



Erasmus Policy Statement

Overall strategy

Created in 1949 shortly after the second World War, the College of Europe is the first institute of postgraduate studies specialized in European affairs. As envisaged by its founders, who included both leading intellectuals and politicians such as Salvador de Madariaga, Winston Churchill, Alcide de Gasperi and Paul-Henri Spaak, the College has as its mission the offering of postgraduate education, as well as carrying out scientific research and the organisation of conferences, symposia, training seminars and other work of a European interest, with the objective of contributing cooperation and integration in Europe.

The College continues to play the dual role of studying and shaping the EU, bringing together academics, practitioners and graduate students from all over Europe and beyond, engaging them in a mutually enriching process of transnational intellectual exchange. The College prepares graduates of its six fully accredited advanced “Masters after the Masters” programmes to take part successfully in the dynamic, Europeanized and internationalized polities, societies and economies of today, and to assume positions of responsibility in shaping these and the Europeanization process itself.

International exchange is embedded in the College’s mission and structure. Despite its small size, over fifty nationalities are represented in the student body. Similarly, the College recruits professors from across Europe. Most of the faculty are visiting professors, combining their College appointment with other academic or professional position in leading universities, public institutions, or the private sector. Its two campuses in Bruges and Natolin are strategically located in western and central Europe, with both campuses using the working languages of English and French. The Administrative Council consists of representatives from both EU and EFTA countries.

Many of its graduates occupy positions of leadership and contribute to the Europeanization process through their work in European institutions, national government administration, academic institutions and in the private sector. Over one thousand civil servants working for the European institutions graduated from the College of Europe.

The students at the College of Europe not only study together, but also live together on-campus in student residences throughout the academic year. This intense and unique socio-cultural experience remains one of the major attractions of studying at the College, and has given rise to many colourful traditions such as the ‘national weeks’, where groups of students from different countries represent and reflect on their national, cultural identities from a transnational perspective. The College has acquired a reputation for fostering a European spirit among its students.

However, the College is also, and foremost, an institute of higher learning. The College exposes students, whom it wishes to prepare for leadership functions in various Europe-related professional fields, to a variety of visions about what European cooperation and integration is aimed at and should look like. Research conducted at the College of Europe by the academic staff, which includes departmental professors, chairs and academic assistants, similarly aims to study and explore a variety of issues linked to European integration, through publications and the organization of conferences and research workshops. Furthermore, the Development Office underpins the College’s role as a center of excellence in European affairs, with its the European and worldwide reach of its numerous projects for academic co-operation, research and professional training.

Just as the dynamic European integration process that is its *raison d'être*, the College of Europe has changed over the years, and continues to anticipate and adapt to changing societal and geo-political circumstances. The expansion of the EU, and the widening and deepening of the integration process, is reflected in the College of Europe’s increased number of students, professors and study offering. In the early 1990s, in the wake of momentous changes in Central and Eastern Europe after the fall of Communism, Europe’s enlargement was anticipated by creating a new European Interdisciplinary study programme designed to bring together graduates from all parts of Europe to help build a common future after the end of the Cold War. This initiative culminated in the creation of a second campus in Natolin, Poland, with the support of the Polish government and the European Commission.

In September 2017, the College of Europe launched a new and innovative Joint Master of Arts in Transatlantic Affairs together with the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy of Tufts University. Both institutions agree that in the 21st century the United States and the European Union face complex challenges which they best address in common and are convinced that closer cooperation will bring benefits to both academic institutions and their broader constituencies, as complementary institutions with an interest in forging transatlantic leaders. This cooperation may furthermore include research projects and staff exchanges, joint



College of Europe
Collège d'Europe

Brugge



Natolin

academic events, as well as executive education.

The College of Europe furthermore collaborates with the European University Institute, including through the organization of a yearly joint academic conference. The College of Europe has also engaged in partnerships with various European organizations to apply for grants under various European funding programmes, as well as other type of tenders providing technical assistance in the field of European Affairs. Through its Development Office the College has, inter alia, carried out academic and technical assistance programmes in selected ACP countries, the Russian Federation and Azerbaijan.

On a more general level, the College's unique formula makes it a platform for transnational intellectual exchange for academics and graduates from a variety of institutional backgrounds. In particular, a great number of faculty members are full-time academics at other universities across Europe and beyond, and similarly the students have all obtained their initial qualifications at other universities as the College exclusively offers postgraduate education. This means that the College of Europe strives to embody the spirit and objectives of the Erasmus programme *par excellence*.