

Global Master School Aschaffenburg University of Applied Sciences (AUAS)  
Doing business in Europe:  
*Think global, act local*  
Sustainable Business Stories (16 – 23 May 2026)

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**Website:** [www.th-ab.de/gms](http://www.th-ab.de/gms) (16/ 23 May are reserved for arrival/ departure)

**Target Group:** Master students with a background in business/management or related areas (*maximum 40 participants based on trilateral agreement with 10 participants each (30) + ERASMUS+ BIP partners*)

**Pre-requisites:** good/very good English (B2+ at least on CERF). A background in business, management, marketing, sustainability related affairs would be convenient along with a strong sense of motivation, an open mind and a great sense of enthusiasm and the willingness to cooperate intensively and across cultures is greatly appreciated.

**Workload:** 6 ECTS/3 UC (assessment will comprise an online preparatory assignment + an onsite final student presentation to companies/ key stakeholders + an individual online written report following the GMS). A dedicated moodle course will be made available to all GMS participants/lecturers and practitioners.

### **Academic Content & Learning Outcomes:**

This year's Global Master School examines how locally embedded firms can successfully internationalise within and beyond the European market by strategically combining sustainability, regional identity, and tourism-based value creation. Using the case of a German winery operating within the framework of the European Union Single Market, the course analyses internationalisation strategies, sustainability-oriented marketing, and wine tourism as interconnected pillars of international management.

The intensive programme situates international business decision-making within the specific institutional, regulatory, and cultural framework of Europe and the European Single Market - with its free movement of goods, services, capital, and people, shapes opportunities and constraints for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Particular attention is paid to how European integration reduces barriers to cross-border expansion while simultaneously increasing competitive pressure and regulatory complexity.

Using a German winery as a core case study, students investigate how companies can exploit regional heritage and sustainability narratives to differentiate themselves in saturated European markets. The program highlights the strategic balance between standardisation across EU markets and local adaptation to national consumer preferences, regulatory environments, and cultural expectations. Sustainability is considered here not only as a normative goal but as a potential driver of international competitiveness - particularly in Europe, where environmental regulation, ESG standards, and consumer awareness are comparatively high. Students will analyse how sustainability certification, eco-labels, and transparent communication contribute to brand positioning and market access with the European context.

### **Overall Context of the GMS:**

The course module provides students with in-depth insights into international management in the European context, combining strategic theory with applied practice. It equips future managers with the ability to navigate the complexities of the EU Single Market, develop sustainable business models, and manage international growth in highly regulated and culturally diverse environments such as Europe and selected non-European countries.

The GMS will take place on the premises of TH Aschaffenburg/Aschaffenburg University of Applied Sciences located in the city center and surroundings. The beautiful Bavarian city of Aschaffenburg, which King Ludwig I used to fondly call the "Bavarian Nice", is the focal point of the Bavarian part of the "Frankfurt Rhein Main" area and holds top positions in European rankings as far as future viability and economic dynamics are concerned. Key factors for its success are the close cooperation and mutual trust between commerce, science, society, politics and government. Aschaffenburg is within easy reach of Frankfurt which is just 30 minutes away.

Lecturers from selected participating universities and practitioners will share their expertise with inputs on the related areas to support students in carrying out their task for the companies in question. The program includes outings to the winery with an in-depth presentation on site and hiking in the surroundings as well as cultural activities and networking events during this GMS edition. Visits to the case study company, a guided city tour of Aschaffenburg and a visit to Frankfurt and the European Central Bank form an integral part of the GMS programme. Additionally, the GMS programme features an outing to the picturesque old town of Miltenberg and a local brewery.

#### **Learning Outcomes:**

- Students will get a deeper understanding on doing Business in Europe and the EU Single Market and apply internationalisation strategies of European SMEs
- In cross-cultural teams, students will take on consulting roles to identify suitable market entry/internationalisation strategies for a selected case company in the area of winemaking.
- Students will be able to explain how the EU Single Market influences internationalisation strategies of European SMEs and analyse international expansion paths of German companies within Europe and beyond.
- They will learn to evaluate market entry strategies in the European context and beyond (e.g. intra-EU exporting, partnerships, clusters, digital platforms).
- They will learn to design sustainability-driven marketing strategies for European consumer markets and beyond.
- They will be able to apply international management concepts such as institutional environments, liability of foreignness, and cultural distance to European business cases.
- Students will practice and enhance their management, marketing communication and interpersonal skills in a typical consulting setting (including time constraints)

### Assessment Methods:

- International Team project (onsite): Market entry strategy for a regional German winery (selected target countries will be identified and
- allocated to the teams accordingly) with a sustainability-focused marketing concept for the target region/country with a final consultancy style presentation to representatives of the case study company and stakeholders
- Individual case analysis (online pre-assignment)
- Individual Reflection report/video (online post-assignment)

### Selected Key topics:

- Doing Business in Europe/ EU Single Market
- Internationalisation strategies of European SMEs
- The European wine market and regional branding
- Cultural diversity and consumer behaviour in Europe
- Germany as a business location/export economy