

MUNI
FACULTY
OF SOCIAL
STUDIES

Strategic plan
of the Faculty of Social
Studies of Masaryk
University for the years
2021–2028

2028

FOREWORD

Dear colleagues, you are holding in your hands the Strategic Plan of the Faculty of Social Studies of Masaryk University for the years 2021–2028. It is a key document that largely determines our efforts to develop teaching and research at our faculty and its third role in the years to come.

The eight-year period that this document focuses on goes beyond the mandate of the current dean and faculty management. For this reason, we strongly supported the highest degree of participation of a wide staff and student part of the faculty. The limitation of physical contact in 2020 took a lot from us, but it also taught us a lot. In connection with the process of creating a strategic plan, it was important to get used to the meetings of various bodies through video calls, which became second nature to us. This way we managed to open the process of creating a strategic plan to the faculty at large and the student body probably more easily than if we had only been meeting off-line. First, the individual vice-deans discussed their proposals in the relevant areas with their long-established expert groups. Each meeting was open to academic and non-academic faculty staff. The resulting draft of the strategic plan was then subjected to a detailed debate in the Vice-Dean's working group for strategy and development. The Academic Senate of the FSS MU was subsequently invited as a key actor, so that the individual members could comment on the emerging text. The Student Chamber of the faculty also organized an online meeting of students over the text. This resulted in a number of comments and suggestions that were properly dealt with.

The structure of this document is based on the Strategic Plan of Masaryk University for the years 2021–2028, drawing on it and elaborating its content. In the following text, we do not want to suggest that we are the best or that the opposite is true. We look back with respect

and pride at the past almost quarter of a century of our existence starting with the visionary work of the first dean and founder, Professor Možný, followed by the careful development work of the next three deans. We also consider the people involved in the management of the faculty and its individual components today, as well as all other colleagues who teach, research and popularize the results of our research. We understand the need to read the time and that for the faculty to be successful, it must not rest in its development.

The presented strategic plan does not overflow with grand, noble and mostly unfulfillable visions, nor is it a set of minor objectives. We have tried to formulate achievable strategic goals, although their fulfillment will require more effort; these goals will not only help the faculty to move to the top of the faculties of social studies in the Czech Republic and among the leaders of faculties with a similar focus in Central Europe, but they will also help to keep it there.

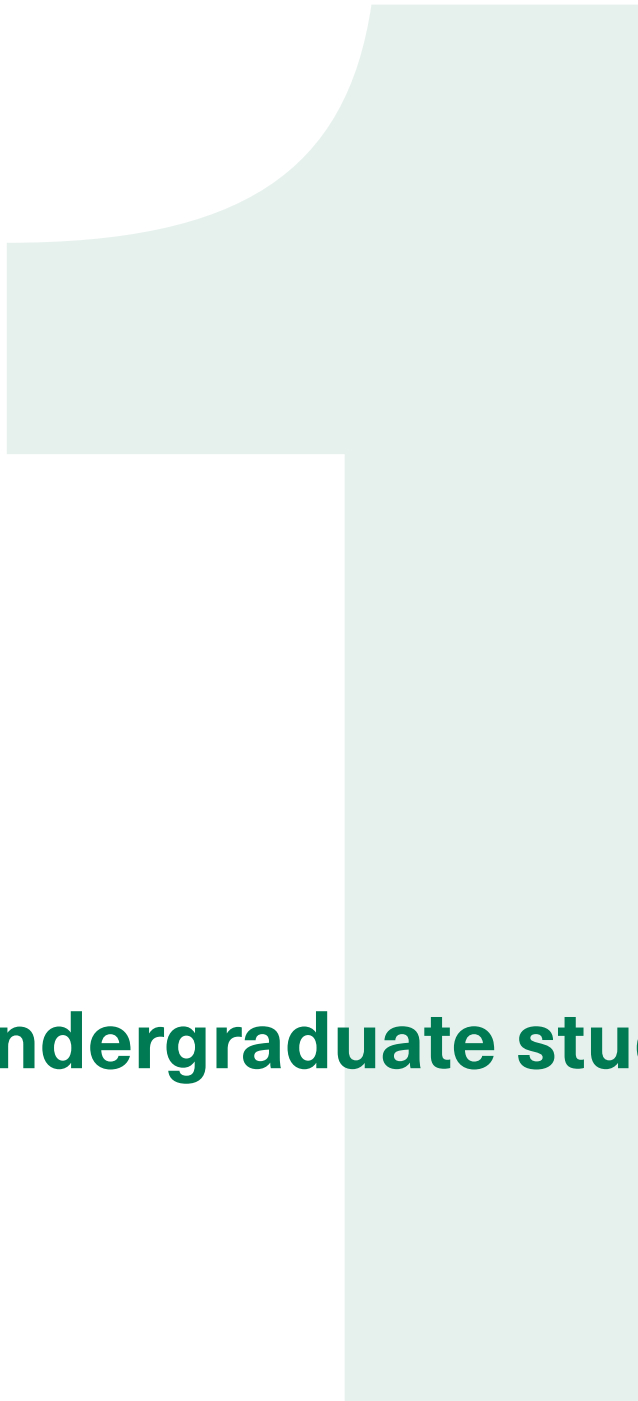
We believe that the strategic plan is more than a mere document posted online to check once in a while against the progress made. We believe that it will strengthen the already existing framework for everyday work, because together with Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, whose name our university bears, we are convinced that “the world is maintained only with work, namely small work, permanent work.”

Stanislav Balík

Dean







Undergraduate studies

VISION

In 2028, the Faculty of Social Studies will be an educational institution that attracts motivated and talented applicants, uses innovative teaching methods in the educational process, supports gifted students and actively prevents academic failure at all levels of study. It will be a supporting institution that cares about its students and teachers, helps when there is failure and rewards when there is success. It will be a place that offers demanding and quality education characterized by its emphasis on interdisciplinarity and whose important principle is sustainability and social responsibility. It will be the destination of applicants at various stages of life seeking support in their personal and professional growth.

STRATEGIC GOALS

- 1.1** Intensive development of modern teaching methods, distance and online forms of education and strengthening the participation of students and renowned experts in teaching practice.
- 1.2** Systematic prevention of study failure and active support of study success through a well-established admission procedure and support system during study.
- 1.3** Effective support of the pedagogical and non-pedagogical competencies of teachers, emphasizing the importance of teaching as a prestigious academic mission.
- 1.4** Strengthening the wide range of lifelong learning to enable comprehensive professional growth and personal development of the graduates.
- 1.5** In terms of the content of the education, supporting the interdisciplinary nature of teaching at the Faculty and University, strengthening the importance of social responsibility and sustainable development in education and developing an innovative and open offer of study programs raising important social issues.
- 1.6** Strengthening the excellence of studies at the faculty.


TOOLS - INDICATIVE MEASURES AND ACTIVITIES TO MEET THE STRATEGIC GOALS

- 1.1.1** Adopting innovative forms of teaching, especially interactive, distance, project teaching, etc.
- 1.1.2** Supporting participatory teaching and greater involvement of undergraduate students in teaching.
- 1.1.3** Developing online education where it is desired and appropriately complements face-to-face teaching.
- 1.1.4** Strengthening practical teaching at the level of individual study programs.
- 1.1.5** Workshops and regular meetings to share good teaching practice across study programs.
- 1.1.6** Systematic effort to improve the process of collecting student feedback and responding to it.
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- 1.2.1** Creating an effective mechanism for early identification of potentially unsuccessful students.
- 1.2.2** Active co-operation with potentially unsuccessful students at the level of the study department, departments and senior students (e.g. in the form of consultations, tutoring or mentoring by students).
- 1.2.3** Strengthening communication of the study requirements to students, with an emphasis on individually designed support mechanisms.
- 1.2.4** Support and appreciation of talented students in the form of scholarships, participation in teaching, research, etc.

- 1.3.1** Cultivation and expansion of pedagogical skills of teachers through the offer of methodological courses within MU and beyond, both for beginning and experienced teachers.
- 1.3.2** Development of ICT skills, competencies in the field of cyber security and support for teachers in the implementation of online forms of synchronous and asynchronous teaching (video creation, post-production, etc.).
- 1.3.3** Appreciating examples of good practice and working with less successful ones (in the form of supervision, recommendation of observations of well-evaluated teachers' lessons and providing feedback).
- 1.3.4** Emphasizing the importance of teaching in the academic environment.
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- 1.4.1** Creating an offer of lifelong learning courses that will enable career and personal growth in all phases of life.
- 1.4.2** Supporting various forms of lifelong learning courses (short-term courses, online courses, etc.).
- 1.4.3** Co-operating with a variety of target groups (graduates, secondary school teachers, employers, etc.) to create a relevant offer of lifelong learning.
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- 1.5.1** Supporting interfaculty joint studies as a way to interdisciplinary education.
- 1.5.2** Developing interdisciplinarity of education within the faculty (joint studies, revision of optional courses, etc.).
- 1.5.3** Creating an offer of compulsory elective courses that shall arise from the co-operation between several departments and programs (phenomenon-based learning).
- 1.5.4** Cultivating competencies for sustainability and social responsibility and their inclusion in the undergraduate curriculum.

- 1.6.1** Continuous updating of the content of accredited study programs.
- 1.6.2** Support and coordination of the study program boards.
- 1.6.3** Openness to possible amendments to the structure of study programs.
- 1.6.4** Striving for the greatest possible “user friendliness” of the structure of study plans and transitions between them.





**Internationalization
of curricula, studies,
study offers and related
services**

VISION

In 2028, the Faculty of Social Studies will be a highly internationalized faculty in all respects. It will offer a wide range of English-taught study programs from bachelor's to doctoral degrees across social science disciplines. As a standard, students of all study programs will be able to choose from a wide selection of subjects in foreign languages (mostly English). Study programs in Czech and English will effectively be linked to increasingly socialize and integrate the entire student community. The high number of quality subjects in the English language will lead to a further increase in the attractiveness of FSS among foreign applicants and students from partner universities, whose numbers will continue to rise. Spending at least one semester studying or working abroad will become common practice among most students at all levels of study. The faculty will also motivate both academic and non-academic staff to participate in international mobilities. All departments will have long-term highly qualified foreign teachers. Furthermore, the number of leading foreign experts will increase in the positions of visiting professors and subject-matter experts.

STRATEGIC GOALS

- 2.1** To achieve a stable number of established and well-functioning English programs at all levels of study.
- 2.2** To teach a large number of subjects in foreign languages (especially in English), facilitating “internationalization at home” in all departments.
- 2.3** To stimulate on-going growth in the number of students participating in student mobility to and from the faculty; to achieve an increase in the participation of academic and non-academic faculty staff in foreign mobility programs.
- 2.4** To increase the number of foreign teachers working long-term at the departments.
- 2.5** To develop a robust, effective faculty infrastructure helping to meet goals 2.1–2.4.

TOOLS - INDICATIVE MEASURES AND ACTIVITIES TO MEET THE STRATEGIC GOALS

- 2.1.1** Use of grant opportunities for the development of study programs in English; support of the creation, launch and establishment of interdisciplinary study programs based on interdepartmental cooperation.
- 2.1.2** Active, continuous and appropriately targeted promotion of English study programs.
- 2.1.3** Searching for opportunities for further financial support for excellent students of English study programs.
- 2.1.4** Development of cooperation between study mentors and student ambassadors of English study programs.
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- 2.2.1** Use of both domestic and foreign grant schemes for the preparation of new attractive subjects in English.
- 2.2.2** Motivating teachers to offer subjects in English and in other foreign languages; sharing attractive subjects taught by foreign universities.
- 2.2.3** Further development and intensification of cooperation with the Language Centre with the aim of strengthening the language competencies of students and academic staff.
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- 2.3.1** Proactive establishment of co-operation with leading universities and other academic institutions in Europe and abroad.
- 2.3.2** Active search and establishment of co-operation with institutions implementing student internships.

2.3.3 Intensive promotion of mobility opportunities among students of Czech and English study programs, for academic and non-academic staff, and support for their trips abroad.

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2.4.1 Active use of mobility programs (Fulbright, etc.).

2.4.2 Creating attractive offers for foreign post-doctoral students.

2.4.3 Promotion of job opportunities abroad.

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2.5.1 An adequately staffed foreign relations department providing excellent service to applicants, current students and foreign colleagues. Development of its support capacities focused on administration and assistance with accommodation, visas and submitting applications, promotion of foreign mobility, organization of events for foreign students and support of the creation of an effective alumni network.

2.5.2 Faculty support of the development of adequate language competencies of faculty staff.

2.5.3 Regular communication with guarantors of English study programs and with the heads of departments.

2.5.4 Regular communication and coordinated co-operation with student ambassadors and mentors.

2.5.5 Close co-operation with the University Welcome Centre and other relevant workplaces across the university in an effort to provide excellent support and counseling services to foreign academics and students.



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**Science, research
and doctoral studies**

In 2028, the Faculty of Social Studies will be a workplace carrying out meaningful research that expands knowledge, is visible in international and domestic environments, and is beneficial to society. It will be an institution that agrees on the importance of the quality of research that it can recognize and appreciate. It will have conditions for its scholars to deliver quality performance. In relation to individual researchers, the faculty will be able to appreciate diligence and success; it will be able to recognize excellence, lead towards it and support it. It will be able to work well with talented people at the beginning of their scientific careers. Grant funds from sources outside MU will be an important part of the budget. Obtaining domestic and foreign grants will be considered a natural part of the work of each of the academic staff. The faculty will be able to provide high-quality administrative support for this purpose.

Preparation for work in an international academic environment will be understood as the main purpose of doctoral studies. The programs will be open to talented and highly motivated applicants. Quality standards will be set for doctoral studies with an emphasis on the quality of scientific output, on the international experience of doctoral students and on the timely completion of studies. The faculty will create conditions enabling doctoral students to fully concentrate on their studies. The supervision and quality of cooperation between the supervisor and student are key elements influencing academic success. The functional standards of supervision and successful cooperation will be clearly formulated and shared. Academic staff will consider doctoral students as colleagues, equal partners and will treat them in this spirit. Supervisors will devote appropriate time and expertise to doctoral students and will support their development.

STRATEGIC GOALS

- 3.1** Conducting quality research that expands knowledge, has international impact and benefits society.
- 3.2** Creating conditions for quality scientific performance.
- 3.3** Supporting participation and success in grant competitions.
- 3.4** Promoting excellence and working with talented people who are at the beginning of their academic careers.
- 3.5** Increasing the quality of doctoral studies and supporting doctoral students.

TOOLS - INDICATIVE MEASURES AND ACTIVITIES TO MEET THE STRATEGIC GOALS

- 3.1.1** Monitoring the number of results of both basic and applied research, their citation rate and social relevance.
- 3.1.2** Striving to make faculty publications in WoS predominant in DEC1 - Q2, and for foreign language monographs to be published by high-quality international publishers.
- 3.1.3** Support and creation of conditions for recruiting excellent foreign scholars.
- 3.1.4** Cultivation of the domestic professional scene and popularization of faculty results.
- 3.1.5** Setting the budgetary rules for the division of the Institutional Support for Long-term Conceptual Development of a Research Organization (DRKVO). The priorities are the international impact of faculty research, its social relevance and the third role of the faculty.
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- 3.2.1** Defining the parameters of quality and excellent science in basic and applied research and sharing with FSS staff.
- 3.2.2** Setting the budgetary rules for the division of DKRVO so as to promote quality scientific performance and reward excellence.
- 3.2.3** Ensuring that the gold standard in science at FSS is visible, shared and used as a criterion for evaluating scientific performance.
- 3.2.4** Creating new research institutes with the potential to achieve excellent research results.
- 3.2.5** Creating stable salary conditions with a long-term perspective, which will enable the achievement of quality scientific performance.
- 3.2.6** Taking into account the quality of the scientific performance of the workplace when evaluating the heads of departments and research institutes.

3.2.7 Monitoring the quality of services provided by service departments.

3.3.1 Preparing a grant strategy that is visible and shared within FSS.

3.3.2 Motivating workplaces to obtain grants for basic and applied research – setting the budget rules for the division of DKRVO so that it supports the pursuit of grant funds and appreciates the success in obtaining them.

3.3.3 Motivating researchers and research teams to obtain grants – setting salary rules so that researchers with a grant and participating in its implementation have a higher salary than those without it.

3.3.4 Promoting good information management and education in the field of proposal submission and implementation and supporting the sharing of good practice.

3.4.1 Incorporating the co-operation of talented junior researchers with the potential to achieve excellent research results into the organizational culture of the faculty.

3.4.2 Preparing a system for the identification and support of talented junior researchers with the potential to achieve excellent research results.

3.4.3 Supporting the development of the potential of talented people.

3.4.4 Preparing a system to support researchers with excellent results.

3.5.1 Increasing study success within the established standard of successful completion of studies in due time plus one year.

3.5.2 Setting common quality standards for doctoral studies related to the admission procedure, publishing activities, pedagogical activities, international involvement, scholarship support and study conditions.

- 3.5.3** Setting common standards for the quality of supervisors' work and communication between the supervisor and the doctoral student.
- 3.5.4** Efforts to ensure sufficient financial income from various faculty and university sources, so that each doctoral student can fully concentrate on doctoral studies without the need to earn extra money outside the academic environment.
- 3.5.5** Evaluating the quality of supervisors and the quality of their work with doctoral students by monitoring the success of the completion of study of doctoral students in due time plus one year, by monitoring the quality of creative results of doctoral students and their career paths after graduation.
- 3.5.6** Ensuring the functional and useful evaluation of the quality of doctoral study programs.





Social role

VISION

In 2028, the Faculty of Social Studies will be a socially active institution that enters important societal and regional debates in areas in which it has expert knowledge, and in which it seeks to advance the quality of public dialogue. It will be a faculty supporting active and responsible citizenship, including helping people in need and cultivating public space and public debate. The individual departments will keep their uniqueness while creating a strong net of internal links. The faculty will be an academic workplace proving the meaning of social science research and its practical contribution to society through its activities.

STRATEGIC GOALS

- 4.1** To be an active participant in social debates, which are directly or indirectly related to the areas of faculty expertise, and to cultivate public debate.
- 4.2** To connect the research and educational activities of the faculty with practice – either by supporting the applicability of research results or by presenting these results in a way that will appeal to the narrower professional and general public in an attractive way.
- 4.3** To support both employees and students in civic activity and community care.
- 4.4** To support the dialogue of individual workplaces so that in the long run it leads to the further strengthening of interdisciplinary co-operation, both in science and teaching.
- 4.5** To strengthen the long-term sense of belonging among students, employees and graduates based on the shared values of dialogue, respect for the truth and its search, and efforts to move their field and community towards these values.

TOOLS - INDICATIVE MEASURES AND ACTIVITIES TO MEET THE STRATEGIC GOALS

- 4.1.1** Efforts to enter the public debate, popularize research results and incorporate one's own research.
- 4.1.2** Strengthening relations with journalists and other important actors in the social debate.
- 4.1.3** Continuing co-operation with specific target groups. Monitoring the impact of public outputs in cooperation with the university.
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- 4.2.1** Increasing the importance of popularization of science towards the public in the evaluation of individual departments of the faculty, as well as in the evaluation of the academic staff. Support for the activities of departments and other workplaces connecting the faculty with the public in a broad sense.
- 4.2.2** Increasing the competence of academic staff in the popularization of science and support for the transfer of good practice from the most successful workplaces to the rest of the faculty.
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- 4.3.1** Support of student associations and their activities through scholarship and grant support, mentoring by academic staff and direct participation in selected events.
- 4.3.2** Support of student volunteer work in a variety of ways (e.g. offering students appropriate opportunities for volunteer work in close cooperation with the MU Volunteer Centre; giving the students of selected study programs the possibility to replace the required practice with voluntary activities; providing facilities for the

coordination of volunteering activities; linking volunteering with strengthening selected vocational education).

- 4.3.3** Support of the activities of associations and individual departments of the faculty aimed at educating secondary school students and seniors.
- 4.3.4** Development of cooperation with secondary and, in exceptional cases, primary education, both by offering co-operation in secondary school scholarly activities and by offering further education for teachers, or lectures at schools.
- 4.3.5** Identification of barriers to study faced by applicants from socially disadvantaged backgrounds and support for university-wide efforts to reduce these barriers.

- 4.4.1** Creation of the “FSS MU brand” connected with the “MU brand,” which will express the shared values of the faculty. Establishing tools to communicate these shared values inside and outside the faculty.
- 4.4.2** Regular information service for employees and students about events at the faculty and related workplaces through selected communication tools.
- 4.4.3** Support of the creation of interdisciplinary teams of the faculty.
- 4.4.4** Development of a culture of communication about various aspects of faculty life that will strengthen the culture of internal dialogue and involve academic and non-academic staff and students.

- 4.5.1** Developing the tradition of formal and informal meetings of the faculty community as a whole and of the wider circle (graduates, former employees, family members, etc.)
- 4.5.2** Strengthening internal communication through previously unused tools – newsletter, several-day trips of work groups, specific workshops, etc.



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**Inner culture and faculty
administration**

VISION

In 2028, the Faculty of Social Studies will be a prestigious employer helping members of the academic community not only in their professional growth, but also in fulfilling all the university's roles. This will be enabled by the faculty's functional internal processes, pleasant motivational atmosphere and supportive processes. The faculty will be internally interconnected and will not separate individual professional worlds. It will be a community that is aware that the range of taught and researched disciplines also obliges it to wider social responsibility and to be an institution that is environmentally-friendly through its internal procedures, setting an example worth following.

STRATEGIC GOALS

- 5.1** To be a prestigious employer with a shared internal culture and an open personnel policy at the level of leading European faculties, with appropriate processes and tools of personnel management.
- 5.2** Creating a motivating environment by rewarding exceptionally high-quality and exceptional work results, providing employees with equal opportunities and conditions for individual development and career growth, as well as supporting work-life balance.
- 5.3** Strengthening efficiency with the aim of paperless administration.
- 5.4** Communicating fundamental changes related to the organizational matters of the faculty and studies in a transparent and timely manner.
- 5.5** Sustainably and responsibly managing the development and renewal of the faculty infrastructure in order to ensure an adequate functional background for excellent research and quality teaching, as well as a nurturing environment for students and staff.
- 5.6** Careful management of energy resources, water and waste, in accordance with the principles of sustainable development. Strengthening the informed management of the faculty's operations and communicating examples of good practice.

TOOLS - INDICATIVE MEASURES AND ACTIVITIES TO MEET THE STRATEGIC GOALS

- 5.1.1** Preparation and implementation of related processes, passing the evaluation, obtaining and maintaining the HR Excellence in Research Award.
- 5.1.2** Implementation of programs to support career growth for academics, researchers and non-academics, including support for managers in their development and acquisition of key competencies in order to increase the efficiency and quality of their work.
- 5.1.3** Utmost respect for the importance and powers of individual faculty self-governing bodies, encouraging academic staff and students to participate in their work.
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- 5.2.1** Application of existing tools supporting the gradual involvement in or full return of working parents into work life, including support for the operation of a children's group or kindergarten.
- 5.2.2** Consistent application of the individual evaluation of researchers, academic and non-academic staff; introduction of evaluation of managers by their subordinates.
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- 5.3.1** Increasing efficiency through the revision of administrative procedures in practice; moving the agenda that remains online and consistent application of bilingualism (Czech and English) in all necessary agendas.
- 5.3.2** Striving for the reduction of red tape faced by researchers and teachers.
- 5.3.3** Modifying the methodology of compiling the faculty budget with the aim of motivating individual bodies to the highest efficiency while maintaining excellent teaching

and research. Raising awareness of this methodology among members of the academic community.

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5.4.1 Setting up and maintaining information management to keep employees, and current and prospective students up-to-date about significant changes concerning intra-faculty policies towards the organization of studies, including changes in study programs and conditions of the admission procedure.

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5.5.1 Maintaining the facilities to maintain a pleasant and stimulating atmosphere (e.g. contactless unlocking of classrooms; more accessible bike room, and common areas for students and staff).

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5.6.1 Implementation of a university strategy for responsible public procurement, taking into account the broader economic, environmental and social aspects, including the application of qualitative criteria.

5.6.2 Creation, implementation and popularization of strategies for the responsible management of energy, water and waste, and increasing the availability of clean transport.

5.6.3 Participation in public debates on ways to prevent the consequences of climate change, and the presentation of the results of individual approaches.

Masaryk University

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