Police networking – the way ahead
TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Preface ................................................................................................................................. 3
2. Mission .................................................................................................................................. 3
3. Current measures .................................................................................................................. 3
4. Vision ..................................................................................................................................... 5
5. Measures planned .................................................................................................................. 5
Imprint ......................................................................................................................................... 7
1. PREFACE

“Coming together is the beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.” (Henry Ford)

Rhineland-Palatinate Police University (HdP) considers itself to be an integral part of the police network in Europe. Its activities contribute to tightening and thus strengthening this network in order to meet the current requirements and future challenges of police work.

The present internationalization strategy bundles the international relations of the university and covers international connections in teaching and research as well as in everyday university life. It serves as a binding working and planning basis. The organisational units and students of the university were involved in the development of the strategy and received the document after its completion.

2. MISSION

In the age of globalisation and open borders in Europe, Rhineland-Palatinate Police University puts particular emphasis on international police cooperation. Especially in a federal state close to the border such as Rhineland-Palatinate, it is impossible to imagine everyday police work without it, because criminals do not stop at borders either. In order to prepare future police officers adequately for their work, foreign language skills of students, teachers, trainers and administrative staff are required as well as international networking and intercultural sensitivity. Rhineland-Palatinate Police University as the central location for police training and further education in Rhineland-Palatinate promotes communication in foreign languages and intercultural skills. In maintaining cross-border cooperation in police training and further education, Rhineland-Palatinate Police University follows the overall concept of Rhineland-Palatinate police force and the university’s development plan 2018-2022 and promotes networking.

3. CURRENT MEASURES

Rhineland-Palatinate Police University has concluded formal cooperation agreements with seven police training institutions in six European countries: École Nationale de Police Rouen-Oissel (France), Politieacademie, locatie Apeldoorn (Netherlands), École de Police de Liège (Belgium), Académie de Police de Savatan (Switzerland), Avon and Somerset Constabulary (Great Britain), Interkantonale Polizeischule Hitzkirch (Switzerland) and Police University College in Tampere (Finland). The selection of cooperation partners was initially based on geographical proximity or comparable training missions. There is close contact at a working level with neighbouring Luxembourg. Later, overseas partners such as the USA and Israel were
added in cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior of Rhineland-Palatinate. Participation in mobility programmes such as CEPOL (European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training) and Erasmus+, as recommended by the German Council of Science and Humanities, offers Rhineland-Palatinate Police University institutional forms of exchange as well as continuous professional development of teachers, trainers and administrative staff and the opportunity to strengthen its international profile.

Police-specific language classes (English and French) are offered within the Bachelor of Arts study course in policing. In Module 10 "Special fields of cooperation in policing and international and intercultural relations," not only intercultural knowledge is imparted, but students can also experience it in various forms: Students of Rhineland-Palatinate Police University can take part in an internship abroad or an international project week together with European police students and in the Europe days of the European Academy Otzenhausen with participants from the Greater Region Saar-Lor-Lux, Rhineland-Palatinate and Wallonia. The joint annual visit of students of the Police University and cadets of the Police School of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg to the memorial to the concentration camp in Hinzert is another important point. On the one hand, Rhineland-Palatinate Police University thus implements the suggestions of the German Council of Science and Humanities to promote the mobility of its students by providing time slots in the curriculum for stays abroad. On the other hand, it enables international experience both at home and at neighbouring educational institutions.

The Master of Arts study course "Public Administration - Police Management" at the German Police University (DHPol), the decentralised parts of which are taught at Rhineland-Palatinate Police University, also includes a Module 10 "European police cooperation and national and international police cooperation". After participating in the module, students will know the effects of increasing Europeanisation and internationalisation on police work and the importance of international police work as well as its legal and organisational framework, the structures of crime fighting at national and international level and examples of the structure of foreign police organisations. Students of the Master of Arts study course from Rhineland-Palatinate, Hesse and Saarland are actively involved in the international orientation of the module, which is coordinated by Rhineland-Palatinate. There are study trips abroad and visits to international police organisations (e.g. Europol).

The target group includes teachers, trainers and administrative staff and focuses on bi-national mobility activities in annual driving and safety training, shooting and operational training and language exchange. An annual seminar held at Rhineland-Palatinate Police University hosts experts from the TISPOL network (European Traffic Police Network) from several European countries and views on current traffic legal issues are exchanged with the aim of improving road safety and law enforcement throughout Europe. In addition, the university regularly organises or participates in organising international conferences, events and workshops (e.g. International Summit, Conference on the Appearance of Police Officers, E-learning Conference, Cybercrime Symposium, Colloquium on Police History, events on counter-terrorism and
major emergencies). The Rhineland-Palatinate Police University is also a partner in the German-French research project on organised parades and demonstrations in public spaces, which deals with planning and crisis management in times of high conflict potential in cities (OPMOPS). The project is funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF).

4. VISION

The Rhineland-Palatinate Police University has taken on the recommendations of the German Council of Science and Humanities and decided to give its strategy a European orientation. To this end, the university relies on its existing regional strategy and develops it further by expanding the network of its European partners. At the same time, relations to selected non-European partners are being maintained.

Rhineland-Palatinate Police University aims to strengthen the intercultural competence and language skills (especially police-specific English skills) of all target groups and to contribute to their personal development. Students, teachers, trainers and administrative staff need to be trained to deal with cross-border crime phenomena (e.g. international terrorism, organised crime). This is done through targeted cooperation with foreign police training institutions and in teaching and research. Students are taught specifically about working in international police organisations. In the target group of teachers, trainers and administrative staff, the university contributes to staff qualification and professional exchange through its international activities.

5. MEASURES PLANNED

In order to implement the above-mentioned objectives, the Rhineland-Palatinate Police University intends to nurture active relations with foreign partners (e.g. Finland, France, Luxembourg, Switzerland, USA, Israel) and to revive dormant partnerships with European partners in the medium term. This primarily serves to secure places for the international project week and the internship abroad, which are cornerstones of the university’s international activities. In the long term, the international network is to be expanded to include other European countries (e.g. Denmark, Italy, Austria or Spain). As recommended by the Council of Science and Humanities, the aim is also to further develop the existing basic police-specific language concept for teaching, research and administration, to expand the range of foreign-language courses in the field and to support the development of teaching skills in a foreign language.

In the future, selected students will be given the opportunity to carry out research projects together with students from foreign police training institutions as part of their bachelor thesis.
The university thus takes up a recommendation of the German Council of Science and Humanities to promote bi-national cooperation in teaching and research. E-learning formats are also suitable as a means of networking with foreign students. In order to make Europe a tangible experience for students as well as for teachers, trainers and administrative staff, the Rhineland-Palatinate Police University is also making long-term efforts to promote visits to international police organisations, trips abroad to police-related sites and longer stays abroad. In principle, access to the Rhineland-Palatinate police force is also open to applicants with a migration background and/or foreigners, which makes it possible to recruit more personnel in other European countries. The Rhineland-Palatinate Police University is considering the elaboration of an appropriate concept.

The University also supports international research cooperation in the target group of teachers. Future mobility measures will encourage the development of teaching formats on cross-border police phenomena (trafficking in drugs and human beings, money laundering, organised crime). Furthermore, driving and security instructors as well as shooting and operational instructors are very much interested in foreign training concepts, the use of digital technology in further education and an exchange of experience on the topics of "leadership and police management". Participation in Erasmus+ and CEPOL will therefore be extended, and participation in TISPOL will continue. In addition to encouraging its own staff to go abroad to attend further education seminars and international meetings and conferences, the Rhineland-Palatinate Police University also endeavours to accept foreign guest lecturers and to employ teaching staff with international experience in order to facilitate a fruitful exchange of experience and knowledge at the working level, which contributes to the further development of studies and teaching. Planning and implementation of further education seminars for foreign police officers will be examined. In order to promote the exchange of expertise, the Rhineland-Palatinate Police University increasingly organises international police meetings and conferences or participates in their organisation.
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