

## **Erasmus Policy Statement (Overall strategy) 2021–2027**

Organisation ID: E10160529

Erasmus Charter for Higher Education Code: LV RIGA47

The Red Cross Medical College of Rīga Stradiņš University (further – RCMC) is an agency under the supervision of one of the largest universities in Latvia - Rīga Stradiņš University.

RCMC provides a highly qualified medical education, in total ensuring five first-level higher professional education programmes, funded by State budget – Nursing (qualification Nurse), Treatment (Physician Assistant), Treatment (Emergency Medicine Physician Assistant), Therapeutic Massage (Massage Therapist) and Pharmaceuticals (Pharmacist Assistant), Vocational education programme Nursing (Nurse's Assistant) and Vocational secondary education programme Dentistry (Dentistry Nurse). All RCMC study programmes have been developed in accordance with the requirements of the labour market, and the strategic goals of study programme development are related to national processes and trends in the European Higher Education Area according to the Bologna process.

RCMC goal is to contribute to the future of health care students' education and further education possible in connection with the labour market requirements, the targeted use of existing intellectual, material and technical and financial resources, establishing closer co-operation between lecturers, promoting mutual integration of study subjects and co-operation with colleagues abroad, and modernizing the interaction between lecturers and students in the learning process. The main goal of RCMC internationalization is to improve the professional level and knowledge of its students and staff in the corresponding field of activity, giving them the opportunity to participate in international projects to get ideas and experience from foreign colleagues in order to help students – future professionals to adjust to the requirements of the EU labour market.

According to RCMC Strategy, main RCMC development aims are:

- to prepare highly qualified health care professionals whose knowledge, practical skills and professional attitude obtained during the studies, would be in line with the European Union's requirements and the basic principles of the RCMC;
- to improve the quality of first-level higher professional education study programmes and vocational education programmes by establishing closer cooperation between lecturers and promoting the integration of joint study courses;
- to improve communication with partner institutions both in Latvia and abroad, as well as to strengthen already existing collaboration with foreign partners and to find new ones;
- to encourage free, creative and co-responsible cooperation between students and lecturers in the terms of study process;
- to establish a stable basis for academic staff lifelong learning and to encourage research activity development.

RCMC has three main aims for next programming period:

1. To increase the number of traineeship mobilities and training and teaching mobilities for staff members, which is important part of RCMC study process due to its strong focusing on practical skills. The Erasmus+ Charter will allow RCMC students to participate in the international student exchange programme Erasmus+ and practice in the best clinics of the European countries, which directly corresponds to the main RCMC development aims. Also, as it had been proved during the previous programme period, staff members returning after Erasmus mobility, bring new ideas to the RCMC which they integrate in the study process in order to modernize and equate it to the European level standards. One of such ideas was building a Simulation Lab which provides Nursing and Treatment programme students with opportunity to practice their clinical and decision-making skills through varied real-life situational experiences, without compromising the patient's well-being.
2. RCMC is planning to start creating joint study courses with European partner educational institutions which will improve both academic staff competences and student English language skills (which is very important for medical workers in order for them to be able to provide health care for foreigners), as well as will improve and enrich RCMC study programme quality and will also improve the teaching and learning of languages itself, which corresponds to the European Education Area policy.
3. Building new cooperation projects and involving foreign academic staff and students in the study process will enable RCMC students to benefit from the best education and training, and to find

employment across Europe. RCMC previous programme period experience showed that communication and fulfilling common tasks with foreign students helps Latvian students to become more open minded, confident, as well as to develop in them a sense of their identity as Europeans.

RCMC has already formed a successful cooperation with several universities in Estonia, Lithuania, Poland, France, Greece, Portugal, Finland, Belgium and Spain during the previous programme period. RCMC has experience in developing Erasmus+ higher education projects as well as welcoming Vocational Training students from partner institutions. College has a long-term successful collaboration with the best national health care institutions providing training places for the students – Children's Clinical University Hospital, Pauls Stradiņš Clinical University Hospital and Riga East University Hospital.

According to the RCMC Strategic development plan, one of the main RCMC goals is to promote internationalisation, which is crucial for further development and modernization of study environment. Latvian student interaction with foreign students is very important ensures personal growth knowledge and practical skill improvement. Students returning after Erasmus+ exchange become more confident, open minded and willing to improve their work environment by implementing new methods and, which is more important, they develop a completely new attitude to their work and particularly patients.