

Incontro EFSA 17 luglio 2014 ore 10.30

Good morning to all of you.

Dear Professor Url, first of all welcome to Italy and welcome to Parma.

As Rector of the University of Parma, it is my pleasure to be here today to meet you and lay the foundations for a fruitful scientific and educational cooperation between the University of Parma and the renowned European Food Safety Agency.

We all appreciated your initial statements to the local press, expressing your wish to promote further integration between EFSA and this city. The new management team and I particularly welcome your desire to work more closely with this region, where EFSA was established ten years ago.

We ourselves expressed the very same intention after taking office a few months ago and we have started along this route of opening ourselves up and building ties with our local area.

The University of Parma is a very old and prestigious academic institution, that goes back to the year one thousand.

However, after taking office, the completely new team, having no connection to the past, realised that the University had become very isolated, lacking connections to local businesses, institutions and the community. Even today's meeting with EFSA is something new, that fits into this new direction.

We are totally convinced that forming synergistic working relationships between industry, external institutions and academia can benefit not only those involved but also the local community and our students. It is this spirit of mutual cooperation that the University staff bring to this inaugural meeting with the representatives from EFSA.

I don't want to bore anybody with a long presentation about the University of Parma.

I am only going to give a general outline of our University and what it means, also in economic terms, for a small town like Parma, having about two hundred thousand people.

We have seventy-seven degree courses, attended by over twenty-five thousand students, divided into nine subject areas:

Food and Agriculture

Economics

Pharmacy

Law and Social Studies

Engineering and Architecture

Medicine and Surgery

Veterinary Medicine

Mathematical, Physical and Natural Sciences

Arts and Humanities

We have about one thousand teaching staff (full, associate and aggregate professors) and about the same number of technical and administrative staff.

The teaching staff cover some eighteen departments that are responsible for education and research.

As well as the departments, we also have twenty-three centres primarily dedicated to research: five in the area of health, five in the area of engineering and nanotechnologies, five in the area of safety (including food safety), three in the area of education, two in the area of arts and one in the area of international cooperation with developing countries.

In addition to the seventy-seven degree courses, the University of Parma operates forty-four Postgraduate Schools, forty Master's degrees and twenty Research Doctorates – PhD Courses and a number of specialization courses on various subjects.

Between the undergraduate and postgraduate courses we have around thirty thousand students at the University of Parma.

With regard to scientific activity, every year, the total number of research products is more than two thousand and, currently, we have one hundred and eighty five international cooperation agreements.

With regard to the financial aspect, I will only give you two figures: the University's balance sheet amounts to about two hundred and fifty million euro a year, and its properties consist of almost three hundred thousand square metres of habitable surface.

Before I bring my speech to a close, I would like to point out that only some of the new rectorate staff are present, as others were unable to take part because of prior engagements that couldn't be postponed.

The programme for this event includes brief presentations by:

Professor Francesca Zanella, pro-rector for general affairs and internationalization of the University

Professor Furio Brighenti, pro-rector for research and the library and museum system

Professor Maria Cristina Ossiprandi, pro-rector for education and student services

Professor Carlo Quintelli, pro-rector for buildings and infrastructures

Professor Erasmo Neviani, delegate for Expo 2015

Professor Michele Guerra, delegate for University, culture and the region.

I would like to end my brief presentation thanking EFSA again for this valuable opportunity to get to know each other.