

RUN-EU EPA Mission brings innovation and collaboration to the University of Burgos

Twenty-six RUN-EU researchers, professors, and students gathered in Burgos to propose future training activities.

Between April 8 and 11, the University of Burgos hosted the EPA Mission (European Programmes Academy), bringing together 26 participants, including professors, researchers, and students from the eight entities that make up [Regional University Network European University \(RUN-EU\)](#) Alliance, of which the University of Burgos is a member.

An EPA Mission is an initiative that facilitates international mobility within the RUN-EU alliance, aiming to identify opportunities for developing joint educational programmes that address the EU's future skills needs and priorities. It is held annually at each of the eight universities that make up RUN-EU.

The theme of the EPA Mission at the UBU was [Smart Sustainable Manufacturing \(SSM\)](#), with the aim of developing four transdisciplinary pedagogical proposals and methodologies for collaborative learning through flexible and innovative training experiences.

At the conclusion of the event, Ileana Greca Dufranc – Vice-Rectorate for Internationalization, Cooperation and Strategic Alliances, reaffirmed the RUN-EU Alliance's commitment to creating meaningful and relevant learning opportunities for students: *“The proposals presented during this EPA Mission have great potential and could be further developed and even adapted to other formats. Within the framework of the RUN-EU Alliance, we are working on the design of new joint degrees, including master's and PhD's, and some of these proposals could be developed in this direction,”* said the Vice-Rectorate.

Divided into four multidisciplinary teams, the participants spent four days working on smart, efficient, and sustainable manufacturing from a holistic perspective—integrating technical, economic, social, and environmental aspects—with a focus on developing advanced skills that have regional and social impact.

The four resulting proposals focus on topics such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), technology transfer from universities to small enterprises, smart manufacturing, and the design of circular and sustainable supply chains as central themes for future Short Advanced Programmes (SAPs).

With the face-to-face work completed, the next step is to ensure the continuity of these groups in the coming months to implement the four initiatives.

The participants of this EPA Mission came from diverse academic and professional backgrounds, including degrees and specialisations in industrial engineering, manufacturing technologies, sustainability, and the circular economy. Among them were researchers with expertise in automation, AI, sustainable design, and technology transfer, as well as advanced knowledge in engineering, environmental management, and business innovation.

During their stay at the University of Burgos, the participants visited the facilities of the High Polytechnic School, La Milanera, including the Construction Materials, Large Structures, and Hydrogen Technologies laboratories, as well as the spaces where research projects involving Autonomous Guided Vehicles (AGVs) are being developed.

To gain deeper insight into the challenges faced by companies in the field of smart and sustainable manufacturing, participants also visited the headquarters of Antolin, a multinational company committed to sustainability and innovation in the region.

Another activity was a guided tour of the exhibition “Burgos Industrial” at the Fórum Evolución, where participants were welcomed by Andrea Ballesteros, Councillor for Culture, Tourism, and Education of the Burgos City Council/ProBurgos.

The training also included a meeting to design key training actions in the field of smart sustainable manufacturing, led by professors and researchers from the UBU, such as José María Cámara Nebreda and Aqib Hassan Ali Khan, Álvaro Arnáiz González and Inés Miguel Alonso, with the collaboration of various stakeholders from the Burgos industrial sector, such as Susana Navarro Espina, General Manager at Retail360 Consulting; Marteyn Van Gasteren and Adrián Salazar Gómez, from the Castilla y León Technological Institute (ITCL); Diego Moreno Eguíluz, CEO at IOThing; and Álvaro Díez Barbero, Rodrigo González Maeso and Carlos Estébanez Izquierdo, from Benteler.

The programme was rounded off with a series of cultural and social activities, such as a guided tour of the historic centre of Burgos and a visit to the CAB Burgos Museum of Modern Art.