

In the following sections of the application form, you will need to explain how your institution will fulfil the ECHE principles if the Charter is awarded. You are encouraged to consult the [ECHE Guidelines](#) for support in completing this application.

Please note that your Erasmus+ National Agency will monitor your Erasmus Policy Statement and your answers to the questions given in the application. The Erasmus+ National Agency reserves the right to request more information on your activities and propose supplementary measures, for the purposes of monitoring and implementing the Charter principles by your institution.

## 1. ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT (EPS)

### 1.1 Erasmus activities included in your EPS

In this section, you need to tick the Erasmus activities covered by your Erasmus Policy Statement. Please select those activities that your HEI intends to implement during the entire duration of the Programme.

#### 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

#### Erasmus Key Action 3 (KA3):

Erasmus Key Action 3 (KA3) - Support to policy development and cooperation:

### 1.2 Erasmus Policy statement (EPS): your strategy

Your Erasmus Policy Statement should reflect how you intended to implement Erasmus after the award of the ECHE. Should you wish to add additional activities in the future, you will need to amend your Erasmus Policy Statement and inform your Erasmus National Agency.

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

(Please reflect on the objectives of your participation. Please explain how you expect the participation in Erasmus to contribute towards modernising your institution, as well as on the

goal of building a European Education Area<sup>1</sup> and explain the policy objectives you intend to pursue).

Original language (and translation into EN, FR or DE if the EPS is not in one of these languages)

The University of Economics, Prague (VSE) is the biggest public university of economics in the Czech Republic. Currently, there are more than 13000 students studying at VSE and its courses are taught and supervised by more than 600 qualified academics and business experts. Internationalization is one of the key long-term strategic priorities of VSE development. Strategic objectives that should lead to further internationalization and modernisation include increasing the number of students who enrol in mobility programmes, increasing the number of applicants and students who are enrolled in English-taught study programmes and supporting active participation of academic staff in international mobility and common research/cooperation projects. Strong accent is put on expansion of double and joint degree programmes.

Internationalization strategy of VSE is based on cooperation with high quality partner universities all around the world. VSE is a member of numerous international organizations and networks, such as the international strategic alliance CEMS (Global Alliance in Management Education), PIM (Partnership in International Management) or PRME Initiative (Principles for Responsible Management Education – United Nations supported platform whose aim is to raise the profile of sustainability in business and management universities). The university has active bilateral agreements with close to 240 universities worldwide. Erasmus programme has provided a solid base for building strong relations with various European partners (VSE has currently 170 partner universities in Europe). However, there is also significant amount of overseas bilateral agreements. All agreements are carefully reviewed not only during the preparatory phase but also on regular basis during the cooperation to ensure high quality study experience compatible with home programme to all outgoing and incoming students. VSE will continue the trend of deepening cooperation with existing and well-established partners and build new partnerships with prestigious business schools around the world.

Over years VSE approach has shifted from sending abroad limited group of the best students to more inclusive approach of providing the valuable international experience to about 1000 students (from all study levels and faculties) each year. About the same amount of international students comes to VSE turning the university environment to very multicultural and inspiring. To create conditions for such a development, high priority is placed on increasing offer of English taught courses both by local and visiting professors to mixed groups of Czech and international students. They can get to experience a different teaching and learning approach even while staying at home.

Nevertheless, spending at least one semester abroad should become a norm and all VSE graduates should be given an opportunity to experience learning and working in multicultural environment which will help them develop higher self-confidence, stronger identity as a European citizen and openness to other cultures.

VSE's efforts to deepen digitalization and simplification of its processes started many years ago. Recent development provided universities and their students with sudden need to focus on online learning experience and this transition showed an importance of further deepening current trends of going paperless. VSE will closely review its students' experience with online learning during Spring 2020 and will reflect it in exploring new types of mobilities (such as virtual/blended and short-term) during the upcoming Erasmus+ programme period.

VSE has already implemented Erasmus+ rules of supporting students with special needs and students from socio-economically disadvantaged background to all mobilities and provides special funding also to students selected for exchanges to overseas partners. It will further focus on promoting mobilities among these groups of students by individual advising and detailed information sessions about specific possibilities offered by partner universities.

VSE is using the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) since 2006 and a full recognition of the outcomes of learning periods abroad is guaranteed to all VSE students who study abroad.

Extensive effort has been put into developing English taught master and bachelor programmes and this should continue also in the following years. VSE currently offers 4 international bachelor's and 8 master's degree programmes fully taught in English. Some of them include study abroad experience as an obligatory part of the curricula, the rest offers it as an optional choice to their students.

Next step in further broadening cooperation with VSE partner universities and providing students with possibility to get a deeper dive in multiple cultures is to implement increased number of joint and double degrees. These have been a part of VSE priorities for a long time and should develop even further and in higher amounts during the next Erasmus programme period.

VSE strongly supports a cooperation with businesses and plans to focus on this even more under new programme –it should include inviting speakers from international companies to VSE lectures but also increasing the numbers of students going on practical traineeships abroad providing them with ability to work in the multicultural environment. VSE will encourage its students to include and develop digital competences and skills as an integral part of the traineeships.

<sup>1</sup> For more information on the priorities of the European Education Area, such as recognition, digital skills, common values and inclusive education, please consult the following website:  
[https://ec.europa.eu/education/education-in-the-eu/european-education-area\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/education/education-in-the-eu/european-education-area_en)

Erasmus programme has also significantly contributed to increasing the numbers of staff mobility and this trend should continue also in the following programme period. Administrative and technical staff with international experience play a key role as they are more involved in internationalization efforts and help to establish international environment. The staff exchange will have a positive impact on deepening international research cooperation and exchange of the knowledge and will help to transfer this knowledge to its graduates who will then easier succeed in the competitive job market. Therefore, focus on both teaching and training mobility will continue to be a significant part of the Erasmus+ programme also in the future (with participation of all faculties and departments).

In a long term, internationalization of university environment contributes to allowing VSE to remain one of the best business schools in Central and Eastern Europe. This will also result in increasing employability of its graduates in highly competitive labour market.

Please reflect on the Erasmus actions you would like to take part in and explain how they will be implemented in practice at your institution. Please explain how your institution's participation in these actions will contribute to achieving the objectives of your institutional strategy.

Original language (and translation into EN, FR or DE if the EPS is not in one of these languages)

Having been involved in the Erasmus KA1 for many years helped VSE to significantly increase the number of student and staff mobility thus creating a space for internationalisation and modernisation of its environment. This trend will continue under the new programme. High priority will be given to promoting international experience and exchanges to students from all study levels, faculties and backgrounds. VSE bilateral agreements are usually signed on the central level and the exchange applications are also centralized. Some faculties tend to send abroad higher rates of students, a specific promotion will therefore be targeted to the programmes and fields with less study abroad applicants. VSE is well aware of the importance of peer-to-peer recommendation and will work closely with students who already have international experience (ambassadors) to promote it to their faculty colleagues. Information meetings, social media promotion, study abroad fair and other activities will be used to attract attention of students who are still reluctant to apply and go on exchange.

International Office (which serves as a central point for mobility administration and provides support to all mobility participants) will cooperate with VSE Centre for Disabled Students in order to promote international experience to this target group and address their specific needs and fears. Most VSE partner universities are able to provide an adequate support for disabled students however there is still space to improve the awareness of this possibility among students.

VSE students have generally very good knowledge of English (and mostly of another foreign language) however further support of language competencies will retain its importance. Overcoming and addressing all possible mobility obstacles seen by students should result in an increase of graduates with international experience.

When asked about possible obstacles of going abroad, students are often mentioning complicated administrative requirements. This leads VSE to focus on simplification and digitalization efforts which have already started and should continue in line with the recent Erasmus+ development of digitalization and online possibilities of sharing good practices. This will make the processes easier both for outgoing and incoming students.

VSE International Office will continue its cooperation with ESN and provide an extensive support to all incoming students. They are always assigned a Czech buddy before arriving to Prague which helps in better integrating them to the local community and allowing for a deeper cultural experience.

High priority will be given to staff mobilities and VSE plans to increase the numbers of both academic and administrative staff exchanges. Increased Erasmus+ funding has recently allowed to make the staff exchanges available to more staff even on a repetitive basis. This trend should continue and promotional activities (such as testimonials of staff who have been on exchanges) will focus on staff who have not yet participated. Including also administrative staff from other units such as dormitory, IT support etc. will help in further development of multicultural and friendly environment for all international students and staff.

The focus will continue to be put on developing joint and double degrees with existing partners and deepening the exchange experience both for students, staff and universities as such. Currently, three out of six VSE faculties offer double degree programs with two or more partners. Multilateral cooperation will be of increased importance during the new Erasmus+ period. The plan is to introduce at least one double or joint degree at each faculty.

Even deeper cooperation with its partner universities is planned under Erasmus KA2 and KA3 which will focus on reinforcing existing networks and share good practices and learning new trends, moving VSE towards modernisation of its processes. VSE aims to play a leading role at the competitive market of international education and using strategic partnerships with its prestigious partners to develop innovative research ideas will strongly support this trend. The focus will be given on raising common EU values awareness, supporting sustainability practices and deepening digital competencies of both students and educators.

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

Please reflect on targets, as well as qualitative and quantitative indicators in monitoring this impact (such as mobility targets for student/staff mobility, quality of the implementation, support for participants on mobility, increased involvement in cooperation projects (under the KA2 action), sustainability/long-term impact of projects etc.) You are encouraged to offer an indicative timeline for achieving the targets related to the Erasmus+ actions.

Original language (and translation into EN, FR or DE if the EPS is not in one of these languages)

Erasmus+ Programme will continue to provide a valuable base for keeping up the trend of internationalisation and modernisation of VSE. Recent demographic trend of decreasing the total number of students at VSE (from 19000 to 13000) leads towards a shift from quantity to quality of offered education. The decreased number of students at VSE presents a challenge of keeping the mobility numbers (of 1000 incoming/outgoing students per year) at the same level and this should be the main goal during the upcoming years. This should result in increasing the rate of students with international experience.

As for the staff mobility, VSE wishes to increase the numbers significantly and plans to double the amount of staff mobility during the upcoming programme period.

VSE has always put a strong accent on cooperation with high quality partner universities. Bilateral agreements are always prepared and signed after a careful examination of study programmes' compatibility and regularly re-evaluated according to the mobility participants' feedback. The result is that all bilateral agreements are active and used to their full extent.

Quality of all mobilities is closely connected with the preparatory steps. International Office (IO) is providing administrative support to all mobility participants. IO focuses on increasing students' awareness of all exchange possibilities via info meetings, social media, website and individual counselling. After applying and being selected, students are always required to have their Learning Agreements signed by the Vice-Dean of the respective faculty before their departure which eliminates uncertainty regarding the recognition process. It also applies to staff mobility where the Mobility Agreement must be approved by the Head of respective Department.

Incoming students receive an academic advising from IO coordinators. All students are assigned a buddy, Czech student who helps them to settle into the new environment. Orientation Week in the beginning of each semester helps with orientation and easier accommodation to the host country.

Outgoing students' coordinators help with the application process to partner universities and provide consultation before and during the study abroad period.

A long-term experience with cooperation within partner networks showed importance of multilateral cooperation projects. Being part of the PIM network has allowed VSE to develop bilateral agreements with many high-quality partners from around the world and allow its students and staff to benefit from shared knowledge with this prestigious universities. VSE will continue this trend and use its involvement to implement new practices, digitalize its processes and focus on sustainability of projects developed through multilateral university cooperation.