

Erasmus+ Declaration on Higher Education Policy (Erasmus Policy Statement = EPS)

The institution's international strategy in the context of the European renewal agenda and modernisation agenda

Internationalisation at the **University College of Teacher Education Vienna (PH Wien)** with all its facets (mobility, co-operation, delegations, informal exchange, and joint programmes) takes place at the regional, national, and international level. All areas were previously linked to the Erasmus+ programme or to cross-regional EU programmes with neighbouring countries.

In terms of international knowledge transfer, it is a particular concern of the university to both deepen existing cultural co-operative partnerships and further expand networking with the educational focal points and academisation within the international scientific community as part of the professionalisation continuum.

The institution assumes its socio-political responsibility by developing research projects and thereby initiating and intensifying international co-operation. The long-standing continuity in bilateral exchange within the research-performative, collegial, and cultural spectrum is to be maintained or further expanded, especially as part of the co-operation within the framework of Erasmus+. In addition, the English-language teaching offer at the PH Wien is to be expanded. This will enable international students to participate in the entire teaching portfolio of the institution, promote the common Lingua Franca of science in the tertiary context, and represent an important step towards the internal qualitative internationalisation of the university. An important goal according to the profile and development planning is to combine staff mobility in teaching as well as in projects or international co-operation. This should enrich all central areas of activity (teaching, research, and development in educational institutions).

The role of PH Vienna...

in the European education area is to be based on several levels and is based on continuity with the current EPS:

- on the convergence of national education systems through transparency, the exchange of experiences, and the definition of common goals and fields of action at the political level. Cross-border projects, especially with the immediate neighbouring countries, are already doing pioneering work for a future generation of programmes.
- on the comparability of qualifications and the mutual recognition of educational qualifications and workload up to and including joint degrees in higher education (also with partner countries of the EU)
- on the Europe-wide structural co-operation of educational institutions and the transnational mobility of individuals

within the framework of the renewal agenda:

- Orientation towards *best practice examples* in higher education (education, research, innovation, and systems design) with the help of study and expert groups as well as the analysis and monitoring of benchmarks and indicators

- Promotion of co-operation, mutual learning, and targeted strategic advice between the bodies responsible for higher education (ministries) or regional authorities
- Strengthening of the capacity and output of higher education institutions by funding innovative co-operation projects between institutions and their partners (Erasmus+, Horizon2020) and through funding from the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) as well as investment in infrastructure, institutions, skills development, and innovation projects. Investments in infrastructure in the field of higher education are **also launched through projects of the responsible federal ministry**
- Promotion of the international mobility of students, higher education staff, and female researchers in order to provide them with an opportunity to develop their experience and skills (through Erasmus+ and other actions such as Marie Skłodowska-Curie)
- Strengthening of the co-operation between universities, research institutions, and other educational institutions such as the **resident education directorates**

Adapted within the framework of the previous priorities of the modernisation agenda

- Further increase in the level of education to meet Europe's demand for female academics and researchers: the introduction of the eight-semester Bachelor's programme and the subsequent Master's programme will raise the quality of teacher training and as well as the level of academisation in Austria in general. This enables comparability with EU countries.
- Improvement of the quality and relevance of higher education: offering Master's programmes will allow access to PhD/Doctoral studies. The existing quality and relevance of study programmes and research training will be evaluated and increased in the long term. Graduates will be equipped with the knowledge and recognised transferable skills that are already common internationally in teacher training programmes.
- Strengthening of quality through mobility and cross-border co-operation: the planning and facilitation of jointly recognised degrees/joint degrees with regard to the conversion to a Bologna-compliant teacher training is a focal point of work within the framework of internationalisation. Participation in strategic partnerships and capacity building together with neighbouring countries as well as with partner regions (e.g. the US, Ukraine, and Asia) will be sought in parallel with the curriculum development of the Master's programmes.
- Making the knowledge triangle work: the integration of professional internships within the framework of Erasmus+ as well as the setting of content-related focal points in curricula and research lead to a greater attractiveness of the location in regional competition with regard to co-operation with the economy as well as urban or regional development fields.
- Improvement of governance and funding: this can be better achieved with a new, longer-term improved target and performance plan from the Ministry of Education. The areas of internationalisation and mobility in particular appear in this as well as in the Development Plan for Universities of Teacher Education 2021–2026 and can thus be planned and tracked in a resource-efficient manner. Decades of co-operation with the Erasmus+ National Agency and the OeAD form a reliable, synergetic, and evolutionary basis for the new Erasmus programme.

Strategy for establishing international networks and co-operation projects in the field of research

In addition to promoting mobilities within the framework of KA103 and KA107, the international strategy of the PH Wien also aims to establish or consolidate links with other programme and partner countries in the areas of research and development. In particular, the establishment of strategic partnerships and knowledge alliances (KA2) of the Erasmus+ programme are envisaged here as are the track of the current KA3 policy support programmes, which particularly support the public mission of the university. The active establishment and expansion of research networks through goal-oriented project activities is an important element in fulfilling the tasks of the university – as are internal personnel development and the promotion of young researchers.

In recent years, the institution has achieved by far the most frequent participation rate in the aforementioned actions in the field of Erasmus+ compared with the other Austrian universities of teacher education. It thus has many years of expertise with EU programmes, the results and products of which are reflected in the further development of the institution and in research. This successful path must be continued in the coming programme generation.

Strategy of the Institution for achieving and monitoring the objectives of international co-operation projects

Participation in Erasmus+ co-operation and innovation projects is indispensable for further university development. On one hand, participation in these projects contributes to the improved and sustainable academisation of the higher education institution; on the other hand, participation links current societal and educational policy needs with the education, training, and continuing education activities as well as with research at the PH Wien.

Strategic partnerships form essential topic-specific focal points of their own expertise, promote dialogue between different scientific disciplines, and expand these with the capacities and expertise of other internationally active comparable partner institutions. The co-operation and networking of academic staff with colleagues in other countries contributes significantly to internationalisation and Europeanisation and is therefore a declared goal of our internationalisation strategy.

Strategic knowledge alliances enable *capacity building* and professional development of our academic teaching staff. This, in turn, has a positive influence on teacher training and thus on the education of the next generations of students.

The high-quality and sustainable mobility of students, lecturers, and administrative university staff is an essential concern of the PH Wien and for years has been handled synergistically and successfully with the National Agency within the framework of KA103 and KA107. However, because of ongoing resource cuts, the University College of Teacher Education Vienna is reaching the limits of what is feasible.

The quantitative indicators we use in relation to Erasmus+ projects are:

- Number of participations in submissions to third-party funded projects, external research projects, and publications in (peer-)reviewed journals
- Number of European and international partner institutions in submissions specific to academic networks
- Sum of third-party funds raised (mostly EU or through national projects)
- Number of staff involved (students/teachers/decision-makers) and visibility in work packages
- Number of courses taught in English
- Number of courses with virtual teaching – number and form of delivery (Mahara, Moodle, Zoom, webinars)

The following serve as qualitative indicators:

- Relevance of *intellectual outputs* from implemented EU projects and resulting publications
- Sustainable implementation in the study programme as well as the use of this generated experience in the study programme
- Increased publication rate of scientific publications
- Multiple uses of increased expertise by university staff (in the classroom and elsewhere)
- Paradigm shift from a teacher-centred to a student-centred approach
- Initiation of individual teaching and learning processes, following the models of international knowledge alliances
- Visibility of the university in the international higher education area through publications, international projects, and participation in scientific conferences
- Mapping the unity of research and teaching
- Dissemination of the results of international research and development projects at the institution, reference to the curricula, and anchoring in the courses
- In the context of inclusion: virtual semester abroad for people with disabilities (also in the context of blended mobility), thereby enabling students from abroad with, for example, sensory disabilities or physical impairments to participate in courses
- In the context of digitalisation: virtual teaching or distance learning not only in the international programme
- Increased use of virtual consultation hours
- Events on global issues (students' conferences) involving Erasmus+ students

With regard to the timetable mentioned above, the PH Wien, as a higher education institution and subordinate agency, is bound by the approval of the target and performance plan of the institution, the higher education mobility strategy of the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research, and the higher education development plan for Austrian universities of teacher education. At the time of submission of the ECHE charter, these documents for 2021–2027 were not available.

In any case, the continuation of the ongoing KA103, KA107, KA2, and possibly KA3 projects will also be strived for in the coming years.