

INTERNATIONALIZATION STRATEGY OF MCBU

Manisa Celal Bayar University (MCBU) benefits from the multicultural heritage of the city of Manisa, the history of which dates back to 1450-1200s BC. MCBU is among the leading universities in the Aegean Region in terms of number of students. The university carries out on-site and cross-border internationalization activities together while considering qualitative and quantitative factors. Within the scope of internationalization activities, MCBU successfully carries out activities such as student and staff exchange, international student attraction, international research and project partnerships. As part of the Bologna process, the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) has been adopted throughout the University.

The document of *Europe 2020: A Strategy for Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth* highlights that young people face various challenges throughout their education and training and while entering into the labour market and reveals the need for both diversity in education and preparation of young people for the labour markets of different countries. In this regard, universities, which have established important international collaborations to prepare their students and graduates for international job markets, carry responsibilities. The workplace training model, which has been launched in our university, aims to meet this requirement and increase the employability of our students.

Erasmus Policy Statement of the MCBU adopts and promotes the European Union's agenda of modernization and internationalization in higher education. MCBU has committed itself to teaching within a high-quality, inspiring and inclusive academic culture and to achieving international excellence by putting forward internationally recognized research. In this respect, our internationalization strategy focuses on five key areas:

- 1. To educate students and researchers with the qualifications needed in the international arena***

One of the main aims of our university is to make our students gain entrepreneurial skills at international level. With the awareness that higher education is not only about teaching but also about preparing students for the labor market, MCBU aims at international cooperation that will support students in finding jobs in the international arena after graduation. In this regard, it is important to implement Erasmus+ student and academic staff exchange programs and workplace training program model at all levels with the EU countries and other partner countries.

2. To increase quality and functionality in higher education, research and knowledge transfer

In order to increase job opportunities for its graduates and to focus on practice as much as knowledge in research; expanding distance education networks and improving our international education facilities at all levels (bachelor, master and doctorate), are vital for MCBU. In all our programs, including distance and formal education, we encourage the creative and innovative use of information and communication technologies to improve teaching quality and to strengthen students' experience in their fields. By building strong connections with world cultures, students and staff are encouraged to make use of international mobility in order to promote knowledge transfer and improve language skills in order to contribute more to regional and international development.

In accordance with MCBU's internationalization strategy, to give international students an opportunity to study at our university, there is a quota allocated for international students in all graduate programs. In order to ensure the quality standards for international student recruitment at undergraduate level and to ensure sustainable quality in education, MCBU carries out its own International Student Examination.

Manisa Technocity, aiming to increase university-industry cooperation, provides infrastructure and superstructure opportunities for companies, researchers and academicians to develop technologies that will increase the competitiveness of our country in the international arena.

3. International recognition

MCBU adopts the vision of becoming an international university and International Relations Office serves as the gateway of the University to the world. International Relations Office serves the internationalization strategy while aiming to effectively implement international programs and strengthen international connections. Our university attaches importance to regional and national diversities in its international collaborations. MCBU aims to increase its visibility in international arena. To develop this strategy, to develop new collaborations, participation to various education fairs has been realized under the framework of the European Association for International Education (EAIE) and Study in Turkey. In terms of non-EU countries, as part of international promotion activities aiming at attracting full-time students to our

university, participation in various educational fairs in countries such as Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kosovo and Morocco has been realized. In addition, within the scope of Erasmus + and Mevlana Programs and bilateral cooperation agreements, a large number of academic/administrative delegations from foreign universities are welcomed in our university and efforts are being made to develop new collaborations and research projects.

4. *Exchange programs and partnerships*

MCBU's international mobility strategy is based on the principles of 'equality' and 'non-discrimination' in student and staff mobility. Each student and staff who fulfills the required conditions has the right to participate in international mobility within or outside the Erasmus+ program.

MCBU hosts international congresses in order to increase academic mobility and at the same time supports participation in international scientific events and invites speakers and researchers from abroad. MCBU attaches importance to increasing the number of international publications within the scope of internationalization of universities. For this purpose, academic staff is supported by increasing the number and variety of international academic databases and printed and electronic publications. In addition, in order to increase the students' international scientific and cultural activities and to ensure the international quality standards in the graduate and doctoral education process, our university aims to create joint diploma programs with international universities

5. *Cultural exchange within the scope of international mobility*

The strong communication brought about by globalization and the easy access to information around the world has increased curiosity of people and a desire to know and experience other cultures. In this respect, the Language Teaching Application and Research Center (DİL-MER) has been established within MCBU in order to introduce the Turkish culture and to teach Turkish language especially to the international students and the teaching staff. We foresee that DİL-MER will serve not only as a language teaching organization, but also as an organization that carries out activities through which our local and national cultural values can be personally experienced.