

# Erasmus is not just for students

When you say ERASMUS+, you first think of student stays abroad; however, this programme also sends university staff to the world. But the ERASMUS+ staff programme differs from the Mobilities 3.0 and Academy Career programmes, which provide services for researchers and scientists (presented on pages 4, 5 and 8).

“All employees of the University of West Bohemia can go abroad within the framework of ERASMUS+, which is divided into teaching mobilities and training opportunities. Unlike Mobilities 3.0 and Academy Career, these stays are shorter, at least two days,” says Jana Ovsjanniková, Head of the International Office, which coordinates outgoing mobilities of both students and employees.

Unlike students, university employees want to travel abroad more and more, year after year. Three years ago, thanks to ERASMUS+, 110 employees travelled abroad; last year, their number was 195; they went most often to Germany, Slovakia or Great Britain. “Employees apply for travels to their superiors, who know how many people can leave their workplace. In most cases, employees already know where they would like to go, unlike students, who sometimes have no idea, but just want to go abroad for Erasmus stays,” continues Ms. Ovsjanniková.

Employees aiming for training are more interested in ERASMUS+ travels. The so-called teacher mobility is not so much used any longer, because it includes the condition of teaching abroad in a foreign language, which is more difficult for teachers to prepare. All outgoing employees are financed by International Office funds from a grant

that the International Office obtains to cover all the necessary costs of outgoing employees. “This is also the reason why the number of staff visits is increasing. Indeed, the European Union, which funds ERASMUS+, considers it one of the activities which have proved their worth, really work and have a visible effect. Although sending staff and teachers is not a priority for the EU, as the priority is sending students, more and more funding is available for staff visits. Interest is growing from year to year,” adds Ms. Ovsjanniková.

Both employees and students can also use credit mobilities for their ERASMUS+ travels; this allows them to travel outside the European Union if their workplace has a partnership with a workplace there.

Of course, thanks to ERASMUS+, employees from foreign universities are also coming to the University of West Bohemia; such visits, however, may not always be directly addressed by the International Office. The workplaces that receive foreign visitors participate in arranging employees' mobilities. Other programmes that are used not only by students but also by incoming visitors include CEEPUS, the Norwegian Grants, the Austrian programme Aktion and others. ●

