



Document name	Mobility at the University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice
Document type	Recommendation
Project name	OP VVV USB Development – Development of USB – Capacities for R&D (activity HR Award)
Activity	Action Plan, activity no. 8 - Mobility

UNIVERSITY STAFF MOBILITY

This Recommendation supports the goals of the Action Plan of HR Excellence in Research Award project related to mobility of employees at the University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice. The document is intended for employees (or students) who are directly responsible for the implementation of mobility at the University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice (hereinafter USB). The document aims to define the concept of mobility, as it is understood at USB, including recognition of results and outputs achieved during international mobility.

1 VALUE OF MOBILITY

Mobility and its importance is defined by a number of national strategic tools, regulations, etc. Along with student mobility, the international mobility of academic, research and other public university staff was listed among the priorities of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (hereinafter MEYS) and included in the Long-term plan for educational and scientific, research, development and innovation, artistic and other creative activities for higher education for the period 2016–2020 (priority objective Internationalization: Financing - *Take into account the degree of internationalization of teaching in determining the financial contribution; Support mobility of students and academic staff with a special financial instrument. Accreditation - Consider internationalization in providing accreditation for degree programmes, etc.*). The Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports for the period from 2021 reflects the growing importance of mobility and addresses this issue in a separate annex: *Strategy for the Internationalization of Higher Education for the period from 2021*¹ (hereinafter Strategy). The Strategy formulates objectives and measures which should lead to strengthening the international dimension of higher education institutions activities. The Strategy was developed in cooperation with the House of International Cooperation and creates a framework for further financial support for various types of mobility, recruitment of international students and staff, strengthening cooperation with international partners as well as other measures to support the development of the international profile of universities. The Strategy emphasizes that “Current trends in internationalisation focus on the internationalisation of the curriculum provided at home institutions for students in order to increase the quality of degree programmes and equip all graduates with international and intercultural skills, often referred to as global competences.” It also states that “The Internationalisation Strategy provides an understanding of current trends in the world and the potential benefits of international cooperation for institutions, management, administration, academics, and students, and provides a framework for a comprehensive internationalisation strategy for universities and the creation of their individual institutional strategies.” Also, the National Policy of

¹ https://www.msmt.cz/uploads/odbor_30/DH/SZ/internationalisation_strategy_2021_.pdf



Research, Development and Innovation of the Czech Republic for 2009-2015 with a view to 2020 (NP RDI) states: "Use and support of talents and skills with emphasis on improving the education systems and promoting the mobility of highly qualified staff which will help effective transfer of experience and knowledge dissemination." The topics of mobility, human resources and open labour market for R&D staff are, of course, among the priorities of the European Research Area (ERA). A well-implemented mobility of researchers is one of the most effective ways to reach excellence and create an open European labour market for researchers.

Recommendation

When implementing mobility of researchers, USB takes into account (builds on) the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers in the following priority areas focused on Human Resources and Mobility. USB fully acknowledges the value of mobility for academic and non-academic staff; therefore, this document focuses on both of these groups.

1.1 European Charter for Researchers

The European Charter for Researchers addresses, inter alia, the value of mobility and its recognition and evaluation by employers:

1.1.1 Value of Mobility

Employers must recognise the value of geographical, intersectoral, inter- and trans-disciplinary and virtual mobility as well as mobility between the public and private sector as an important means of enhancing scientific knowledge and professional development at any stage of a researcher's career. Consequently, they should build such options into the specific career development strategy and fully value and acknowledge any mobility experience within their career progression/appraisal system.

This also requires that the necessary administrative instruments be put in place to allow the portability of both grants and social security provisions, in accordance with national legislation.

1.1.2 Evaluation/Appraisal Systems

Employers should introduce for all researchers, including senior researchers, evaluation/appraisal systems for assessing their professional performance on a regular basis and in a transparent manner by an independent (and, in the case of senior researchers, preferably international) committee.

Such evaluation and appraisal procedures should take due account of their overall research creativity and research results, e.g., publications, patents, management of research, teaching/lecturing, supervision, mentoring, national or international collaboration, administrative duties, public awareness activities and mobility, and should be taken into consideration in the context of career progression.



1.2 Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers

The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers emphasizes the importance of mobility for professional development of researchers and assessment of their professional qualifications:

1.2.1 Recognition of Mobility Experience

Any mobility experience, e.g., a stay in another country/region or in another research setting (public or private) or a change from one discipline or sector to another, whether as part of the initial research training or at a later stage of the research career, or virtual mobility experience, should be considered as a valuable contribution to the professional development of a researcher.

1.2.2 Recognition of Qualifications

Employers should provide for appropriate assessment and evaluation of the academic and professional qualifications, including nonformal qualifications, of all researchers, in particular within the context of international and professional mobility. They should inform themselves and gain a full understanding of rules, procedures and standards governing the recognition of such qualifications and, consequently, explore existing national law, conventions and specific rules on the recognition of these qualifications through all available channels.



2 DEFINITION OF MOBILITY AND IMPORTANCE OF MOBILITY AT USB

From the outset, the internationalization of universities and implementation of mobility have been a part of the Bologna Process negotiations. European higher education institutions and other involved parties have worked together for the past 20 years to achieve one of the key objectives of the Bologna Process, which is to increase the mobility of staff, students and researchers (collective of authors, 2020).

Mobility, in its original concept, as described in the Bologna Process, is primarily intended to strengthen the international competitiveness of the European higher education system. Mobility is intended to provide students, teachers², researchers and administrative staff with a space to share knowledge and learn about different linguistic and cultural backgrounds and higher education systems. Mobility is a means of internationalizing the activities of higher education institutions within the European Higher Education Area.

Given the emphasis on mutual benefits for both the sending and the receiving higher education institution, international mobility is understood as a trip to a foreign university within a partnership (programme, bilateral, university) agreement between the domestic and host university or institution.

In the broader concept of international mobility of academic staff, mobility (going abroad) can also take place for the purpose of research, internships, data collection, participation in conferences, etc., at institutions where there is no contract between the USB and the given institution (museums, research or educational institutions, archives, etc.).

The University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice views mobility as a necessary tool for increasing the teaching and research qualifications of academic staff and for expanding the professional knowledge and intercultural skills of non-academic staff. The topic of mobility is reflected in the Internationalization Plan of the Strategic Plan of the University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice for the period 2021-2030.

3 CATEGORISATION OF MOBILITY

The final categorisation of mobility is affected by a number of factors, such as the purpose of the mobility, the mobility participants, the mobility objectives, the way the mobility is implemented, the number of institutions involved, etc. Individual mobility definition and conditions are also defined by the specific grant providers.

² At a higher education institution, teaching activities are performed by academic staff and/or other experts outside the employment relationship on the basis of Agreements to perform a job.



3.1 CATEGORISATION BY THE FORM OF MOBILITY

3.1.1 Physical Mobility

Physical mobility is defined as physical working stay of a USB employee abroad in the case of departures from the Czech Republic or a working stay of an international staff member in the Czech Republic for incoming mobility to the Czech Republic. During this type of mobility, there is an interaction with another international institution. Based on the above definition of physical mobility, an excursion with students, independent field work, data collection, a visit to the library, etc. cannot be considered physical mobility.

3.1.2 Virtual Mobility

In the context of virtual mobility, no physical transfer of people is necessary. This involves mainly online teaching or training and, for example, e-conferences, e-seminars, video conferences, etc.

3.1.3 Blended Mobility

Blended mobility (a combination of physical and virtual mobility) is a common type of mobility within international research projects or, for example, research organizations networks. The advantage of this type of mobility is the possibility of shortening the physical mobility, which can be effectively complemented by virtual mobility tools.

3.2 CATEGORISATION BY THE MOBILITY PURPOSE

The purpose of a mobility can be:

- academic teaching,
- training,
- professional practice,
- research,
- joint project,
- internship,
- shadowing,
- language training,
- participation in a conference.

3.3 CATEGORISATION BY LENGTH OF MOBILITY

From the point of view of tax residency, mobility can be categorised as follows:

3.3.1 Short-Term Mobility

Mobility lasting 1-183 days (determined by tax residency³).

³ The length of stay after which a person can be considered a tax resident may vary from country to country, however usually it is 183 days in the relevant tax year.



3.3.2 Long-Term Mobility

Mobility of 184 days or more (determined by applicable legislation).

3.4 CATEGORISATION BY MOBILITY PARTICIPANTS

Mobility participants can be:

- Researchers
 - a) young researchers and post-docs (a definition of a post-doc position at USB is available on the USB website [HERE⁴](#)),
 - b) senior researchers,
- academic staff⁵,
- non-academic staff,
- doctoral students.

USB prepared a **Guide for Employees Going Abroad for a Study Stay or Training** for employees and students of the doctoral degree programme who are interested in traveling abroad. It is available on the USB website or in printed form at the International Relations Office.

The list of available international mobility opportunities for USB researchers, academic and non-academic staff and doctoral students can be found in Annexes 1, 2 and 3 of this document.

3.5 CATEGORISATION BY MOBILITY RECORD KEEPING

The principles for keeping records of international mobility at the University of South Bohemia are regulated by *Rector's Ordinance R 355 on International Mobility Record Keeping* of 1 June 2017. Mobility records will be further addressed and possibly amended in connection with the ongoing digitization of university agendas.

European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2020. The European Higher Education Area in 2020: Bologna Process Implementation Report. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

Annexe No. 1 – International Mobility Opportunities for Researchers

Annexe No. 2 – International Mobility Opportunities for Academic and Non-academic Staff

Annexe No. 3 – International Mobility Opportunities for Doctoral Students

⁴ <https://www.jcu.cz/veda-a-vyzkum/podklady-pro-www-stranky/postdoctoral-positions-at-the-university-of-south-bohemia-in-ceske-budejovice.pdf>

⁵ As defined by the 111/1998 Sb. Higher Education Act and on Amendments and Supplements to some other Acts .