

## **REPUBLIC OF SERBIA**

**Academy of Technical and Art Applied Studies Belgrade**

**Number: 749/1**

**Date: June 7, 2021, Belgrade**

Pursuant to Article 87, Paragraph 1, Items 30 and 33 of the Statute of the Academy of Technical and Art Applied Studies Belgrade (number 7-1/2019 from December 17, 2019, amendment 2/11-11 from February 27, 2020, amendment 2/17-3 from September 17, 2020, amendment 197-8/2 from April 14, 2021), the Teaching and Professional Council of the Academy of Technical and Art Applied Studies Belgrade, at a sitting held on June 7, 2021, adopted the following:

### **STRATEGY OF INTERNATIONALIZATION OF THE ACADEMY OF TECHNICAL AND ART APPLIED STUDIES BELGRADE IN BELGRADE FOR THE PERIOD 2021 TO 2026**

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Academy of Technical and Art Applied Studies Belgrade (hereinafter referred to as: ATUSS) has decided to focus on internationalization as one of the most prospective ways of institutional development. This particularly refers to the activities of ATUSS related to education, research and development. Strategy of Internationalization of ATUSS for the time period 2021 – 2026 (hereinafter referred to as: Strategy) is an umbrella planning document which defines the main objectives of ATUSS in the domain of internationalization of activities and international cooperation. Furthermore, the Strategy defines the basic course of actions for ATUSS to obtain the objectives set in the domain of internationalization and international cooperation. This Strategy is to be followed up by the adoption of a corresponding Action Plan for the Realisation of the Strategy of Internationalization 2021 – 2026, which will further determine the steps for achieving the hereby given objectives.

#### **1.1. VISION**

Through the realization of this Strategy, ATUSS should become an institution of higher education, research and development which is, in the international domain, a bearer of activities for the introduction of new, additional, social values, particularly when it comes quality education of competent and globally competitive experts in the areas of study characterizing ATUSS and its study programmes. ATUSS should become internationally recognized and acknowledged as a reliable actor in the sphere of higher education, research and development, both at the European and global level. Through its successfully realized process of internationalization, ATUSS should become an important element in the regional, European and global education system, firmly incorporated in those systems and well connected with organizations working in education and research, as well as other related organisations from various countries. International two-way student mobility of students and staff, as well as mutual participation in research, development and other projects with partner organizations from abroad should become regular and routine processes at ATUSS.

## **1.2. MISSION**

ATUSS shall attain its vision of international status, first and foremost, by making strong, productive ties with relevant partners at the international level, as well as its persistence in maintaining and improving the quality of educational activities it performs. The outcomes of making ties with international partners should, above all, include international recognizability, as well as acknowledgement of the quality of educational activities realized by ATUSS, that is, international recognizability and acknowledgement of student competencies obtained at ATUSS. Furthermore, ATUSS shall build its international status through consistent commitment to and investment in the development of quality human resource potential, providing material resources as well as overall investment in its educational, research, development and other activities. ATUSS must strive to adopt, adjust and additionally enhance examples of positive business practice in relevant activities from international partners, particularly with regard to education, research and development. ATUSS shall support corresponding initiatives and ideas of students and staff which contribute to the improvement of the developmental potential and the international status of ATUSS. ATUSS should, apart from its educational and other activities, aim at improving and developing research and development to its maximum, including other corresponding activities, which will extend the spectrum of potential international partnerships and increase its chances for personal growth and development at both the national and international level.

## **1.3. OVERVIEW OF THE CURRENT STATE**

ATUSS is an independent institution of higher education created upon the Decision of the Government of the Republic of Serbia on the establishment of the Academy of Technical and Art Applied Studies Belgrade (number 022-7976/2019 from August 29, 2019) and the Decision of the Government of the Republic of Serbia (number 022-11161/2019 from November 7, 2019). ATUSS has, through the given Decisions, been established as a institutional change in status bringing together the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering of Applied Studies in Belgrade, School of Applied Studies for Informational and Communication Technologies in Belgrade, School of Civil Engineering and Geodesy in Belgrade, School of Railroad Transport in Belgrade and Textile School for Design, Technology and Management in Belgrade. In accordance with the above, although it is a newly-founded institution, ATUSS is a legal successor of the higher education institutions it comprises, but also a successor of the tradition those higher education institutions have had in educating experts in different fields. The history of ATUSS, depending on the history of the individual Department, goes from four to six decades back. The Departments comprising ATUSS have been realizing activities pertaining to higher education as their primary activity, while simultaneously realizing a number of other adjacent or secondary activities. ATUSS realizes activities of higher education, as its primary activity, through its study programmes in undergraduate, specialist and master applied studies in the sphere of technical and technological sciences, social sciences and humanities, and art. Study programmes realized at ATUSS should equip students with applicable skills and develop their professional or artistic knowledge and skills in practice. In its domain of activities, ATUSS also realizes short-term study programmes, organized for vocational training of persons with a high-school diploma, and may also realize life-long learning programmes, beyond the framework of the study programmes it is licensed for. Apart from the main activities, of particular importance to ATUSS are secondary activities of: research and development in other natural sciences, technical and technological sciences, research and development in humanities and social sciences, art and design, technical research and analysis, engineering and technical consulting, consulting in information technologies, consulting in regard to business, management and the like.

As ATUSS is a newly-established institution, it does not have a history of significant activities in the domain of international cooperation. What can be emphasized as an ongoing activity of significance to international cooperation at ATUSS is the fact that the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (hereinafter: ECHE) was successfully evaluated and awarded to the Department School of Electrical and Computer Engineering of Applied Studies in Belgrade. This Charter has been transferred to ATUSS as a transitory Charter. Similarly, some of the Departments of ATUSS have taken part in the realization of international projects with a focus on development in higher education, some of which were supported by the European Union, first through the Tempus programme, a later through Erasmus+ programme (projects for capacity building in higher education). Through such international projects, ATUSS has greatly improved its overall potential and capacity - accredited several new study programmes at both levels of studies, secured substantial material resources for improving and raising the quality of teaching, gained invaluable experience through cooperation with partner institutions on those projects, particularly with foreign institutions, and the like.

After the official establishment of ATUSS, all formal and legal conditions having been met, ATUSS immediately started working on activities related to setting the framework for the realization of international cooperation. In the past months, ATUSS has intensively been realizing activities with the aim of improving the atmosphere for internationalization and developing the shape and scope of international cooperation. The given activities currently being realized are focused on meeting the requirements necessary for the attainment of the European Charter for Higher Education. However, on a broader scale, these activities should contribute to overall development at ATUSS in the domain of international cooperation. Key activities having been or being realized with the given goal in mind are as follows:

- A team of staff has been designated to execute tasks pertaining to the process of preparing all international cooperation legal and planning documents of ATUSS, with the view to creating the conditions and preparing the required framework for the attainment of the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education. This team is currently a temporary organizational unit (department) of ATUSS in charge of international cooperation and related matters;
- The activities pertaining to the attainment of a transitory Charter for ATUSS were implemented, that is, successfully realized. The transitory Charter was transferred from the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering of Applied Studies in Belgrade to ATUSS, based on which the necessary registration of ATUSS was made in the registers of the corresponding agency of the European Commission. ATUSS was attributed Charter code RS BELGRAD25;
- General acts of ATUSS have been adopted, defining general rules for the realization of international mobility of students and staff. A general legal act has been prepared in that respect, with the focus on mobility - Rule Book on International Mobility;
- The above-mentioned Rule Book on Mobility and adjacent acts define the formal conditions and procedures pertaining to the realization of international mobility of students and staff at ATUSS. These acts stipulate the rules of submission of mobility applications, selection of candidates for mobility, documents necessary for international mobility, recognition of the period of mobility, recognition of ECTS credits and the grades received during mobility, and the like;
- Language policy of ATUSS has been defined, enabling the possibility of one part of studies at ATUSS being realized in the English language.

- Content of the web page of ATUSS has significantly been aligned with the requirements and standards necessary for the attainment of ATUSS, also for the purpose of better promotion of international cooperation.

## **2. OBJECTIVES**

Strategy objectives, actions, and bearers of activities will be, as is common practice, be described in detail in the Action Plan for the Realization of the Strategy of Internationalization 2021 – 2026. In this document, for each of the individual goals and accompanying activities, there will be information on the set of steps to be taken, anticipated outcomes, progress indicators, duration of activity, as well as information on the bearers of each of the listed activities.

### **2.1. LOCAL IMPROVEMENT OF INTERNATIONALIZATION**

- 2.1.1. Improvement of course content of study programmes in alignment with the global trends and development**
- 2.1.2. Improvement of language skills of students, teaching and non-teaching staff**
- 2.1.3. Increasing the number of courses realised in the English language**
- 2.1.4. Introduction of a study programme in the English language**
- 2.1.5. Introduction of a joint master programme in cooperation with a foreign partner (*Joint and/or double master degree*)**
- 2.1.6. Introduction of foreign mentorship in master studies**
- 2.1.7. Improvement of international cooperation in research, development, publishing and expert/consulting activities (secondary activities)**

### **2.2. INCREASE IN THE RATE OF INCOMING AND OUTGOING MOBILITY**

- 2.2.1. Legal and administrative preparation of mobility projects**
- 2.2.2. Strengthening the Organisational Unit for International Cooperation**
- 2.2.3. Improvement of services for foreign and local students who participate in mobility**
- 2.2.4. Strengthening ties with foreign institutions of higher education in the field of international mobility**
- 2.2.5. Participation in international mobility projects**
- 2.2.6. Promotion of ATUSS as a candidate for international mobility**
- 2.2.7. Designing databases of international mobility**

### **2.3. IMPROVEMENT OF COOPERATION WITH FOREIGN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION, THE ECONOMY AND OTHER PARTNER INSTITUTIONS**

**2.3.1. Connecting with relevant European and global programmes and relevant associations for the realisation of international projects**

**2.3.2. Extension of the base of potential partners for international projects among foreign institutions of higher education, the economy and other partner institutions**

**2.3.3. Increase in the number of international projects**

**2.3.4. Legal and administrative improvement of project realisation**

**2.3.5. Platform for monitoring realization of international projects**

**2.3.6. Increase in visibility of ATUSS as a participant in international projects**

## **2.4. COMMITMENT TO INTERNATIONALIZATION AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

**2.4.1. Functional, organizational and structural improvement of ATUSS**

**2.4.2. Establishing a corresponding normative framework in the sphere of international cooperation**

**2.4.3. Continuous improvement of linguistic competencies of students and staff**

**2.4.4. Providing reliable and sufficient own financial means**

**2.4.5. Establishing a mechanism for monitoring the process of internationalization and the development of international cooperation**

## **3. CHALLENGES**

In the domain of international cooperation, key limitations and challenges of ATUSS may currently be divided into three categories of factors:

**1. Functional, structural and organizational limitations:**

- the organizational unit (team for international cooperation) of ATUSS which should be the bearer of the majority of activities of internationalization and international cooperation has not been officially formed in a corresponding manner and does not have sufficient capacity, especially with respect to human resources;
- in relation to the above, due to the regime of prohibition of new employment, still active in the public sector of the Republic of Serbia, the process of ensuring sufficient human resources and forming a corresponding organizational unit, which would have sufficient capacity for the realization of intensified activities of international cooperation, has been extremely difficult to realize;
- An extremely relevant and major limiting factor limiting internationalization and international cooperation at ATUSS have been organization and functional difficulties which have come in the process of establishing ATUSS, that is, the status change of merging school of applied studies into one institution.

## 2. Limitations in primary activities:

- there are no study programmes realized in one of the world languages;
- part of study programmes offered in the English language at one of the Departments of ATUSS are not sufficient for the realization of international student mobility at a substantial level;
- mobility of students and staff has not yet been realized or has been realized in an inconsistent manner;
- there is no prominent institutional cooperation with institutions of higher education or other related organization abroad established with the aim of the internationalization of educational activities (realising student and staff mobility, mutually realising study programmes or creating complementary study programmes, etc.);
- although a significant number of the graduates of ATUSS pursue further professional careers abroad, ATUSS does not have a mechanism to stay in touch with its alumni and maintain relations with them.

## 3. Limitations in secondary activities:

- ATUSS is not accredited as an organization of research and development. It neither has the structure nor an organizational unit committed to science, research, development, innovation and similar activities;
- although activities of research, development and consulting have been registered as secondary activities of ATUSS, such activities are at an unsatisfactory level at the moment.

PRESIDENT OF THE TEACHING AND PROFESSIONAL COUNCIL OF ATUSS

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