

## **Internationalization Strategy of the Powiślańska Academy of Applied Sciences (formerly Powiślański University until 30 September 2025) for the years 2021–2027**

### **(Declaration of the Implementation of the Erasmus+ Program Policy for 2021–2027)**

The Internationalization Strategy of the Powiślańska Academy of Applied Sciences is a key element in the fulfillment of its mission. The Academy places emphasis on actively contributing to the development of the modern labor market by integrating the experiences and needs of employers into the educational process. This objective is pursued through maintaining relationships with national and international institutions, social organizations, healthcare services, and the business sector, as well as through participation in the development of European higher education.

The update of the Internationalization Strategy for 2021–2027 is necessary due to the rapidly changing market conditions, emerging challenges and opportunities, as well as the experience gained in its implementation. This will allow for better alignment of the Academy's actions with the current situation and future trends.

As part of its Internationalization Strategy, the Academy aims to pursue the following objectives:

1. Actively participate in the development of international and research networks, which will provide greater access to EU funding for international cooperation.
2. Expand the international educational offer by creating new programs in English, both independently and in cooperation with international partners on a joint degree basis, and by implementing innovative teaching methods.
3. Obtain international accreditations for medical programs, as well as for the Academy as a whole, in order to enhance its recognition on the international stage.
4. In response to evolving global market and economic challenges, provide specialized knowledge and develop practical, creative skills and social competences in an environment of tolerance and freedom, fostering lasting relationships with society and a sense of responsibility for one's actions.

5. Actively promote a bilingual culture at the Academy, taking into account on-campus students in the English Division, as well as students and staff participating in academic exchanges.
6. Develop the language and cultural competences of academic and administrative staff through training programs and language courses.
7. Collaborate with alumni, maintaining connections with former participants of the Erasmus+ program and graduates of English Division programs, to promote their achievements and increase the Academy's international visibility.
8. Actively participate in the implementation of the Erasmus+ program for 2021–2027, providing students and staff with opportunities for comprehensive development of their talents.

The Powiślańska Academy of Applied Sciences is a dynamically developing academy that places strong emphasis on the internationalization of the educational process and the development of international cooperation. Since its establishment, the Academy has undertaken initiatives aimed at integration with the European and global education systems, promoting the mobility of students, academic staff, and administrative employees.

The Academy intends to participate primarily in two key activities under the Erasmus program for the years 2021–2027. During the period 2014–2020, the Powiślańska Academy of Applied Sciences actively took part in the Erasmus+ program, supporting the mobility of students, academic staff, and administrative personnel. During this time, the number of international exchanges increased significantly, and the Academy consistently sought to expand its cooperation opportunities. The Powiślańska Academy of Applied Sciences offers the opportunity to study in English-language programs, which represents an important step towards internationalization, with the main priorities and objectives being:

### **1. KA1 – Learning Mobility in Higher Education**

The main goal will be to engage as many students and academy staff as possible in international mobility, enabling them to benefit from education, culture, language development, and experiences in learning or teaching in other programs and partner countries. This will help to expand the academy's internationalization process, acquire new partners, and promote the program. The academy implements KA1 projects on a large scale, including KA131 – program and associated countries, as well as KA171 – countries not associated with the program.

**Powiślańska Academy of Applied Sciences, implementing the student and staff exchange program in accordance with the principles of Erasmus+, will ensure the highest quality of its academic mobility activities, in particular through:**

- full compliance with non-discrimination principles;

- full recognition of all successfully completed courses attended by students during their studies abroad, in accordance with the signed Learning Agreement and the Regulations on Recognition of the Period Abroad;
- not charging incoming students any tuition, registration, exam, or laboratory/library fees;
- ensuring full and equal access for all participants, including those with fewer opportunities;
- having a procedure for awarding ECTS credits;
- implementing the provisions of the European Student Card Initiative;
- promoting the Erasmus+ mobile application among students;
- implementing and promoting practices that support sustainable development and environmental protection within the Erasmus+ program;
- promoting civic engagement among program participants;
- publishing and regularly updating course catalogs on the academy website in a timely manner to ensure transparency of information for all interested parties and to enable prospective students to make informed choices regarding study programs abroad;
- implementing mobility based on previously signed inter-institutional agreements, defining the roles and responsibilities of each party, and committing them to adhere to agreed quality criteria applied in candidate selection;
- preparing mobility participants, welcoming them at the host institution, and integrating them into the local community;
- providing participants with proper pre-departure preparation, including language preparation to achieve the required proficiency level;
- implementing student and staff mobility based on agreements prepared and approved prior to departure (regarding the study/internship program for students and teaching/training for staff), agreed upon by the sending institution, the receiving institution, and the participant;
- providing assistance to outgoing and incoming participants in obtaining visas, if required;
- providing, if necessary, assistance in obtaining insurance and accommodation for outgoing and incoming participants;
- ensuring equal treatment of local students and staff and incoming mobility participants in academic matters and in access to other academy services;
- integrating incoming mobility participants into the daily life of the host institution and the local academic community;
- offering appropriate guidance and support to incoming mobility participants;
- providing incoming mobility participants with adequate language support;

- recognizing all student activities listed in the Learning Agreements/traineeships, provided they are successfully completed, within the degree program of the home institution;
- recognizing internships completed abroad in the graduate's Diploma Supplement;
- creating a list of foreign employers who could offer internships to our students;
- issuing certificates to incoming participants and their home institutions, containing a full and accurate record of their achievements;
- supporting the reintegration of returning mobility participants and enabling them to use the acquired experience for the benefit of the institution and other students/staff;
- recognizing teaching and training activities undertaken by staff during mobility in accordance with the previously signed agreement.

## **2. KA2 – Cooperation among Organizations and Institutions**

### **Key Action 2 of the Erasmus+ program supports:**

- **cooperation partnerships, including cooperation partnerships and small-scale partnerships;**
- **partnerships for excellence, including centers of vocational excellence and Erasmus Mundus actions;**
- **partnerships for innovation, including alliances and forward-looking projects;**
- **capacity-building projects in higher education, vocational education and training, youth, and sport;**
- **non-profit European sport events.**

### **The main objectives within KA2 will be:**

- a) establishing strategic partnerships aimed at implementing and disseminating innovative solutions at the academy. The outcome will be the modernization of the academy's educational offer, better alignment with the needs of society, the healthcare system, and the economy, as well as the improvement of the quality of education at the academy;
- b) establishing cooperation with enterprises/institutions through knowledge alliances, aimed at promoting innovation, entrepreneurship, and creativity, increasing students' employment opportunities, facilitating knowledge exchange, and supporting interdisciplinary teaching and learning.

### **Participation in projects under KA2 at Powiślańska Academy of Applied Sciences will:**

- ensure that the cooperation undertaken leads to sustainable results benefiting all partners;
- provide appropriate support for institutions, staff, and students participating in the projects;

- utilize project results in a way that maximizes their impact on individual participants and institutions, while also promoting mutual exchange of knowledge and experiences within the wider academic community, as well as at the local and regional levels.

**To promote information, Powiślańska Academy of Applied Sciences will:**

- publish the Internationalization Strategy of Powiślańska Academy of Applied Sciences, as well as the ECHE Charter along with the Erasmus+ Policy Statement on its website under the “Internationalization” section;
- consistently promote activities undertaken within the program and their results on its website and social media by regularly updating the sections on mobility reports, divided into incoming and outgoing staff and students.

**Powiślańska Academy of Applied Sciences adheres to the principles of gender equality, the inclusion of students and staff with disabilities, social and economic cohesion, and the fight against xenophobia and racism.**

Participation in specific activities within the **Erasmus+ program** will enable the achievement of the main strategic goals of international cooperation:

1. Creating an international, dynamic environment that fosters knowledge transfer.
2. Developing students’ professional, social, and intercultural competences, and strengthening their position in the national and international labor market.
3. Gaining an increasing number of partners among international institutions operating in fields aligned with the academy’s study programs – Economics, Nursing, Emergency Medical Services, Dietetics, Cosmetology\*.
4. Increasing the potential of teaching and administrative staff through participation in Erasmus+ mobility.
5. Continuous development and improvement of the academy’s educational offer to increase the number of domestic and international students.
6. Undertaking actions to ensure the application and promotion of digital mobility management tools.
7. Broader use of blended mobility and promotion of environmentally friendly practices in all program activities.
8. Engaging former participants, both students and staff, to promote program participation as local Erasmus+ ambassadors.

**Impact of the Erasmus+ Program on Powiślańska Academy of Applied Sciences:**

- supports student and staff mobility, enabling the acquisition of international experience and the development of competences;
- adapts study programs to the requirements of the contemporary labor market;

- fosters cooperation with universities, enterprises, and the healthcare sector, thereby enhancing the quality of education;
- increases the attractiveness of the academy for both domestic and international students;
- strengthens the academy's international position by promoting the exchange of knowledge and experience;
- supports the development of effective management and funding mechanisms, enabling better use of available resources;
- enables the acquisition of additional external funding for educational and organizational development;
- creates new opportunities for cooperation and innovative projects, opening the academy to international challenges and future development directions.

The entire academic community is involved in the internationalization process of Powiślańska Academy of Applied Sciences in order to effectively implement its strategic objectives. By supporting the mobility of students and staff, including academic and administrative personnel, and by developing modern curricula aligned with the requirements of the contemporary labor market, the academy contributes to promoting the European dimension of higher education. Mobility within the Erasmus+ program supports the academy's internationalization and modernization objectives and has a significant impact on the reform of educational areas. The Erasmus+ program at the academy serves as a platform for other mobility-based activities, such as cooperation with higher education institutions, enterprises, public authorities, the creation of strategic partnerships, knowledge alliances, and capacity-building projects. The implementation of Erasmus+ projects is a key factor in achieving objectives aimed at the academy's modernization across all priority areas.

The program promotes mobility and openness to international cooperation with various institutions. An international environment for the exchange of experience and knowledge, as well as planned cooperation with institutions outside the education sector—particularly with business and the healthcare system—will support the academy's efforts to improve the quality and relevance of teaching and to equip graduates with the knowledge and competences necessary to succeed in the labor market. The Erasmus+ program provides students with opportunities to acquire additional skills through international mobility. Improved study programs developed as a result of mobility-related activities will largely meet students' expectations and needs. Thanks to an attractive educational offer, the academy will be able to attract a greater number of both Polish and international students, contributing to an increase in the number of graduates. Participation in the program will strengthen efforts to create an effective management system and funding mechanisms at the academy. New projects will open up new opportunities, challenges, and development paths. Through participation in the program, the academy will gain new opportunities to assess its strengths and focus on leveraging them to achieve positive outcomes.

## **Implementation of International Projects**

The academy plans to systematically increase student and staff mobility and to engage in new projects with existing and future partners, while striving to achieve education at a high, international level. International projects and initiatives aimed at strengthening internationalization will be implemented based on an analysis of the institution's needs and the adoption of measures designed to address them. This approach will enable the selection of appropriate projects and partners, ensuring positive project outcomes. Projects based on bilateral cooperation will contribute to further deepening the academy's international engagement, delivering positive and sustainable results. The objectives of cooperation, the academy's role in each project, and the expected outcomes will be defined in advance for every undertaken activity. The organizational structure, action plan, designation of responsible persons, and monitoring methods will be established individually for each project to ensure controlled and effective implementation. Participation in each project will constitute an important element of the professional development of individual participants and a key factor in the internationalization and modernization of the institution. The academy will ensure project promotion, dissemination, and exploitation of results in order to maximize their impact on individuals, the entire academic community, and partner institutions involved in the projects.

Currently, the academy implements and applies for international projects managed by FRSE (Foundation for the Development of the Education System), including Erasmus+ projects; by the European Commission, including European Solidarity Corps projects; by NAWA (the Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange), including the *Welcome to Poland* projects; as well as Horizon Europe projects.

The main objectives of the projects implemented under the *Welcome to Poland* scheme are to increase awareness of the cultures of origin of international students through the organization of Cultural Festivals, as well as to establish a Welcome Point—an information and advisory center providing comprehensive non-academic support for international students and staff.

The Welcome Point provides comprehensive support related to living in Poland, including:

- legalization of stay in Poland, including assistance with submitting applications for a Temporary Residence Card (TRC);
- obtaining health insurance and a PESEL number;
- finding suitable accommodation.

Additionally, the Welcome Point offers:

- organization of Orientation Days;
- organization of information meetings;
- assistance in finding employment.

### **International Organizations**

Powiślańska Academy of Applied Sciences is a member of the Baltic University Programme, one of the largest university cooperation programs in the world, involving over 110 universities in the Baltic Sea region that collaborate in education and research on sustainable development and democracy. Through its membership, the university's students as well as academic and administrative staff have the opportunity to participate in seminars, conferences, and other program activities.

The academy also participates in projects funded by the International Visegrad Fund, an international organization based in Bratislava, cooperating with partners from the Czech Republic, Albania, and Kosovo to enhance the teaching staff's knowledge of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The aim of the fund is to inspire and promote the development of cooperation among citizens and institutions in the region, as well as between the V4 countries and other states, particularly from the Western Balkans and the Eastern Partnership regions.

The academy is also applying for membership in the following international organizations:

- IAU – International Association of Universities;
- FEDE – European Federation of Schools.

### **International Partners**

Powiślańska Academy of Applied Sciences maintains active cooperation with over 230 higher education institutions in 65 countries worldwide. The academy continues to expand its network of international partners by establishing cooperation with universities both within and outside the European Union, focusing in particular on countries with which cooperation has not yet been established—mainly in Central and Eastern Asia, North and South America, Africa, and Australia. The geographical scope of cooperation has been determined by the growing interest of students, especially from Africa and Asia, as well as by established contacts with universities that have already resulted in active and successful cooperation.

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