

SEINÄJOKI UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES (SeAMK), FINLAND

EUROPEAN POLICY STATEMENT (EPS) 2021-2027

Strategy of Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences

SeAMK strategy strongly emphasizes the importance of internationalisation and of multiplying capabilities through cooperation. As stated in SeAMK's strategy for the years 2020-2024 (2030), the mission of SeAMK is to increase know-how, competitiveness and welfare. SeAMK's vision is to be international, entrepreneurial and the best for our students. The strategic goals for the coming years are strengthening the appeal among the students, standing out from other higher education institutes, growth in internationalisation, digital leap in all operations and succeeding together with the region and other cooperation partners. The core values are entrepreneurial mindset, internationalisation, responsibility and SeAMK spirit.

The learning process and the research, development and innovation (RDI) process are the core processes. They are backed by the process of strategic management and leadership and by the support process. Internationality is integrated into all of these processes.

SeAMK's international aims and standards in education, RDI as well as co-operation networks bring significant added value for students, staff, enterprises and other organisations in the region. Internationality is recognized as a strategic success and modernisation factor of SeAMK. The aims, set for the development of the international operations, include:

- The staff is internationally competent and committed and the competence is utilized in teaching, RDI functions and regional development. More teachers and staff members of foreign origin will be hired.
- SeAMK educates internationally competent professionals for regional, national and international needs.
- Teaching conducted in English and international degree programmes are competitive in the global education market. SeAMK aims to increase the number of degree programmes taught in English and the number of international students considerably.
- Incoming and outgoing student, teacher and staff mobilities are a constant part of SeAMK's operations.
- SeAMK invests in creating internationally significant research clusters in co-operation with national, European and global partners. SeAMK coordinates the TalentHub network in the region.
- SeAMK creates an internationally significant innovation ecosystem in cooperation with partner HEIs.
- SeAMK has well-functional and successful partnerships and networks in all continents.

SeAMK has compiled an action plan for internationalisation 2019 - 2025 under the topic "International Growth". In the action plan, the main objects, measures and responsible actors have been defined

for the coming years. Internationalisation is an important strategic issue for SeAMK, and hence it is willing to invest in the development of international activities.

SeAMK implements both Learning Mobility (KA1) and Cooperation among Organizations and Institutions (KA2). In KA1, the aim is to maintain the present good level of annually incoming and outgoing mobility students and staff. Another aim is to diversify the mobility modes with HEI partners by increasing the virtual and blended mobility. The expected impacts of participating in the KA2 include intensified collaboration in RDI with European higher education institutions, enhanced linkages between RDI and teaching through cooperation partnerships and alliances and later on European Universities initiative.

Expected impacts of the participation in the Erasmus Programme on the institutional internationalisation and modernisation strategy of SeAMK

Active participation in the Erasmus+ Programme in 2021-2027 supports and materializes the mission, vision and strategy of Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences (SeAMK). SeAMK aims to be attractive for the students and other stakeholders, internationalized in teaching as well as in research, development and innovation, specialized in key profile areas: growth entrepreneurship and business transfers, welfare technology, digital manufacturing and industrial internet and food safety.

Erasmus programme supports the development and implementation of SeAMK's internationalisation and modernisation aims by offering a well-functioning framework for the cooperation between SeAMK and its European partners. Erasmus+ ICM does the same with the non-European (global) partners.

The participation in the Erasmus+ Programme offers opportunities for strong contributions to the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and the development as an advanced knowledge-based higher education area with a smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. The participation also improves the quality of education and training, supports the competitiveness of Europe and SeAMK as a study destination of higher education and promotes global understanding between people and offer contribution to the sustainable development of higher education in third countries.

By the participation in the Erasmus Programme, SeAMK expects to receive several benefits to its internationalization and modernization in general, and especially in mobilities and RDI (research, development and innovation).

The expected impacts in general:

- Increasing attainment levels to provide the graduates and researchers to European needs: Increased employability of the Finnish and International graduates and mobility of work force and researchers (completed HE degrees/avoided drop-outs, tailored student guidance to inform study choices, support for research and entrepreneurial skills, start-ups, social integration).
- Improving the quality and relevance of HE: Improved key-competencies and skills of the graduates (designing the programmes with the consultation of employers, career and

systematic student guidance, monitoring the career paths of former alumni students, opportunities for personalized blended virtual learning, support for professional development of staff and reward of excellence, include internationalization in the degree programmes).

- Making the knowledge triangle work: Linking HE, research and business for excellence and regional development: Increased economic growth and wellbeing in the region. Joint regional planning and defined key priorities. Global knowledge networks.
- Improving governance and funding: Effective applying and use of funding. Efforts on the strengths.
- Active partnerships in mobilities and RDI with European higher education institutes in the framework of Erasmus Programme facilitate contribution to European Education Area: Sharing knowledge and good practices. Finding and implementing new and more profound cooperation modes together. Learning from each other. Working together for the development and ever-better higher education in Europe.

The expected impacts in mobilities:

- Increased outgoing student mobility to ensure every degree student has an opportunity for a virtual, blended or short or semester-long mobility as part of the degree studies
- Keeping up the good number of incoming students. Erasmus Programme framework helps to attract incoming mobilities.
- Offering more virtual and blended mobility options for incoming students.
- Increased outgoing and incoming teacher mobilities: regular teacher exchanges in every field of education.
- Increased outgoing and incoming staff mobilities: Mobility belongs to education but also to work of other staff.
- Diversifying the mobility modes of teachers and staff together with partner HEIs by the means of virtual and blended mobility.
- Strengthening quality through different modes of mobility and cross-border co-operation.
- Attracting academics and researchers from EU and non-EU countries.
- Credits gained fully recognized in every form of mobility, including virtual and blended mobility.

The expected impacts in participating in European and international cooperation projects:

- Intensified collaboration in RDI with other European higher education institutions. Results of RDI projects in the profile areas will be incorporated into teaching for both degree students and Open University students. Both RDI and training activities support the implementation of regional smart specialization strategies in South Ostrobothnia as well as in other partner regions.
- Enhanced linkages between RDI and teaching through cooperation partnerships and alliances and later on European Universities initiatives.
- Increased international funding for research, development and innovation.
- Science and knowledge -based policy recommendations based on the RDI projects conducted under the Erasmus+ Programme.

SeAMK is also very committed to implementing the priorities of the Programme: digital mobility management (based on the European Student Card Initiative), environmentally friendly practices in all activities and the promotion of civic engagement and encouragement of students and staff to be involved as active citizens before, during and after their participation in a mobility or project.

The envisaged impact of SeAMK's participation in the Erasmus+ Programme

Erasmus+ Programme supports SeAMK's vision to be international, entrepreneurial and the best HEI for the student:

- All students have a level of international competence irrespective of the degree programme.
- Internationalisation windows in all degree programmes.
- First and second cycle degree students have diversified internationalisation options - Internationalisation at Home, Virtual Mobility, Blended Mobility, semester-long study or training period abroad or international double degree – a study-field-specific mixture of these in every master and bachelor degree programme.
- Increasing the activities and modes of Internationalization at Home.
- Adding the number of study courses which include elements of virtual and blended mobility. Every degree programme should include several of these.
- Ensuring that every School (study field) of SeAMK has at least one semester-long study module taught in English in order to be able to welcome incoming exchange students.
- Adding the number of English-taught degree programmes.
- Offering Finnish and international students in each SeAMK School (education field) an opportunity to obtain double degree in strategic partnerships.
- 450 international degree and 300 incoming and outgoing mobility students/trainees yearly and the proportion of international graduates 10%.
- Diversifying the mobility of teachers and staff, e.g. virtual and blended mobility.
- Further development of international services for the mobility target groups (incoming and outgoing students and staff) and both for Finnish and international degree students including double degree students
- Adding the number of the teaching/research staff from outside Finland.
- Tripling international funding for research, development and innovation.
- Implementing 3-5 international RDI projects in each faculty/profile area annually during 2021-2027: each key profile area of SeAMK should implement at least one Cooperation Partnership project under Erasmus+ Programme
- Increasing the participation in Alliance for Innovations –projects in key profile areas.
- Improved and intensified partnerships and networks in key profile areas.

All the above targets and impacts support SeAMK's vision to be entrepreneurial, international and best higher educational institution for the student.