

University of Vienna: Erasmus+ Policy Statement

2021-2027

1. Principles

For the University of Vienna, internationalisation is an essential instrument for profile building. In its development plan, the University of Vienna defines its understanding of internationalisation as follows:

Part of the essence of a university is openness to the world. This naturally also applies to the University of Vienna. The University of Vienna considers internationalisation as a core element of openness.

The internationalisation of research and teaching and international cooperation are important because they enable the exchange of ideas with the whole world. Science is international because the entire scientific discourse takes place internationally. In other words, the internationalisation of research and teaching is always part of a comprehensive quality strategy. Teaching and research co-operations with the most suitable partners for this serve to keep up with the leaders in science internationally. This results in the University of Vienna's claim to be an internationally competitive university,

- a) that attracts talented students and scientists;
- b) that offers study programmes of recognised quality, whose graduates are readily employed by other organisations;
- c) that offers attractive framework conditions for teaching and research, so that scientists enjoy working at the University of Vienna.

In addition, the University of Vienna sees internationalisation as part of its educational mission in the 21st century. As citizens and workers in a globalised world, graduates of the University of Vienna need intercultural competences, international experience and a good knowledge of the lingua franca English.

Participation in the Erasmus programme makes an important contribution to the international positioning of the University of Vienna with its broad range of programme activities.

The Erasmus Programme supports the students of the University of Vienna in developing not only their professional but also their personal competences. In addition, exchange and networking within the programme promote the international orientation of the University of Vienna. Innovation is also strengthened through international exchange.

The broad opportunities in the programme not only contribute to competence development at the individual level as well as to strengthening the University of Vienna in its efforts towards international networking and innovation. They thus also make an important contribution in the implementation of the European Renewal Agenda (promotion of competence development, networking of higher education systems, contribution to innovation and promotion of effective and efficient higher education systems, creation of inclusive and networked higher education systems).

2. Planned Activities

The University of Vienna plans to participate in all activities of the Erasmus programme.

2.1. Key Action 1

In its participation in the Erasmus+ Programme, the University focuses on Key Action 1 (Mobility of Students and University Staff). The University of Vienna uses the participation in Key Action 1 as a contribution to the objective of being an attractive location for students and researchers, to increase the quality of the study programmes and to offer attractive framework conditions for teaching and research. In addition to cooperation within the programme countries, the University of Vienna also plans to use the track for third-country mobility in a very targeted manner for the strategic development of cooperation with selected partner universities.

The following activities are essential cornerstones of the implementation of Key Action 1.

Study Visits:

The opportunity to complete part of their studies abroad is an important contribution to the internationalisation of studies, so that students acquire important personal competences in addition to broadening their professional skills.

With a broad network of partner universities, the Erasmus programme offers a wide range of exchange opportunities. It is also by far the largest mobility programme for this target group. The consolidation of the network of partners should be quality-assured and driven forward in consideration of the agreement content. New agreements should only be concluded in a limited form.

Criteria for new agreements are:

- Quality of the partner university
- Conformity of the curricula and compatibility of the courses offered
- Use and utilisation of existing exchange places

In addition to the International Office, the mobility coordinators in the individual departments are important players in the implementation of the programme. The focus of their tasks is on:

- coordinating the content with the partner universities
- the selection of outgoing students
- the professional supervision of incoming students

In addition to the mobility coordinators, the programme directors are responsible for the recognition of the study credits acquired by outgoing students.

The focus of programme implementation should continue to be on quality orientation. Linguistic and intercultural preparation are essential elements that are to be further strengthened.

Students of all study levels can complete study visits. The University of Vienna plans to make targeted use of the new opportunities offered by the Erasmus programme (e.g. blended mobility and PhD mobility) in order to better meet the needs of the different target groups.

Internships:

Erasmus internships should continue to offer students of the University of Vienna the opportunity to spend a period of time abroad in Europe and to acquire intercultural competences, international experience and good language skills (especially English) in addition to their professional and vocational qualifications.

The organisation of the internship is up to the students; the University of Vienna considers this as part of the learning process. The programme directors are responsible for checking the relevance of the programme and for quality assurance of the content.

In this programme track, too, new language certificates are to ensure the success of the internship and emphasise the quality-oriented focus.

Teaching Mobility:

Teaching mobility is intended to make a significant contribution to the internationalisation of the University of Vienna and is an important funding channel to complete a teaching stay at a partner university and to make international contact with colleagues. For younger members of the academic staff in particular, it is a good opportunity to gain international teaching experience and to network. At the same time, as a contribution to Internationalisation@home, it offers students of the University of Vienna the opportunity to come into contact with international teachers and to get to know new teaching content.

The network of partners is formed as a bottom-up process, which is generally based on existing contacts and cooperation and which is to be further developed in a quality-assured manner. The integration into existing courses on site should also ensure the appropriate embedding of teaching at the university.

Staff Mobility

Internationalisation is understood as a common concern of all university members. The exchange of experience with international colleagues from a similar field of work should also broaden the view of one's own work from an international perspective. The University of Vienna particularly supports participation in international Staff Weeks. The organisation of such Staff Weeks at the University of Vienna is intended to give the staff of the University of Vienna the opportunity for an international exchange of experience.

2.2. Key Action 2 and 3

In addition to the focus on Key Action 1 (Mobility of Students and University Staff), the University of Vienna will also be active in Erasmus Key Action 2 (Cooperation between Organisations and Higher Education Institutions) and in Key Action 3 (Support for Policy Development and Cooperation).

The **projects in Key Action 2** (programme lines Partnerships for Cooperation and Exchange of Good Practice, Partnerships for Innovation) the projects in **Key Action 3** apply the principle of bottom-up development.

As partners in the implementation of projects, the University of Vienna will give priority to institutions that are comparable or complementary in terms of content, as well as institutions with which there are already corresponding (research) contacts and cooperations. When carrying out and implementing the projects, the involvement of the relevant internal university stakeholders should be ensured in order to guarantee a sustainable institutional anchoring of the results at the University of Vienna.

Key Action 2 - European Higher Education Institutions (EUN): With regard to EUN, the University of Vienna refers to its fundamental intention to participate in a higher education network whose strategic orientation is in line with that of the University of Vienna. In contrast to the other programme tracks in Key Actions 2 and 3 (see above), the decision-making process on the European Higher Education Institutions will clearly follow a top-down procedure. This process will take into account existing cooperations and connections in research and teaching and will be oriented towards the development possibilities of new forms of cooperation.

By participating in the Erasmus Programme, the University of Vienna aims to live up to its claim of being an internationally competitive university and to act under the premise of the greatest possible quality orientation when implementing the individual programme tracks.

The University of Vienna has implemented important quality assurance measures for the linguistic and intercultural preparation of outgoing students. Furthermore, it has developed specific information formats to promote mobility and to increase the quality of mobility stays. These measures are to be further refined. In the incoming sector, the university has established itself as a popular destination. Quality assurance measures, for example in the social integration of incoming students or the English-language teaching programme, are to be implemented in order to remain attractive as a partner university.

The University of Vienna will endeavour to maintain or even increase the level of mobility already achieved (incoming and outgoing). Important prerequisites are

- a targeted information policy and skilful marketing of the mobility programmes as well as
- the anchoring of mobility in the curriculum through time-framed mobility windows for semesters and internships abroad as well as curricularly defined spaces for the recognition of academic achievements at partner universities (e.g. extended curricula or elective subjects).
- Last but not least, the portfolio of partnership agreements is to be further developed in a quality-oriented manner in order to enable students and teachers to spend time at a very good university.

The development of quantitative targets for the implementation of the Erasmus programme is based on the performance agreements concluded between the University and the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research. Further objectives are specified in the annual target agreements between the Rectorial Council and the International Office of the University of Vienna.