

Erasmus programme receives award for the second time in 2008

The EU's Erasmus Programme, which promotes student and staff exchanges in higher education, has been awarded the "Chemical Engineering Medal" from the University of Valladolid, Spain. The award, handed over on 27 June 2008, is a recognition of the programme's contribution to academic and professional performance in chemical engineering, a section of Valladolid's university in which almost 80 % of students participate in an Erasmus exchange. This is already the second award Erasmus received in Spain this year.

The President of the Chemical Engineering Section at the University of Valladolid, Prof. Maria José Cocero Alonso, handed out the "Chemical Engineering Medal" to the EU's Erasmus programme at the 2008 graduation ceremony on 27 June 2008.

"I am deeply honoured that the Erasmus Programme, undoubtedly one of the best known EU programmes, has been awarded with the Chemical Engineering Medal of the University of Valladolid", declared Ján Figel', European Commissioner in charge of Education, Training, Culture and Youth. "The medal recognises the particular value the Erasmus Programme can add to a degree in higher education. I am particularly pleased since the University of Valladolid has been a very active partner in Erasmus since the beginning of the programme."

According to the University of Valladolid, **student and staff mobility** has always been considered as one of the most relevant aspects in its undergraduate and graduate training. In recent years, almost 80 % of its chemical engineering students spent at least one semester at one of the university's 27 partner universities across Europe under an Erasmus exchange agreement.

The Erasmus programme is a sub-programme of the EU's global programme in the area of education and training, the *Lifelong Learning Programme* (LLP). Erasmus has an overall budget of approximately **€ 3.1 billion for the period 2007-2013**, and aims at enhancing the quality and reinforcing the European dimension of higher education as well as at increasing student and staff mobility.

Currently, more than 3,100 higher education institutions in 31 countries in Europe participate in the Erasmus programme, which has so far supported **1.7 million students**.

Founded in the early 13th century, the **University of Valladolid is Spain's oldest university** and therefore the forerunner of many other prestigious universities in the country. The university has about 3,500 staff with campuses in four cities, enabling over 30,000 students to choose from more than 100 study programmes, 17 postgraduate programmes and 50 Master's programmes. Since the beginning of the Erasmus Programme, the University of Valladolid has been an active partner and the **leading European university in the mobility of teaching staff under Erasmus**. More than 180 lecturers and 800 students from the university move abroad and at the same time more than 850 European students come to study in Valladolid, which holds the **number 20 spot of the top 100 European universities under Erasmus**.

This is already the second award for Erasmus in 2008: in May, the programme received the "Prize for Excellence in integrating young people into the workforce" from the NoviaSalcedo Foundation of Bilbao, Spain.

To find out more:

European Commission: The Erasmus Programme:

http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/erasmus/index_en.html

University of Valladolid:

<http://www.universityofvalladolid.uva.es/>