

## **SSE Riga Erasmus Policy Statement 2014-2020**

In line with the mission of the Stockholm School of Economics in Riga (SSE Riga) to provide state-of-the-art education in economics and business that contributes to the economic and social development of the region, internationalization of higher education and the EU dimension sets a new agenda that is incorporated in the SSE Riga strategic development plans. Internationalization of the student body and the involvement of the faculty in international research projects need to be widened and strengthened in the period of 2014 – 2020 to educate highly qualified people with an increased employability in Europe.

When choosing the partners, there are three aspects considered, i.e. the geographical location, the size and programmes offered at a partner university and the research focus. First, the conceptual base for the choice of partners is established in the aims of SSE Riga to contribute to the development of the region, hence a number of mobility schemes and multilateral research projects involve the Baltic Sea region. Further, to produce comparative studies and provide diversity, the partners from Southern Europe are addressed. Second, with SSE Riga being a small higher educational institution, we are looking for partners that offer a broader range of courses and programmes to provide our students with specialization opportunities to enrich student specialization. Third, with SSE Riga focusing on research within entrepreneurship and sustainable business, partners with similar research areas are of importance for implementing multilateral projects.

The student mobility programme aims at providing long-term educational, personal and professional benefits for incoming and outgoing students, and it is supported by a well-organized structure of maintaining quality of exchange studies. There are information and support services developed for incoming and outgoing students, including information published on the website, brochures made available both as hard copies and electronically downloadable, and a scheme of consultancy, evaluation and feedback. The incoming students are provided with a special welcoming programme, a cultural programme, a course on Latvian Culture and History, and Latvian language course.

The staff and faculty mobility programme aims at generating thematic networks, joint teaching projects and multilateral research projects. The thematic networks in economics and business are developed through building personal relationships that generate the development of new courses, improved and updated curricula and strengthen the links between education and research to respond to the requirements of the knowledge economy. The staff and faculty mobility programme is provided with well-structured support services, including information published on the website, a tailor-made communication scheme and an individualized welcoming and cultural programme.

## **Teaching and Training**

The collaboration between the partner universities is strengthened through international weeks, teacher exchange and joint teaching and training projects. During the last few years the initiative to organize international weeks has gained importance since it brings together a number of teachers from partner universities, and it helps to generate new professional networks. Having participated in international weeks organized by our partner in Germany, Portugal, Spain and Sweden, SSE Riga aims at organizing an international week in 2014 when Riga is nominated as the European Capital of Culture. It will not only bring together lecturers from our partner universities and enhance their

academic and personal learning, but it will also provide great opportunities of cultural experiences and learning.

In addition to regular teacher mobility, joint teaching and expert visits provide much more opportunities both for students, faculty and the staff. It provides more resources for such a small higher educational institution as SSE Riga, improves the quality teaching, enriches the curriculum and meets the needs of individuals. Such a scheme also encourages SSE Riga lecturers to take on short-term positions abroad so that they contribute to the curriculum of partner universities and learn from best practice.

## **Modernization Agenda**

Entrepreneurship is the key to economic development. The World Bank directs for evidence of the economic power of entrepreneurship to look at the United States, where “young firms have been shown to be a more important source of net job creation than incumbent firms” (The World Bank Group Entrepreneurship Snapshots 2010). Even though Latvia has been ranked the 25th out of 185 countries in the World Bank's "Doing Business 2013" report, in Europe 2020: Country-Specific Recommendations for Latvia (July 2012) it is stated to improve the quality of higher education, and strengthen links between education, business, research and innovation and to promote entrepreneurship by supporting young innovative companies.

Entrepreneurship skills, however, are lacking in Latvia. According to the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor 2011 Latvia Report (A. Paalzow/SSE Riga, M. Krumina/BICEPS), the firm lifetime is short, and there is lack of innovation. In the same report the authors state that education has a strong effect on entrepreneurship. There are numerous traditional study programmes that either focus on entrepreneurship or have elements of that by teaching general management principles, however, exposure to what other people have done and what mistakes they have made is missing. Linking up entrepreneurship education at university level with real world should become part of the current entrepreneurship curriculum. As of September 2012, SSE Riga has started a new experimental course “Laboratory of Entrepreneurship” run by a team of a designer and an entrepreneur who under the guidance of the pro-rector facilitate 120 students through their first experiences in generating ideas to concluding pitches on March 22, 2013. This experience has raised a number of issues to be further explored and clarified to design the best practice model.

The purpose of the participation in the programme on the modernization of the curriculum is therefore focused on mapping entrepreneurial education in the curriculum, where international experience at partner universities is seen as value added. The programme will include exploring the existing entrepreneurship programmes and their delivery at partner institutions, exploring the involvement of entrepreneurs in teaching and the pedagogical support provided to them, exploring student entrepreneurship spaces as well as visits and study activities to centers of entrepreneurship.