

Erasmus Policy Statement (EPS)

Erasmus activities included in our EPS

Erasmus Key Action 1 (KA1) - Learning mobility:

The mobility of higher education students and staff

Erasmus Key Action 2 (KA2) - Cooperation among organisations and institutions:

Partnerships for Cooperation and exchanges of practices

Partnerships for Excellence – European Universities

Partnerships for Excellence - Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees

Partnerships for Innovation

Strategy

Our Erasmus Policy Statement reflects how we intend to implement Erasmus after the award of the ECHE.

What would we like to achieve by participating in the Erasmus Programme? How does our participation in the Erasmus Programme fit into our institutional internationalisation and modernisation strategy?

The strategy of internationalization of ŠKODA AUTO University (hereinafter ŠAVŠ) is defined in its "Long-term Plan for Educational, Research, Scientific, Development and Innovative and Other Creative Activities of ŠKODA AUTO University". This Strategic plan was developed for the period of 2016 – 2020 and will be followed by the ŠAVŠ strategy for the next period of 2021 – 2025. This Long-term Plan is done in accordance with Act No. 111/1998 Coll., on Higher Education Institutions, as amended; with the Strategic Plan for the Scholarly, Scientific, Research, Development, Innovation, Artistic and Other Creative Activities of Higher Education Institutions for 2016-2020 (2021 -2025 respectively) of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in compliance with the plan of educational, research, scientific and development and innovative, creative and other activities for higher education institutions published by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic. At the same time, the long-term plan of the ŠAVŠ reflects the strategy of its founder, ŠKODA AUTO Company, the so-called Strategy 2025 and, finally, with relevant strategic documents of the EU on the development of higher education. It is the continuity of the strategic objectives of the university with the strategic development of the founder which defines precisely the relevance of higher education study programmes, research activities and other professional activities that are developed and implemented by ŠKODA AUTO University.

In the past, the strong strategic emphasis of ŠKODA AUTO University on internationalization through participation in Erasmus+ and other internationalization initiatives has been recognized for excellence nationally as well as internationally. The university was awarded Medal of the Minister of Education, Youth and Sports for development of higher education in the Czech Republic (2009), was granted full and unconditional accreditation by Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP, 2014), received the Seal of Quality from The Centre for International Cooperation in Education (DZS) (in 2016), lately it was recognized by the Czech-Bavarian Higher Education Agency as best practice for its joint international teaching initiative together with OTH Regensburg (in 2019). Repeatedly, ŠKODA AUTO University is reported among top national institutions for its systematic focus on international study exchange and internships, whereas a large proportion of graduates would have spent at least a semester abroad during their studies.

The main objective of the strategy of internationalisation of ŠAVŠ is the dynamic development of a wide range of international activities. ŠKODA AUTO University endeavours constantly to deepen a well-functioning network of cooperating partner institutions within and outside the European Union. When selecting partner universities within the EU, ŠAVŠ focuses on establishing cooperation with such partners who, besides the similarities in their study programmes, may provide access to a developed network of industry contacts focusing primarily on the automotive sector, other manufacturing companies, financial institutions and the businesses of tertiary or quaternary sphere. The same principle of partner seeking and establishing well-grounded international cooperation applies also to partners outside the European Union with strong presence of ŠKODA AUTO and other companies belonging to the VW Group.

Our choice of international partners is based on the following three criteria: 1) Cooperating higher education institutions (HEIs) must have an established record of student focus, have clearly outlined policies and procedures for student development, offer student academic services, assistance in providing student housing and catering. The HEIs must apply the same policy in terms of non-discrimination, transparent procedures, equal opportunities for students, academic and non-academic staff, among others. 2) Our HEI partners shall focus on similar areas of expertise as outlined in their offered degree programmes, preferably programmes should be offered for both bachelor and master degree. 3) Our HEI partners should declare their strategic interest in mutually beneficial cooperation not only in student exchange. ŠKODA AUTO University is especially interested in working partnerships with a potential for teachers' and staff exchange, short-term intensive programs, common research agenda and common international research projects, and potential for the future establishment of double-degree or joint-degree programs. An example of such cooperation is our partnership with the Upper Austria University of Applied Sciences in Steyr, Austria; Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences, Finland or OTH Regensburg, Germany. The partnership started with student and teaching staff exchange, a few years later the schools had joint research and education projects (e.g. Erasmus+ KA2 "Green Solutions for Business and Industry"), double degree programs, shared accredited subject (a pilot project of blended mobility) and collaborate frequently on short term intensive programs and at present have been working on virtual learning opportunities within the plan of blended mobility which shall enable more participants to study within the Erasmus+ programme in the future.

The corporate (non HEI) partners are expected to be leaders in the automotive industry, including suppliers and distributors. Such corporate partnerships shall demonstrate a potential to progress in cooperation arrangements beyond student placements such as common research projects and agenda. An example of successful partnerships is Bentley, Crewe, the UK, or Porsche, Ingolstadt, Germany.

Foreign experience develops the language and intercultural competences of students and staff of ŠKODA AUTO University, which are the key issues for the current and future development of international mobility, the implementation of international projects and partnerships. At the same time, the development of global competences of academic staff leads to the fulfilment of the next objective of the internationalisation strategy, which is the preparation and continuous development of study programmes in the English language.

In terms of geographical coverage for establishing partnerships both in academia and in the industry, the emphasis is on countries with a well-developed automotive industry. So far, we have focused namely on Germany, UK, Austria, France, Slovakia, Finland and Spain in the EU-affiliated countries and on China and India outside of the EU. In the future, the geographical coverage shall expand by adding relevant partners fulfilling other selection criteria which will be located in other major European automotive markets (Italy, Belgium, and the Netherlands) as well as outside of the European Union (Russia).

Our most important objectives for staff and students are to enhance European and international mind-set, contribute to professional as well as individual career development, and to understand business realities in a global context. For bachelor students, mobility is primarily study exchange and internships. For master students, it is primarily study exchange. For teaching staff, the school aims at supporting the exchange of ideas and cross-implementation of novel teaching methods. The current trend and strategic effort is also in establishing teams' collaborating in virtual, blended learning area. For non-teaching staff, the school aims at the exchange of best practice in academic management.

In the upcoming period, our aim is to develop another bachelor and master double degree programme in cooperation with other partners, e.g. HTW Dresden, Germany. Further multilateral degrees will be developed with partners with a proven record of successful exchange and cooperation. Virtual collaboration will be further extended in addition to physical exchange arrangements.

The challenge and intention for ŠKODA AUTO University for the following programming period is also its participation in projects aimed at strengthening the links between teaching, research and innovation, finding a partner for a joint (master's) degree, being involved in the consortium of European universities, and developing the virtual environment of blended mobility concept.

The Erasmus actions we would like to take part in and this is explanation how they will be implemented in practice at our institution. Our institution's participation in these actions will contribute to achieving the objectives of our institutional strategy.

ŠKODA AUTO University has been cooperating for a long time with partner HEIs and businesses in Europe and Asia. Currently it has signed cooperation agreements with more than 50 universities and cooperates with 30 international companies. Study programmes at ŠKODA AUTO University are practically oriented. An integral part of the bachelor's degree is the one-semester obligatory internship, which students can complete in both domestic and foreign companies. In the upcoming programme period, ŠKODA AUTO University will further develop cooperation with all active partners on a reciprocal basis, actively seek new, motivated partners who share similar philosophy and strategy in the field of internationalization and are ready for joint activities and projects.

In order to implement the internationalisation strategy, ŠKODA AUTO University is involved in international projects with support from the Erasmus+ programme as well as other sources of funding. In order to implement the internationalisation strategy, ŠKODA AUTO University is involved in international projects with support from the Erasmus+ programme as well as other sources of funding. All participants in planned mobilities or other activities go through a selection procedure conducted by the International Office in cooperation with the Study Affairs Department and individual academic departments' management, subject to the rector's approval. Transparent selection procedures with publicly announced selection practices and criteria have been practiced for a long time. For students, participation in Erasmus+ initiatives is recognized on their transcript of records (credit transfer). For academic as well as non-academic staff, participation in Erasmus+ activities is recognized in their annual performance assessment as part of their regular workload. For all participants, either students or staff, sharing and dissemination of best practices and international experience harvested through Erasmus+ initiatives is actively practised and encouraged.

With the support of Erasmus+ plus, ŠKODA AUTO University is involved and will continue to participate in the following activities:

1) Mobility of students and staff of HEIs – ŠKODA AUTO University strongly supports its students and staff in international mobility. Although the current trend of student mobility is slightly declining, at ŠKODA AUTO University the interest of our students in foreign studies or internship remains the same or is increasing. ŠKODA AUTO University informs students in detail about the preparation and course of mobility, so there would be no cancellations or worries for the fear that the studies or internship are not manageable. At the same time, ŠKODA AUTO University applies a system of automatic recognition of subjects acquired abroad (credit and course transfer), which motivates students to decide for their

foreign experience, since the students are able to plan their studies in advance and do not have to prolong their study due to a foreign mobility.

Since 2013, ŠKODA AUTO University has expanded student mobility with double degree programs, which are the result of cooperation with the University of Applied Sciences Upper Austria, Steyr and Seinajoki University of Applied Sciences, Finland. The bachelor's double and master's degree programmes are and will continue to be designed for all students of the Economics and Management study programme. For the upcoming period, ŠKODA AUTO University prepares a new double degree program with Dresden University of Applied Sciences (HTW Dresden), which will be designed for all students of the bachelor's degree programme Economics and Management. Further development of double degree programmes in all study programmes and related activities are aimed at the participation of ŠKODA AUTO University in the project of European Universities.

2) Cooperation among organisations and institutions is also very intensive at the ŠKODA AUTO University. The university was involved in the KA2 project aimed at finding Green Solutions in the Automotive Industry. The cooperation of ŠKODA AUTO University with European partners has led not only to common professional articles and publications, but also to other international projects. Thanks to this project and its results, ŠKODA AUTO University staff created a shared block teaching, which takes place one week in the Czech Republic and one week in Germany. In the future, a project of further shared learning is being prepared using a virtual environment, thus enabling virtual mobility and the development of joint study initiatives.

ŠKODA AUTO University is currently a partner of the Joint Enterprise University Learning Strategic Partnership Project (KA2), aimed at establishing and developing cooperation between universities and the business sphere. Based on the experience gained from business practice, HEIs will be able to innovate their study programmes and subjects, implement new forms of teaching / learning and reflect on the needs of businesses with respect to Industry 4.0 requirements.

Current activities financed from sources other than Erasmus+, which continue to be maintained and developed include:

Long-term joint project with the University of Applied Sciences Münster, a project supported by the Der Deutsch-Tschechische Zukunftsfonds, primarily focused on the development of languages and intercultural competences.

The second successful project is the joint teaching with the Ostbayerische Technische Hochschule Regensburg, whose theme are innovative trends in the management of international supply chains. This method of teaching enables students to gain valuable experience from working in international teams, and to gain a lot of theoretical and practical knowledge from professional lectures and excursions to BMW Regensburg and ŠKODA AUTO.

The scholarship programme for non-EU studies and internship supported by the management of ŠKODA AUTO University is also an integral part of the international strategy. Students are supported through own university resources to venture for exchange studies and internships to China, India, Russian Federation or the United States. Specific Erasmus+ grants are being currently utilized to promote more intensive exchange, intercultural, educational, scientific and social, with partner countries such as Israel, Bosnia and Hercegovina and the Russian Federation.

Another grant was gained in 2020 from the EEA Education programme for a project related to digitalisation. In this area, ŠKODA AUTO University will continue to pursue further activities related to new trends and requirements of the 21st century.

In addition to Erasmus+, ŠKODA AUTO University also focuses on other international projects and programmes supporting the current strategy for internationalisation and deepening knowledge and skills, the development of science and research, such as Horizon 2020.

In the future programme period, ŠKODA AUTO University will continue to endeavour for active participation in KA2 projects, as in previous years. In the 2020 call, ŠKODA AUTO University is part of several grant applications, both as coordinator and project partner.

ŠKODA AUTO University plans to continue with the KA1, mobility of students and staff within the programme and partners' countries. Thanks to foreign mobility, ŠKODA AUTO University offers its students not only the opportunity to gain invaluable experience from foreign companies and partner universities, but also the chance to develop their language skills, experience from work in international teams, and gaining intercultural competences. In the area of staff mobility, the key task is to establish the new and to consolidate the existing contacts with partner universities, which brings new possibilities for participation in other international, scientific and research projects.

The continuation of student and employee mobility fully coincides with the strategy of internationalization of ŠKODA AUTO University and is in line with the objectives of the strategy of internationalization of higher education in the Czech Republic.

In the next period, ŠKODA AUTO University would like to continue with its participation in KA2 activities of the Strategic Partnership. In the projects, ŠKODA AUTO University will focus primarily on projects aimed at implementing innovative practices and implementing new teaching approaches in the field of higher education.

Thanks to the extensive experience gained from the previous programming period, ŠKODA AUTO University would like to participate and contribute to the success of the project of European Universities.

What is the envisaged impact of our participation in the Erasmus+ Programme on our institution?

ŠKODA AUTO University plans its participation in different actions of the programme. The school, as already addressed, devised a strategic plan for the internationalization for the period 2021-2025, following the strategy of its founder ŠKODA AUTO, i.e. Strategy 2025. The actual international plan has been updated annually and submitted to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. ŠKODA AUTO University will further seek support in the expansion of innovative solutions and the exchange of best practices in the field of strategic partnerships. Partnerships, exchange arrangements, teaching and project initiatives will be permanently assessed to maintain high educational standards in line with quality management procedures.

The expected timeline for the new period of Erasmus+ programme:

2021

ŠKODA AUTO University applies for the KA 103 and KA 107 grant. The plan is to employ about 80 programme participants; 60 students in mobility for study and internship and 20 employees in mobility for training and teaching. Furthermore, an application for support in the mobility project between programme and partner countries (KA107) is planned.

2022

Following the successful project under the EEA and Norway Funds, ŠKODA AUTO University plans to apply for a grant in the field of strategic partnerships, in particular to expand cooperation and exchange knowledge. ŠKODA AUTO University will seek accreditation of a Double Degree programme with the Dresden University of Applied Sciences, which will be followed up by an application for a joint master's degree in Erasmus Mundus, according to its internationalisation plan. With the plan to increase the number of enrolled students in both bachelor's and master's degree programmes, the number of Erasmus+ students will increase. ŠKODA AUTO University applies for financial support in KA 103 and KA 107 with the plan to fill the capacity of 82 programme participants: 62 students in mobility study and internship and 20 employees in mobility training and teaching.

2023

ŠKODA AUTO University builds on the successful inclusion in the Student Card initiative and the Erasmus Without Papers programme and applies for participation in the Project of European Universities. ŠKODA AUTO University develops a concept of blended mobility with cooperation and involvement of its key Erasmus+ partner institutions to enable more students to participate in the programme and conducts pilot testing. ŠKODA AUTO University applies for financial support in KA 103 and KA 107; the plan is for 85 participants; 63 students in mobility study and al internship and 22 employees in mobility training and teaching.

2024

ŠKODA AUTO University is also involved in the Strategic Partnership under Capacity Building and Enhancing innovative practices used in the partner institution. ŠKODA AUTO University applies for financial support in KA 103 and KA 107. It plans to increase the number of participants to 90; 66 students in mobility study internship and 24 employees in mobility training and teaching. Besides the long-term physical mobility, ŠKODA AUTO University will implement the concept of blended mobility to enable more students to participate in the programme. The first half of participation in the new Erasmus+ programme is followed by evaluation and preparation of further steps for 2024 - 2027. ŠKODA AUTO University responds on the results of its participation in the KA1 and KA2, monitors and reflects on new trends and innovations within the HEIs education as well as international programmes. Based on the analyses, the school adapts its approach to international cooperation so that it accommodates the demands of internalization and Erasmus + programme, all in compliance with the university strategy.