The international Master of Science in Cartography – New perspectives due to Erasmus+

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Abstract
In 2011 the international Master of Science in Cartography (Cartography M.Sc.) has been launched. The program is a joint cooperation of the two universities in Germany Technische Universität München (TUM) and Technische Universität Dresden (TUD) and the Vienna University of Technology (TUW) in Austria. The program focuses on a broad education in cartography and geoinformatics and is completely taught in English. Target students are applicants from all over the world with an above-average Bachelor degree or its equivalent in science or engineering, e.g., cartography, geography, geodesy or computer science. The full-time Master program takes four semesters (two years) and awards a total of 120 ECTS. Students obtain 30 ECTS in each semester/respectively at each university plus 30 ECTS for their Master's thesis. The qualification finally awarded to the students is the joint degree "Master of Science (M.Sc.) in Cartography" issued by all cooperating universities together. After four successful years, the Cartography M.Sc. has been selected for Erasmus+ by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency of the European Union. One section of the Erasmus+ program is the "Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree", which supports excellent international Master courses in Europe. The "Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree" aims to foster quality enhancements, innovation, excellence and internationalization in higher education institutions. The five-year grant includes a preparatory year (starting mid of October 2014), followed by three student intakes from 2015 until 2018. During this time, 38 highly remunerated scholarships might be awarded to the best students. Due to participation in the "Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree" program, the attractiveness of the Cartography M.Sc. will be raised further to get the best cartography students. The Master course enables a unique curriculum and improves the level of competences and skills of Master graduates and their employability. Finally, the selection allows also the University of Twente of the Netherlands to join in the consortium as the fourth equal partner within the awarded joint degree. This paper shares the experiences gained from the first 4 years since the Cartography M.Sc. was introduced until the establishment of the Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree program. Furthermore program features, objectives and the sustainability concept will be introduced as well as new perspectives for the Cartography M.Sc. under the Erasmus+ flag will be highlighted.