

Erasmus Policy Statement (Overall Strategy)

Part one

Internationalization in the sphere of study, research and development (R&D) as well as creative activities is one of the main priorities of the Tomas Bata University (TBU) and its Strategic Plan. Internationalization has a relatively high level at TBU and it is considered to be the strong point of TBU. The University promotes bilingualism in all spheres, and thus increases its capacity to communicate internationally. This facilitates evolution towards excellence in a number of fields/segments.

The priority fields of internationalization in education, R&D and innovations at TBU involve particularly the following:

- ***Increase in the number of outgoing and incoming students to TBU for exchange studies and/or placements;***
- ***Increase in the number of international academics and R&D employees at TBU;***
- ***Increase in the number of TBU outgoing staff mobilities as a part of their professional development;***
- ***Support of quality in the student and staff exchange mobilities;***
- ***Development of the current joint/double/multiple degree programmes and preparation of new joint/double/multiple degree programmes;***
- ***Development of international relations and increase in the level of internationalization at TBU in the way of participation in international educational projects;***
- ***Participation in EU community programmes – Lifelong Learning Programmes***
- ***Development of the offer of degree programmes (in particular Master's and Doctoral) accredited and carried out in a foreign language***
- ***Preparation and implementation of projects focused on the development of international cooperation in R&D and innovations with the aim to increase the involvement of academic staff and researchers in inter-national teams.***

In order to support the internationalization at TBU, an increase in the number of international students is necessary, as they represent a significant specialist and scientific potential of the University.

The University continues to support the growing trend in international mobility for students, academics and other staff of TBU participating in study periods and traineeships abroad within the programmes of cooperation between higher education institutions (Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci, etc.) including free-mover mobility and international R&D programmes. Within the support of an increase in mobility, TBU annually organizes the event entitled International Week, which is also expected to contribute to attracting the interest of students and academics in mobility at TBU.

TBU promoted the employment of international staff in order to internationalize the personnel structure. Several dozens of international experts e.g. from Mexico, Colombia, Turkey, Armenia, Great Britain, Germany, USA, Australia, Sweden, India, Russian Federation, China or Japan were employed as academic staff and researchers at TBU. An increase in the ratio of R&D staff and PhD students from abroad at the individual faculties and in the centres of applied research currently in development receives goal-directed support from the TBU Management.

Currently TBU carries out 3 double degree programmes between our University and international partner institutions in the Great Britain and France. These programmes are on Bachelor, Follow-up Master's and Doctoral level. TBU is working hard on establishing another three double degree programmes within the upcoming year. A financial support from the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in the Czech Republic within a centralized development project was already allocated to TBU to support these activities.

In order to promote its activities abroad, in particular degree programmes accredited to be taught in English and intended for international students, the University developed partnership relations with international institutions and collaborators. In 2013 TBU registered 84 partnership contracts concluded with universities and other foreign institutions in 36 countries, in particular with the Russian Federation, Vietnam, Armenia and China where former Soviet Union states and China are our target geographical areas. TBU contacts made with international institutions are based on historical relations and personal contacts of TBU and TBU Faculties management. Cooperation continued as regards communication with Czech embassies abroad and embassies of foreign countries in the CR, e.g. Bosnia and Herzegovina, China, Serbia, Ukraine, Turkey, India, the Republic of South Africa, Brazil, etc.

Last but not least, TBU continued to put great emphasis on the participation in international projects (Erasmus, Erasmus IP, Erasmus Mundus, Leonardo da Vinci, Gruntvig, etc.). TBU enhanced its international prestige, developed and contributed to creating a multicultural environment at the University, improved the conditions for study of international students and extended the offer of specialized course units taught in the English language and intended for students in degree programmes accredited to be taught in Czech.

Part 2

Tomas Bata University (TBU) put a great emphasis on internationalization and all activities connected with international projects and cooperation.

TBU has been involved in Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) from its launch in 2007. During the years TBU has coordinated/participated in tens of different LLP projects (from Erasmus Intensive Programmes to Erasmus Mundus project) and so established many highly-valuated contacts with different universities and institutions focused on different fields from technology and informatics to economics, marketing and humanities. Within the new Union Programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport called „Erasmus for All“ TBU will continue cooperating with those institutions which have proved to be reliable, responsible and provide worthy and high quality individual mobilities for both students and staff.

TBU is currently involved in the Tempus IV project called IMPRESS (Improving the Efficiency of Student Services). The aim of the project is to put together knowledge and know-how of the European HEIs

regarding the student recruitment and counseling and share it with 4 classic Ukrainian Universities to establish there modern student oriented centers. On the basis of experiences gained from this project TBU would like to make good use of it and be involved in new but comparable follow-up project(s) ,where enterprises will be involved as well, and which will be oriented more on sharing good practice and innovation regarding the employability of graduates. TBU will be searching for a possibility to become a partner of such project/member of a group (network) solving these problems.

At this time TBU carries out 3 double degree programmes on Bachelor, Follow-up Master´s and Doctoral level between our University and international partner institutions in Great Britain and France. During the upcoming year another 3 double degree programmes between TBU and partner institutions in USA, Slovakia and Poland should be established.

Part 3

According the Strategic Plan for Education, Science, Research, Development, Innovation, Art and Other Creative Activities of TBU, update for 2013, the main priorities in the field of University openness are besides other things aimed on:

- ***Increase the competitiveness of TBU in the international environment:***
 - *Increase the number of outgoing and incoming students participating in study periods and traineeships abroad/at TBU.*
 - *Increase the number of international students at all levels of study at TBU and the number of international academic staff employed at TBU.*
 - *Increase the mobility of academic staff at TBU as a part of their professional development.*
 - *Support the quality of mobility of TBU students and academics abroad.*
 - *Develop the scholarship programme intended for international students, particularly for those studying in Doctoral programmes.*
 - *Enhance the offer of degree programmes (Master´s and Doctoral programmes in particular) accredited and carried out in a foreign language, and of joint degree programmes – joint/double/multiple degree.*
 - *Enhance the offer of selected specialized course units taught in English to Czech students studying in degree programmes accredited in Czech.*
- ***Improve the efficiency of educational activities.***
 - *Extend e-learning teaching methods, support the use of the Moodle system.*
 - *Support the preparation of study supports and educational multimedia tools for part-time students*
 - *Create a system for decreasing the number of unsuccessful students and, at the same time, fulfill the requirements regarding the quality of graduates.*
- ***Development of counselling services for TBU students and employees:***
 - *Create conditions for the activities of the Job Centre aimed at increasing the success of TBU graduates in the labour market.*
 - *Improve the conditions for study of disabled students at TBU and provide study opportunities for handicapped applicants for study.*
 - *Support the activities of the TBU Counselling Centre focusing on assistance provided to disabled students/applicants for study at TBU.*

TBU is highly interested in its international reputation and follows different national and international rankings. Thus TBU has showed its interest and has send an application to a new performance-based ranking tool, U-Multirank. Currently we are waiting for the results whether TBU has been involved in the first 500 HEIs to be ranked.

In 2012 TBU signed a contract about the cooperation with the EURAXESS programme and the University became the Local Contact Point for the Zlín region. Currently TBU has 5 different technology centres and parks which offer wide range of doctoral, post-doctoral and research positions. TBU considers the collaboration with the EURAXESS essential as the network represents enormous possibilities of international development and cooperation at TBU.