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## No more cheap middle-class labor



Signs at protests in Prague and other university cities yesterday in favor of more funding for academicians said in Czech, "[No more cheap labor](#)." The ČMKOS labor union used the same slogan starting in 2015, but it had mainly blue-collar workers in mind. ČMKOS union boss Josef Středula told [HN in 2017](#) that we must extract ourselves from this cheap-wage situation and cannot have the goal of remaining a low-cost country. Yet [Handelsblatt](#) quoted Chair Klaus Zellmer of Škoda Auto last week as saying that Škoda's biggest advantage within Volkswagen is its cost-efficiency. He didn't mean just the obvious blue-collar wage advantage. "Sources in the company say that an hour's development work at Škoda's main plant in Mladá Boleslav costs about a third of the hourly rate in Wolfsburg," Handelsblatt reported. Yesterday's protest suggests that if the CR wants to become a [higher value-added economy](#), employers might have to add more value to the paychecks of their white-collar workers.

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