

Combines education with business – European University EU4Dual

EU4Dual is the first European University dedicated to dual studies, i. e. one that combines theory with practice. The objectives of the EU4Dual project cover issues related to the labour market in the present and future perspective. They also address the green economy and healthy living as a social aspect.

Koszalin University of Technology is the only university in West Pomerania participating in the project of European universities and one of only 23 in the country. The consortium also involves companies from each of the participating countries who, together with the scientific community, want to promote innovative education and search for young people with talent. Business partners of Koszalin University of Technology include GlobalLogic, Drutex, Signify and GEA Tuchenhausen Poland.

The consortium includes universities from Spain, France, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Croatia, Finland, Malta and Poland.

Development of the project

Representatives of the universities applied to join the EU4Dual European University even before 2022. An important date in the history of the formation of EU4Dual was the signing of a letter of intent to establish the university, which was signed by rectors. The meeting took place on March 3, 2022, in San Sebastian, Spain, in the presence of representatives of the administrations of the countries involved in the alliance.

Koszalin University of Technology was represented by rector prof. Danuta Zawadzka PhD., and Vice Rector for Education prof. Krzysztof Wasilewski PhD. The next step in the activities related to the establishment of the European University was the submission of a joint application to the European Commission.

Koszalin University of Technology officially became part of the alliance of European universities on July 27, 2022, when the university received a positive decision towards its efforts to join the alliance. From the very beginning of Koszalin Technical University's involvement in the project, the university focused on initiating and deepening cooperation between higher education institutions and business.

The grant was officially signed on November 18, 2022 by Prof. Danuta Zawadzka PhD. On that day, the rector signed the university's participation not only in the project, but also in the financing of project-related activities.

Cooperation with Ukraine

The Koszalin University of Technology was among the universities that supported cooperation with Ukrainian universities. This was the result of the implementation of the "Solidarity with Ukraine" program of the National Agency for Academic Exchange (NAWA). The project concerns universities belonging to transnational alliances of European Universities. So far, the "Solidarity with Ukraine" program has made it possible for representatives of the Ukrainian community who found refuge from the war in Poland to continue their studies, work on their dissertations or pursue any other form of education at Polish universities and research institutes.

On December 20, 2022, at NAWA headquarters, the agreement on expanding the scope of tasks outsourced to universities was signed by Tomasz Rzymkowski PhD., deputy minister of education and

science, Dawid Kostecki PhD, director of NAWA, and vice-rectors of three of the 18 universities, representing different types of alliances.

Funding under the project has been allocated for: organization of exchanges of students, doctoral students and staff of the institution; participation in study visits, internships, seminars, workshops, training courses; active participation in conferences; development of modern teaching materials; development or preparation of new and innovative educational tools and methods.

In addition, universities can: develop quality management systems for raising the level of education and research; conduct joint research and development work; prepare joint scientific publications; network and establish cooperation between Ukrainian universities and alliance members. For Koszalin University of Technology, this is an opportunity to set new directions for development.

Study visits, research work, developing good practices in cooperation with business, as well as training, conferences and publications - these are the main assumptions of the agreement signed on December 28, 2022 between Koszalin University of Technology and Ivan Franko National University of Lviv within the framework of participation in the "Solidarity with Ukraine" program.

The agreement was signed during an online meeting. In addition to the rector of the Koszalin University of Technology, the meeting was attended by prof. Krzysztof Wasilewski PhD., EU4Dual coordinator at the university, and employees of the International Mobility Office, responsible for the implementation of activities within the European University: Aleksandra Zajac and Katarzyna Kaleta. The Ukrainian side was represented by Vice-Rector for International Cooperation prof. Serhiy Riznyk PhD., prof. Iryna Odrekhivska, Director of the Center for Intercultural Communication, and prof. Oksana Molderf, Director of the International Projects Office.

Shared activities

The first meeting of representatives of the universities forming the EU4Dual European University took place in Mannheim on September 28, 2022. The Koszalin University of Technology was represented by prof. Krzysztof Wasilewski PhD., and Aleksandra Zajac, coordinator of the Erasmus+ program. During the talks, issues related to the budget of the consortium and its structure were discussed.

On the other hand, on January 10, 2023, it was our university that was visited by a representative of EU4Dual Jon Altuna PhD., Vice Rector for Science at Mondragon Unibersitatea (Spain). In addition, Jon Altuna PhD., serves as coordinator of the entire EU4Dual project. The guest was welcomed by prof. Danuta Zawadzka PhD. Jon Altuna PhD., reviewed the most important information about Poland and the region, the structure of the Koszalin University of Technology, science and international projects carried out at the university. After the official part, Jon Altuna PhD., toured the three polytechnic campuses. He saw laboratory and teaching halls. The EU4Dual coordinator met with students.

Koszalin University of Technology also participated in the process of establishing a new European institution of higher education - the Center of Excellence on Dual Education - which will provide expertise on the needs of the labor market of the future and act on global challenges, in cooperation with students and the socio-economic environment.

A meeting was held within the walls of the Savonia University of Applied Sciences in Kuopio, Finland, on February 21, attended by representatives of the university, led by rector prof. Danuta Zawadzka PhD.,

The rector presented the region and the university, as well as the goals that Koszalin University of Technology wants to achieve through its involvement in the European University. Representatives of the university took part in the workshop -during the first session, participants focused on presenting the experiences of partners of two existing alliances: YUFE (University of Eastern Finland) and INVEST (UAS Karelia). Jon Altuna PhD., presented the work plan for 2023, including: the main tasks, milestones and results from the cooperation. The next part of the meeting dealt with cooperation strategies and activities.

After Finland, where the EU4Dual kick-off meeting was held in February, it was the turn of France and Spain. On April 17-21 this year, a delegation from the Koszalin University of Technology was hosted by the ESTIA Institute of Technology, located in Bidart, France. The topic of discussion was joint initiatives in education and research within the framework of EU4Dual, as well as opportunities for broader cooperation. An important point of the talks was also the inclusion of partners from the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, whose representatives accompany the delegation, in the activities of the European University.

Late May and early June Koszalin University of Technology hosted representatives of the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv. The visit was carried out within the framework of the "Solidarity with Ukraine" project. During their stay in Koszalin, representatives of the Ukrainian delegation carried out part of the work planned in the project.

They dealt with the development of modern teaching materials and research and scientific work, as well as participated in the workshop "The role of innovative processes in the reconstruction of post-war Ukraine." The team of Lviv National University, in cooperation with the staff of Koszalin University of Technology with the participation of EU4Dual partners, developed teaching materials showing a broad view of research and practical problems in the field of intercultural communication, which is the basis for the functioning of international scientific and business institutions.

The guests took part in a workshop that focused on incremental manufacturing processes from metal powders. During the visit, they visited the Rapid Prototyping Center, where they could learn about technology and product design in the Design for Additive Manufacturing (DfAM) concept.

The first conference organized at the Koszalin University of Technology within the EU4Dual project was "Future of Work - Future of Education". The meeting, held June 13-16, focused on the priorities arising from EU4Dual. The conference was attended by European University partners and representatives of other such consortia, as well as business representatives. It was not only an opportunity to establish future and closer cooperation, but also to exchange experiences between representatives.

The first session of the meeting dealt with issues related to intercultural communication in dual education, industry and science. Conference participants had the opportunity to hear the results of a Polish-Ukrainian research group, presented by representatives of Lviv's Ivan Franko National University.

The research is titled "The Future of Work and the Near Future of Intercultural Communication: Leveraging Dual Education". Paul McNamara PhD., from the Faculty of Humanities at the Koszalin University of Technology introduced the attendees to the project "Supporting cooperation between the Koszalin University of Technology and Ukrainian universities within the framework of the EU4DUAL European University alliance," and talked about cooperation with Lviv's Ivan Franko National University.

The next part of the meeting included workshops, which was held in a hybrid format. Panel discussions were held on the following days of the conference. The first debate was on the future of work, featuring Prof. Winfried Malorny, Sebastian Kondrat and Pawel Zebrowski - experts in business psychology, organization and implementation research.

Another debate titled "Voice of the Industry" was attended by representatives of companies cooperating with Koszalin University of Technology: GlobalLogic, Kronospan, GEA Tuchenhausen Poland, Signify, Espersen Poland. The closing debate of the conference focused on industry links with European Universities: EU4Dual, EUNICE, ARQUS and TRANSFORM4EUROPE.

During the debate, representatives of Polish universities told about their own experiences with European universities. The conference held at Koszalin University of Technology was attended by representatives of universities from Finland, Germany, Austria, Malta, Hungary, Slovakia, Georgia, Ukraine, as well as Poznań University of Technology and the University of Silesia. Participation was open to academics, doctoral students and students.

Another international trip attended by representatives of the Koszalin University of Technology was a visit to PAR University of Applied Sciences in the Croatian city of Rijeka. Guests and experts discussed the strategy of the cooperation within the framework of the European alliance. Koszalin University of Technology was represented during the delegation by prof. Danuta Zawadzka PhD., prof. Krzysztof Wasilewski PhD., Katarzyna Kaleta, EU4Dual project manager, and Aleksandra Zajac, coordinator of international mobility. The program of the visit included a presentation of the university and discussion of activities common to other project participants. A conference on dual education from Croatian and European perspectives was also held in Zagreb. Representatives of the university took part in study visits to companies cooperating with the university.

In November this year, Rector prof. Danuta Zawadzka PhD., and Vice – Rector for Education prof. Krzysztof Wasilewski PhD., attended another meeting of representatives of the authorities of universities participating in the EU4Dual European University. This time, discussions on joint dual studies and potential areas of research cooperation were held at John Von Neumann University in Kecskemet, Hungary. The event commemorating the rectors' meeting in Hungary was the joint planting of a tree, symbolizing wisdom, sustainability and development, i.e. what is available to man and nature.

At the end of 2023, representatives of the Koszalin University of Technology will make another visit as part of the project. They will again travel to Hungary.

Communication as a key aspect of the project

EU4Dual European University partners pay special attention to the role of communication in the project. Representatives from all universities participate in regular online meetings.

The first meeting of the communication offices of all partners belonging to the EU4DUAL project was held on May 10 this year. Jon Altuna PhD., presented preliminary strategies for communication planning among project partners. During the meeting, issues concerning cooperation between offices from partner universities were raised. Issues related to expanding the promotion of the project in social media as well as offline forms were established. Participants of the meeting were able to present their proposals on issues related to communication and promotion of the EU4Dual project.

Another key communication meeting was the online "EU4DUAL Communication workshop" held on October 3. The first session discussed the communication strategy and defined the goals in the project. Then the new structure of the EU4Dual website was presented. There was a discussion of social media and its role in promoting the University European. The next part of the meeting included a workshop on the project's graphic design. Participants also discussed issues related to the project itself and how to promote student mobility, internationalization and learning. Klaudia Kajak, Head of Communication Office in the project, was representing the Communication Office of Koszalin University of Technology, participated in the meetings on behalf of the university regarding communication.

The university is strengthening contacts with foreign universities co-founding the EU4Dual European University also through meetings of the Foundation for the Development of the Education System, which conducts research on interaction within European universities.

During the September 4 meeting, prof. Krzysztof Wasilewski PhD., recalled the most important facts from the history of participation in the international alliance so far. He spoke about the first talks held in Spain in the spring of 2022 on joining the European University and the subsequent approval of the European Commission to join the European University.

He spoke about building relationships with other EU4Dual universities. He stressed that the university's participation in the alliance promoting dual education is meeting with increasing interest from Pomeranian businesses. The university coordinators and staff of the Koszalin University of Technology International Mobility Office spoke about activities related to cooperation within EU4Dual.

Koszalin University of Technology shares experience

Representatives of the Koszalin University of Technology often share their experiences from participation in the international project during meetings and conferences, including at the Medical University of Białystok and during the XVI Conference "Foreign Students in Poland 2023. Study in Poland", organized by the Educational Foundation "Perspektywy". During the session "European Universities - Opportunities, Threats, Development Directions", prof. Krzysztof Wasilewski PhD., presented the participation of Koszalin University of Technology in EU4Dual, as well as discussed the most important goals and tasks set by the alliance, of which Koszalin University of Technology is a member.

On April 12, an international conference on "Intersectoral cooperation and public participation in the implementation of the tasks of local governments" was held, organized by the Town and Municipality of Sianow within the framework of the Association of Polish Cittaslow Cities. The conference was attended by prof. Krzysztof Wasilewski PhD., who took part in a discussion on the role of the socio-economic environment in activating local communities and presented the assumptions of the EU4Dual European University.

During the First Conference of European Universities, organized by the Foundation for the Development of the Education System on May 15 in Warsaw, the university was represented by prof. Danuta Zawadzka PhD., and prof. Krzysztof Wasilewski PhD., . The rector participated in the panel "European Universities Engaged and Accessible," where she talked about the achievements to date within the EU4Dual consortium and pointed out the importance of internationalization of universities not only for the academic community, but also for the socio-economic environment and the entire region.

The European Universities Conference is a new initiative dedicated to alliances of higher education institutions from across the European Union under the Erasmus+ program. The event was accompanied by the award gala of the "European Universities - Alliances of the Future" competition. Koszalin University of Technology was among the elite group of universities nominated in two categories: "Support for Ukraine" and "Cooperation with the socio-economic environment."

The university among important research centers

The evaluation of scientific activities for 2017-2021 carried out by the Ministry of Education and Science at Koszalin University of Technology was successful. The results of the evaluation confirmed that the university is an important scientific center on the map of Poland, carrying out modern scientific research tailored to the needs of regional development.

The school provides human resources training at the highest global level. An important aspect taken into account during the evaluation was the university's participation in EU4Dual and the combination of practical education, science and business.

According to the priorities of the European Education Area by 2025, European universities intend to: promote common European values and strengthen European identity by educating a new generation of Europeans capable of working together across cultures and languages and across borders, sectors and academic disciplines

Countries should strive to make significant progress in the quality, efficiency, attractiveness and competitiveness of European higher education institutions and to contribute to the European economy based on knowledge, employment, creativity, culture and prosperity, by making the best use of innovative pedagogical methods.

Other publications on the implementation of the EU4Dual project at Koszalin University of Technology:

<https://www.tu.koszalin.pl/art/2463/politechnika-koszalinska-czescia-universytetu-europejskiego>

<https://www.tu.koszalin.pl/art/3104/nowa-wspolpraca-politechniki-z-lwowskim-universytetem-narodowym>

<https://www.tu.koszalin.pl/art/3253/uczelnia-na-konferencji-study-in-poland>

<https://www.tu.koszalin.pl/art/1882/politechnika-koszalinska-coraz-blizej-universytetu-europejskiego>

<https://www.tu.koszalin.pl/art/3303/politechnika-koszalinska-dziala-na-rzecz-ksztalcenia-przyszlosci-wizyta-i-spotkanie-czlonkow-universytetu-europejskiego-eu4dual-w-kuopio-w-finlandii>

<https://www.tu.koszalin.pl/art/3333/politechnika-koszalinska-na-warsztatach-w-finlandii>

<https://www.tu.koszalin.pl/art/3669/spotkanie-dotyczace-komunikacji-w-eu4dual>

<https://www.tu.koszalin.pl/art/3684/nasza-uczelnia-czescia-i-konferencji-universytetow-europejskich-w-warszawie>

<https://www.tu.koszalin.pl/art/2485/politechnika-koszalinska-wsrod-najlepszych-uczelni-akademickich-w-polsce>

<https://www.tu.koszalin.pl/art/3808/politechnika-koszalinska-organizatorem-konferencji-universytetu-europejskiego-eu4dual>

<https://www.tu.koszalin.pl/art/2654/w-mannheim-rozmawiano-o-eu4dual>

<https://www.tu.koszalin.pl/art/3534/o-spoecznej-aktywizacji-w-sianowie>

<https://www.tu.koszalin.pl/art/2821/universytet-europejski-gotowy-do-rozpoczecia-dzialalnosci>

<https://www.tu.koszalin.pl/art/3568/przedstawiciele-edu4dual-we-francji>

<https://www.tu.koszalin.pl/art/4234/rozmawiali-o-wspolpracy-w-ramach-eu4dual>

<https://www.tu.koszalin.pl/art/3743/przedstawiciele-lwowskiego-universytetu-narodowego-im-iwana-franki-w-koszalinie>

<https://www.tu.koszalin.pl/art/3064/dzieki-wsparciu-nawa-politechnika-koszalinska-poszerzy-wspolprace-z-lwowskim-universytetem-narodowym>

<https://www.tu.koszalin.pl/art/3756/przy-odbudowie-ukrainy-beda-potrzebne-nowoczesne-technologie>

<https://www.tu.koszalin.pl/art/3155/politechnika-koszalinska-gosci-przedstawiciela-eu4dual>

<https://www.tu.koszalin.pl/art/3825/w-miedzynarodowym-gronie-o-eu4dual>

<https://www.tu.koszalin.pl/art/4333/rozmawiaja-o-komunikacji-w-eu4dual>

<https://www.tu.koszalin.pl/art/4367/nasi-przedstawiciele-w-chorwacji>

<https://www.tu.koszalin.pl/art/4387/eu4dual-przedstawiciele-politechniki-koszalinskiej-w-chorwacji>

<https://www.tu.koszalin.pl/art/4466/rozmawiaja-o-studiach-dualnych-na-wegrzech>