



# Erasmus Policy Statement (2021-2027)

## Mission

The mission of the Evangelical Theological Seminary (VETU: Visoko evanđeosko teološko učilište) is to promote theological higher education and spiritual growth, for missions and church ministry, amid the challenges of modern society. Answering the call to missions the Great Commission in the conditions which characterize the modern world, especially urban society, is growing in complexity. The need for excellent education and practical training of future church workers and ministers becomes a condition without which the Church is no longer able to effectively promote the evangelical message in the contemporary context of mega-trends: culture of globalization, democracy, increasing migration, explosion of knowledge, availability of information, communication technologies, polarization in wealth and knowledge, centralization of decision making and governance, urbanization, moral crises, local and regional conflicts and wars, and the exponential intensification of the rhythm of life.

Such a modern social context puts additional and serious challenges in front of the Church and all of Christ's followers in effectively following their calling in executing Christ's last command: Go and make disciples of all nations ...

## Vision

The vision of the VETU is to be a leading Evangelical centre for education and research in Christ-centered calling in Central and Eastern Europe and the world. The VETU in Osijek is an international, inter-denominational, scientific and educational institution in the field of theology. The purpose of the VETU is to provide theological education, nurture and promote theological scientific disciplines and similar activities to help God's people in strengthening their faith. VETU is a place of higher theological education for pastors, priests, preachers, evangelists, religious teachers and others ministering in the church. The VETU advances theological science by performing scientific research work, equipping students for independent work in science, preparing them for the complexity and diversity of pastoral work. The beliefs and principles of the VETU are in line with the Apostle's Creed, the Nicene creed and the Lausanne covenant.

VETU with its mission and vision aims to increase the visibility and recognition of active role of theology in culture, society and the wider community. VETU participation in the Erasmus programme is critical to the success of our strategic development and sustainability through mobility of individuals, participation in co-operation projects and improvements in the quality of programmes, as well as student and staff experience.

VETU strongly supports exchanges and international cooperation activities and has good international cooperation records with many universities across Europe, UK and USA – VETU is a member of the consortium of the Central and Eastern Europe Mission Studies organisation that let to organizing several



international conferences and round tables (<https://ceeams.org/conference-archive/>), the Osijek Doctoral Colloquium (<https://ceeams.org/doctoral-colloquium/>). VETU organizes annual reformation Week activities that serve as a bridge-builder between the academia, churches and society (<https://ika.hkm.hr/najave/tjedan-reformacije-u-osijeku-rijec-i-reformacija/>) and many more.

VETU has strong international and inter-denominational excellence that gives it a unique ecumenical and multicultural character (<http://www.evtos.hr/en/about/general-information>). VETU regularly welcomes students from abroad, both within Balkans and Western Europe. For that purpose, VETU set general policies on inbound and outbound students transferring internationally, and a number of them are engaged in conference and speaking activities beyond the confines of Croatia. In accordance with the fundamental principles of Bologna Declaration, VETU is interested in furthering its activities regarding students, lecturers and staff mobility, but also in the areas such as training and research, developing new programs as joint master and/or doctoral programs for the future. Being an international, interdenominational and educational institution in the field of theology, VETU strives for academic excellence for engaged, contextual research and reflection, as well as to be a research centre across Christian traditions. The geographical location of VETU in Osijek, Croatia in the triangle between Serbia, Bosnia and Hungary, near the confluence of Drava and Danube, offers itself as a natural meeting point and laboratory for bridge building.

Our library is one of the best in the broader region with near 130.000 books with more than 80% of the titles in English language but also in the other European languages. VETU also offers event organizing and accommodation facilities: there are four fully equipped classrooms as well as a conference hall for 250 participants; VETU Student Dormitory is fully renewed with a capacity to host about 100 students in single and double rooms.

Joining the Erasmus Plus family strengthens our international cooperation and exchanges having in mind that VETU partners are academic institutions, but also civil society organisations and networks within the areas of humanities, religion, peace and human rights; being in-between Central, Eastern Europe and Southern Balkans, VETU focuses on becoming a hub for exchanges ideas and practices to strengthen academic practices as well as professional studies in the area.

VETU objectives in terms of mobility for our teachers, students and staff is to improve competences such as broader understanding of practices, policies and systems in education, training or youth across countries; greater understanding of interconnections between formal and non-formal education, vocational training and the labour market respectively; improved foreign language competences for teachers, students and staff; increased motivation and satisfaction in their daily work, etc., as well as increased capacity to operate at EU/international level, reinforced cooperation with partners from other countries, increased quality in the preparation, implementation, monitoring and follow up of EU/international projects, etc.

VETU has a good past record in placing its graduates in overseas education programs as well as in cooperation and teacher exchanges and partnerships in research projects. VETU has a good record of cooperation with the Theological Center of Mittersill Austria, Oxford Centre for Mission Studies UK,



Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary USA, Theological University Ljubljana, Slovenia, local universities of Osijek, Zagreb and Rijeka.

The participation of VETU in Erasmus programme has the following objectives:

1. To increase the number of EU and non-EU students (especially from the Balkan/pre-accession countries) as VETU is actively involved in promoting international cooperation offering academic environment that contributes to quality professional and personal development if both teachers and students
2. To enable greater participation of lecturers and researchers from EU countries at VETU based upon agreed frameworks of cooperation as well as to support our teaching and non-teaching staff visits/exchanges with universities and research centres in Europe in order to grow in the range and quality of its activities
3. VETU is particularly interested in participating in multilateral projects related to joint master/PhD degrees that investigate the role of religion in peace and war, in the contemporary societies, with EU and non-EU universities where, to the first VETU can serve as on-site laboratory and to the second as bridge-builder to EU.

Cross-border cooperation has significant importance for VETU and expectations to foster it through the Erasmus programme are high.