

# Finalizing a milestone with ERACOL

Rotterdam, the Netherlands – 28 October, 2013

**As one door closes another one opens. The finalization of the successful EU funded programme ERACOL (Erasmus-Colombus) will not mean the end of it. Due to engaged sustainability efforts, this project will hopefully allow us to reap the fruits of its success during the many years to come.**

Over the three year period ERACOL successfully provided 137 scholarships for academic exchanges in medicine and health sciences between Europe and Latin America. The mobility programme provided scholarship opportunities on undergraduate, Master's, doctorate and post-doctorate level, as well as staff mobility that focused mainly on teacher-training and faculty building between the various institutions. The ERACOL consortium involved six universities in Colombia, Costa Rica, and Panama as well as five universities in the Netherlands, Belgium, Italy, Spain and Sweden.

During the course of the ERACOL project, consortium partners and alumni have indicated that their experiences with this collaboration have been very prosperous. The mobility groups have been able to produce reports and publications in international journals resulting from their developments during the exchanges. The focus on research in (public) health and medicine has also resulted in a strong improvement of knowledge, teaching and research skills in the medical and health sciences for all countries involved.

ERACOL resulted into a sustainable strategy of cooperation. Various research collaborations remained with the aim to deal with health problems in the countries involved as well as other neighbouring countries. New research projects are continuously been set-up in the partner universities, indicating a strengthened collaboration between universities involved through the mobility programme.

Sustainability of ERACOL and its repercussions is now of utmost importance. Consortium partners have succeeded in proactively setting up sustainable research projects and partnerships, which in turn constructively influences higher education in medicine and health sciences. To contribute to further sustainability of ERACOL, additional funding opportunities are always being sought.

**ERACOL successfully contributed to mutual enrichment and greater understanding between the people of the European Union and Latin America.**



*“ERACOL’s overriding objective was to respond to the extensive need for programmes to train young scientists – especially in view of the rapidly evolving undertakings in the field of life sciences. We feel that ERACOL has successfully bridged that gap. It was a privilege to be involved in just such an inspiring programme.” – Prof. Hofman*

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#### **About ERACOL**

This programme provided a unique opportunity to study in Europe or Latin America with a time frame varying from 1 to 34 months. ERACOL provided scholarships for undergraduate and master's students, doctorate or postdoctorate students, and academic staff. These scholarships included tuition fees (where applicable), a subsistence allowance, travel costs, and insurance.

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#### **About Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window**

The Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window (EM ECW) is a cooperation and mobility scheme in the area of higher education cooperation launched by Europe Aid Cooperation Office and implemented by the Executive Agency Education, Audiovisual and Culture. The EM ECW objective is to achieve better understanding and mutual enrichment between the European Union and third countries co-operation in the field of higher education through promoting the exchange of persons, knowledge and skills at higher education level. This will be achieved through the promotion of partnerships and institutional cooperation exchanges between European Higher Education Institutions and Third Country institutions and a mobility scheme addressing student and academic exchanges.

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#### **About Netherlands Institute for Health Sciences – NIHES**

The Netherlands Institute for Health Sciences (NIHES) is a leading centre for quantitative research and postgraduate education in health sciences. NIHES has a single clear focus: to provide world-class research education in Health Sciences. In our Master of Science programmes and short courses, we provide graduate and postgraduate research training in quantitative medicine and the health sciences. We provide the following core disciplines – Epidemiology, Clinical Epidemiology, Genetic Epidemiology, Public Health.

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#### **Contacts**

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#### **ERACOL Members of the Partnership**

##### **Latin America**

Universidad del Rosario, Colombia  
Universidad del Cauca, Colombia  
Universidad Autónoma de Centro América, Costa Rica  
Universidad de Costa Rica, Costa Rica  
Universidad de Panamá, Panamá  
Universidad Latina de Panamá, Panamá

##### **Europe**

Erasmus University Medical Center Rotterdam (Erasmus MC), the Netherlands  
Karolinska Institutet, Sweden  
Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium  
Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Spain  
University of Torino, Italy

##### **ERACOL Associates**

Agència de Salut Pública de Barcelona (ASPB), Barcelona, Spain  
Centre de Recerca en Epidemiologia Ambiental (CREAL), Barcelona, Spain  
Colciencias, Administrative Department of Science, Technology and Innovation, Bogotá, Colombia  
Department of Health Policy and Management, Erasmus MC, Rotterdam, the Netherlands  
Embajada de Panamá, Bruxelles, Belgique  
Embassy of Costa Rica, Oslo, Norway  
Embassy of Panamá, Stockholm, Sweden  
Fundación Gabriel Lewis Galindo, Panamá, Panamá  
GGD Rotterdam-Rijnmond, Rotterdam, the Netherlands  
Global International Studies, Bogotá, Colombia  
Panamerican Health Organization  
Royal Netherlands Embassy in Bogotá, Colombia  
Royal Netherlands Embassy in Panamá, Panamá  
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