

National Defence Academy of Latvia

ERASMUS policy statement

National Defence Academy of Latvia (NDAL) is higher education and science institution of the Republic of Latvia, established on February 13th, 1992, and is the successor of Latvian War School's (1919) traditions. The fundamentals of NDAL activities is preparation of professionally educated command and military personnel for the National Armed Forces of Latvia, to conduct and organize research in the area of defense and security, as well as the education of the new generation of military intellectuals, future officers – patriotic, physically and mentally developing personalities with high moral values, who are able to assume responsibility and successfully command military units to ensure state defense and security.

In 2015 the Cabinet of Ministers issued an order on the approval of the Constitution of NDAL, where the main lines of action and tasks include co-operation and development of the exchange of academic staff and students with other higher education institutions and foreign military training institutions, which prepare officers. The need to develop and strengthen international cooperation is stressed also in statement "Of the approval of the concept of national defense", issued in 2016 by the Parliament of the Republic of Latvia, where in section 3.2.4. "Participation in international security policy" it is presented that comprehensive international cooperation is an additional instrument to defend national defense interests. To comply with the previously mentioned national guidance documents, it was decided to get involved and seize the opportunities that the ERASMUS+ program can provide.

In late 2016 NDAL applied for and was granted the Erasmus charter for higher education 2014-2020 (Charter), which is a written document issued by the European Commission (EC) empowering higher education institutions to participate in the ERASMUS+ program activities. By obtaining the Charter, NDAL undertakes to meet the fundamental principles laid down in the Charter, which the higher education institutions must follow in the organization and implementation of the activities of the ERASMUS+ program.

The Charter is a premise for a higher education institution to apply for funding for:

- organizing the mobilities for students, faculty and staff abroad;
- the admission of foreign educational institutions' teachers, lecturers and staff in their higher education institutions;
- implementation of ERASMUS language courses and intensive programs;
- coordination of multilateral projects, transnational networks of higher education institutions and additional events;
- organizing preparation trips.

In spring 2018, NDAL submitted the first project application to implement European Union program ERASMUS+ mobilities and received a positive decision on funding, resulting in the successful execution of the first ERASMUS + project by NDAL from 1 June 2018 to 30 September 2019, fulfilling 11 staff development and teaching mobilities.

In the spring of 2019 the next application was submitted, which was also confirmed and NDAL received the EC grant for the second ERASMUS+ project from 1 June 2019 to 30 September 2020. As of March 2020, 16 mobilities have been carried out within the project, 12 of which have been staff

training and teaching mobilities. An important milestone in the project is the four implemented student mobilities, which, given the specificities of NDAL as a military higher education institution, is a major step towards the achievement of the strategic objectives of NDAL, enabling future officers to gain experience at least once during their studies in military higher education institutions in other countries, which provides not only the opportunity to acquire knowledge and skills from the perspective of other countries, but also broadens the horizons for the cadets - a priceless benefit in their future duty.

In the spring of 2020, NDAL had for the third time submitted a project application to the ERASMUS+ program amid the rapid growth of establishing and ensuring the mobilities for military higher education institutions by European initiative for the exchange of young officers inspired by Erasmus (EMILYO). NDAL also has been actively involved in EMILYO, therefore during this project at least 6 student mobilities are expected to be carried out and the amount of training and teaching mobilities are also planned to increase.

Within the framework of current projects, NDAL has signed ERASMUS+ inter-institutional agreements with the following institutions:

- National Defence Academy of Georgia (GE);
- Helmut Schmidt University (DE);
- Theresian Military Academy (AT);
- The General Jonas Žemaitis Military Academy of Lithuania (LT);
- Royal Military Academy (BE);
- University of Pisa (IT);
- Nicolae Bălcescu Land Forces Academy (RO);
- Estonian Military Academy (EE);
- University of Defence (CZ);
- University of Pisa (IT);
- Portuguese Military Academy (PT).

Apart from the partners already listed, NDAL is working with more than 15 other military higher education institutions, and it is also planned to close ERASMUS+ inter-institutional agreements with them within future projects.

NDAL will continue to work within the Charter in the future in order to promote the growth of international cooperation, and will proceed to actively engage with EMILYO to offer more diverse mobilities for the cadets and staff of NDAL, as well as to attract more foreign specialists in the training process, thus ensuring the development of both future officers' and staff' competencies.

NDAL rector
Colonel Oskars Kudlis

Learn more about the ERASMUS+ program in Latvia's State Education Development Agency webpage www.viaa.gov.lv section "Erasmus+".

Contact person for the implementation of the ERASMUS+ project in NDAL:
Ms.Zane Ribakova
International cooperation coordinator for NDAL
E-mail: zane.ribakova@mil.lv
Cellphone: +37126637294