

EUROPEAN POLICY STATEMENT

The Development Strategy of Riga Technical University is based on the core values of RTU, which has been developing as a modern European multi-disciplinary technical university since 1862. Recognising the role of the University in the development of the Baltic Sea Region and in shaping the future of Latvia, the European Union priorities, as well as the guiding principles set in education and innovation policy planning documents at the national and regional level have been observed formulating RTU Development Strategy.

The strategic aims in the field of internationalisation are the following:

- 1) to enhance the international scope in the education and R&D activities by fostering the cooperation with acknowledged education and research institutions around the world;
- 2) to enhance the quality of education and R&D, thus ensuring the international visibility and competitiveness;
- 3) to promote Latvian higher education and culture in an international arena, thus supporting the intercultural understanding through international cooperation.

Core activities to achieve these strategic aims are:

- 1) Internationalisation of education and research, which will ensure the competitiveness of education and research and the experience of studying and working in an international environment. Internationally recognised and accredited curriculums, considering the local and international developments and priorities in higher education and research, highly qualified teaching staff and researchers and a modern learning and working environment are important prerequisites.
- 2) Managing international cooperation, whereas it is the aim of RTU to broaden the scope of internationalisation into all core activities by developing partnerships with international organisations and cooperation networks, and higher education and R&D institutions around the world.
- 3) Creating the supportive environment for internationalisation with the aim to develop a modern and effective support system that is characterised by the infrastructure, high administrative capability and the availability of supportive structures and services also for non-Latvian speakers.
- 4) RTU aims to foster the international recognition of being a reliable partner and to enhance the reputation and attractiveness of education and R&D activities.

The key performance indicators for internationalisation are as follows: strategic partnerships with other universities and other institutions, percentage of foreign professors and postdocs, percentage of foreign students, percentage of students having an international study component, quality and volume of research with foreign universities and institutes.

RTU is an internationally networked, multicultural learning community. Student exchange will be integrated extensively into the University's curricula, in collaboration with international partner universities. Student exchange visits to other universities are supported through flexible credit transfer and scholarship systems. Similarly, the career system for teachers and researchers includes periods of work abroad. The international dimension is also a starting point for student and teacher recruitment, as well as for designing programmes. Recent amendments to the Law on Institutions of Higher Education give the right to institutions of higher education to develop joint study programmes in cooperation with Latvian or foreign partner institutions and to take part in their implementation. Starting from the year 2013 when joint programmes and joint diplomas are legally recognized in Latvia, RTU now is in the process of developing several joint bachelor and master programmes with partners in Spain, Germany, Austria, USA, Norway, Lithuania etc. Joint programmes are developed together with foreign universities either on a bilateral basis or within clusters of several universities within certain EU programmes and projects, like TEMPUS, ERASMUS MUNDUS, etc.

Based on already existing partnership agreements with higher education institutions in Europe, Asia, Africa and America RTU will strengthen those partnerships in the following priority areas:

- student exchange on all cycles of studies;
- support of elaboration of joint academic and research activities;
- work in joint mobility projects.

In the same time, RTU will develop new links with partners in Europe, Asia, Africa and America. As primary countries for new cooperation agreements between universities RTU considers the following countries:

in Europe – Balkan countries, Turkey, CIS countries and Georgia;

in Asia – China, India, South Korea, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Vietnam;

in Africa – Egypt, Tunis, Morocco, Algeria, Nigeria, Cameroon, Tanzania and Kenya;

in America – United States of America, Mexico and Brazil.

Key areas of implementation of international cooperation projects:

1. International Visibility

The University builds its reputation by investing in the quality of research and education it provides, improving its visibility among relevant stakeholders through systematic marketing and communication activities. RTU aims to work with the best partners in its selected fields.

2. International Recruitment

An operating environment that supports high-quality research and education is a prerequisite for successful international recruitment. Recruitment is facilitated by offering employees, students, and their families support in adapting to society and working life. The reputation and expertise of the University's teachers, researchers and alumni are efficiently capitalized on in all recruiting activities. RTU is going to implement the following steps for significant increase of international students with the following percentage from the total number of full-time students: 4% in 2013, 6% in 2015, 8% in 2017, 10% in 2018. It is expected that by 2015 each RTU faculty will have at least one programme in English in every cycle of studies.

3. International Mobility of Faculty and Staff

International mobility is required to strengthen research cooperation, improve the content and quality of teaching and learn new service practices. Mobility is supported, e.g., by establishing a sabbatical system for professors and young researchers at the qualification stage. The international competence of local staff is developed through systematic training; internationalisation is also a part of the administrative and service staff's job profile.

4. International Teaching and Studying (described in the previous section)

Additionally, RTU will formulate a separate language strategy to enable internationalisation.

5. International Partnerships

Cooperation with universities and research institutions in other countries will be enhanced through long-term partnerships.

Participation in the Programme will contribute to the modernisation of engineering education and increase of the number of highly qualified graduates and researchers Latvia and Europe needs.

Participation in the Programme will provide access to top quality scientific research infrastructure and promote sharing of education and research resources, thus ensuring mutual benefit for all parties involved in the projects under the Programme.

Contribution to the implementation of the quality assurance system would also be significant in this respect.

The RTU administration is designed to fit the needs of variety of the tasks for the modern so-called Third Generation (3G) University, including not only studies and

research but also knowledge transfer, interaction with business sector, lifelong learning, infrastructure development and others.

The administration of RTU will elaborate administrative, financial and other mechanisms in order to stimulate an interest of RTU professors to develop international programmes and attract international students. Such mechanisms will have an impact on the evaluation of programmes and academic staff.

In order to activate internationalisation at home, RTU will develop a plan of joint curriculum for local and international students. RTU will cooperate with other higher education institutions in Latvia, EU and non-EU countries in order to create larger internationalization impact, to present Riga and Latvia as excellent place for studies.

By implementing the internationalisation strategy, which is currently defined as one of the top priorities of the university, RTU will contribute to the EU modernisation and internationalisation agenda in higher education.