

IPCA

Polytechnic Institute of Cávado and Ave
ERASMUS Charter for Higher Education
ECHE 2014-2020

ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT (Overall Strategy)

Please describe your institution's international (EU and non-EU) strategy. In your description please explain

a) how you choose your partners,

b) in which geographical area(s) and

c) the most important objectives and target groups of your mobility activities (with regard to staff and students in first, second and third cycles, including study and training, and short cycles).

If applicable, also explain how your institution participates in the development of double/multiple/joint degrees. (max. 5000 characters)

IPCA is the youngest Portuguese public higher education institution, and started its activity in 1996. Since the beginning, IPCA has a major concern and made a strong commitment towards a continuous alignment of the job profiles it provides with the needs and requirements of the new organizational paradigms, the dynamics of knowledge, society and the overall organizational environment. Internationalization is one of the five horizontal or supporting strategic vectors of IPCA (the other five are the Resources, Support services, Infrastructures and Governance, internal communication and image). The main vertical strategic vectors are, naturally, (1) Teaching and learning, (2) Research and development and (3) Relations with society, employability and entrepreneurship.

The spread of education and training to the international dimension has become an inevitable and pivotal factor, reflected in the growing number of students, teachers and researchers who wish to participate in exchange programs and mobility, in a perspective of lifelong training and learning, benefiting of more opportunities for personal and professional enhancement, embodied in the living of different cultures and experiences.

With the increase and expansion of exchanges and cooperation between EU countries and third countries new partnerships and strategic alliances are being created and strengthened, which are essential for the expansion of the institution at the international level, promoting interculturalism, as well as the development and dissemination of new methodologies in higher education.

The IPCA strategy involves encouraging mobility, strengthening the cooperation with other countries (EU and non-EU) and with the community of Portuguese-speaking countries, promoting the sustainable development within the partnerships, and enhancing international engagement through research, education, mobility and technology transfer actions.

In particular, and addressing the specific points suggested for this item:

*** a) How IPCA chooses his partners:

Currently IPCA has a very large pool of partners (more than 100), which was the result of previous interactions between staff/professors/researchers of both institutions that results in cooperation agreements in several dimensions, and mostly in the mobility and exchange dimension. Several criteria are mandatory: the recognized quality of the potential partner institution in a given field of research or in a given set of courses or degrees that represent an opportunity for a mutual enrichment by developing

joint projects / mobility or other actions/activities. It is also fundamental to know the interlocutor, so the selection of partners and the establishment of agreements imply a relation of trust between the institutions.

The strengthening of collaboration with higher education institutions and enterprises allows a better understanding of the skills that should ideally incorporate the diplomas they offer, as well as enabling its students and graduates all the advantages associated with living and working in Europe.

*** b) In which geographical areas:

The geographical areas are related, both for mobility projects and R&D or technology transfer projects, with the fields of study, of research, of expertise or with the degrees offered by the potential partners.

*** c) the most important objectives and target groups of mobility activities:

IPCA seeks to provide its graduates with the skills that enable them to intervene in the competitive dynamic and continually renewed global economy context. The mobility of students and staff is vital to ensure this desired alignment and to provide to the participants in mobility the access to new ways of living, new experiences and new knowledge, in international cultural and linguistically rich and diverse context enabling them to work and live in a global and pluralistic society.

IPCA participates in a Tempus project entitled "Exporting Master Programme in Enterprise Systems Engineering to Jordan, Syria, Tunisia and Egypt (MSC.ESE)" that is closely connected to a master degree already offered by IPCA (Informatics Engineering and Business Systems). The exchange of ideas within the EU partners (Germany, Spain, Sweden) is revealing very rich to improve our master, and to tune it with the similar master degrees offered by our EU partners. This year IPCA is involved in two applications to Erasmus Mundus related to joint development of degrees and mobility (students and staff).

If applicable, please describe your institution's strategy for the organisation and implementation of international (EU and non-EU) cooperation projects in teaching and training in relation to projects implemented under the Programme. (max. 2000 characters)

IPCA seeks to provide its graduates with the skills that enable them to intervene in the competitive dynamic and continually renewed global economy context. The mobility of students and staff is vital to ensure this desired alignment and to provide to the participants in mobility the access to new ways of living, new experiences and new knowledge, in international cultural and linguistically rich and diverse context enabling them to work and live in a global and pluralistic society.

The participation of staff and students in mobility programs is expected to allow the enhancement of knowledge, crucial for the evolution towards a sustainable development. Also an important emphasis of IPCA is towards the technology transfer that can be achieved through staff and 2nd cycle students' mobility.

The aim is that all the mobility activities will be steered to achieve efficient collaboration among universities, creating scientific relations among different partner groups. The organization of the future mobility projects will give fair chances to eligible candidates to apply in proposed research topics and ally with colleagues working in the same field. This strategy will enable fundamental advance towards a durable transnational network, generating sustainable knowledge development.

As a result of this project, IPCA aims to be a higher education institution involved with the "Strategy 2020" objectives.

Please explain the expected impact of your participation in the Programme on the modernisation of your institution (for each of the 5 priorities of the Modernisation Agenda*) in terms of the policy objectives you intend to achieve. (max. 3000 characters)

In the case of IPCA, the mobility activities aim, on the one hand, to strengthen the valences of its students /future graduates, to identify needs and match the skills associated with the labor market requirements; on the other hand, to enhance personal and professional enrichment of the participants in mobility.

The ERASMUS program is the cornerstone of the mobility efforts of the IPCA. The mobility programmes, both with European Union member-states and third-countries, are a fundamental part of the training of students of IPCA. It meets the policy goals of "internationalization" as one of the supporting strategic vectors of IPCA, since education and training adopted an international dimension as reflected in the growing number of students, teachers and researchers who wish to participate in exchange programs and mobility, in a perspective of lifelong training and learning. Personal and professional enhancement is embodied in the living of different cultures and experiences. The ERASMUS program is therefore a fundamental tool for IPCA in meeting the European Union's modernization and internationalization agenda in higher education.

The ERASMUS program is instrumental for increasing attainment levels to provide the graduates and researchers that Europe needs. The attractiveness of the subjects taught at IPCA, considering the possibility of participating in the international mobility programs, allows for wider and better recruitment, as well as motivates enrolled students to better perform in the respective courses. The ERASMUS project is fundamental for improving the quality and relevance of higher education. It is the guarantee of a more complete academic training; it increases the language skills of the students and also the development of more personal competences. The mobility projects also strengthen quality through mobility and cross-border cooperation, namely considering the potential for compared and shared experiences in the different dimensions involved in the activities of the HEI, the different types of student, staff and teachers mobility, as well as the procedures for quality assessment. The better linkage of higher education, research and business for excellence and regional development is a policy priority of IPCA that the participation in the mobility programmes enhances. The Polytechnic studies, education and research are by their nature applied to the reality at which they are directed and therefore naturally intrinsically connected to businesses and societal development. IPCA is closely linked to the regional environment that surrounds it, all the more so considering its insertion in a regional context away from the major urban centres of the country and within a tight nit transnational, social, economic and academic, network between Northern Portugal and Galicia.