

D Erasmus Declaration on Higher Education Policy (General strategy)

The institution is committed to publishing the general strategy on its website within one month of signing the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education with the European Commission.

Please describe the international (EU and non-EU) strategy of your institution. In your description, please explain (a) how you choose your partners, (b) in which geographical area(s) and (c) the main objectives and target groups of your mobility activities (concerning higher education staff and students in the first, second and third cycle of studies, including course of studies or practical placements, and also short course of studies). If applicable, explain how your institution is involved in the development of double / multiple / joint degrees.

Sigmund Freud University (SFU) is a European university in the sense that it has branches in France (Paris), Germany (Berlin), Slovenia (Ljubljana), Italy (Milan) and Austria (Linz). At its headquarter in Vienna, SFU has established itself as a core university with four faculties: Psychotherapy Science, Psychology, Law and Medicine.

The SFU's internationalisation strategy and European orientation is set out in the Development Plan 2015-2021 as follows:

The SFU wants to offer scientists and students - both in terms of content and as an institution - a European working and learning environment. Establishing European locations also serves this purpose. The decision establishing branches should primarily be based on the following criterion: what can the branch contribute to increasing the critical scientific output? For the branches, primarily those study programmes are to be considered where the innovative momentum can be qualitatively assured by a European network. This is, for example, the case with the Psychotherapy Science programme, which was established for the first time worldwide at SFU, and which should also be available outside Austria. The same applies for the psychology programme, the content of which is unique compared to other Austrian universities and should therefore also be available outside Austria. In the planning period 2015 to 2021, the main task will be to strengthen the research network among all the branches. As an idealistic surplus and contribution to promoting a European attitude among young people, it is planned to develop a culturally-psychologically based European project from 2017 onwards, which will be open to all students and scientists at all branches. In addition to institutional visibility, this project should also make the "European" characteristic of the university more visible.

ad a)

The selection of our partner organisations follows the priorities of the faculties and the branches. Since the student mobilities for studies (SMS and SMP) have so far only been carried out at the faculties of Psychotherapy Science and Psychology in Vienna, it can be stated that our partner universities have a cultural-scientific understanding of psychology. Another selection criterion is the establishment of a psychotherapy science education at university level without prior studies. We also pay attention to these principles when inviting lecturers within the framework of a Teaching Mobility. Basically, we adhere to the following guiding principle: when selecting new partner universities, research-strategically well-functioning cooperations should be taken into account, these contacts should be built on, and new scientific approaches should be created in a targeted manner.

ad b)

Within the framework of Key Action 1, SFU strives for the highest possible cooperation density with European universities in a geographically broad network in order to enable a lively discussion of our specific curricula. There are Erasmus+ cooperations with universities from the following programme countries: Denmark, Netherlands, Spain, Italy, Czech Republic, Germany, Turkey, Greece, Sweden, Norway. Cooperations with universities from partner countries are planned (Ukraine, Albania).

ad c)

SMS and SMP - 'outgoing' - are mainly used by students in the Bachelor programme of the Faculty of Psychology at SFU Vienna. An increase in mobility for students in the Master's programme and also in the doctoral programme is desirable, but is not perceived as attractive by our students due to professional regulations.

With regard to 'incoming students', it should be noted that Bachelor and Master students are equally represented; incoming doctoral students are, however, rare.

SFU also emphasises its international orientation by offering the psychotherapy science study programme in English at its Vienna location. This 'English Programme' is highly attractive for many students at universities in partner and programme countries.

The cultural-scientific orientation of the psychology study programme and the uniqueness of the direct psychotherapy training within the framework of the psychotherapy science studies can be the driving force behind numerous exciting research collaborations. We are working to ensure that Erasmus+ continues to establish contacts with colleagues in research and teaching.

SFU and the Ukrainian Catholic University (UCU) cooperate in a double degree Master Programme. The first student mobility takes place in the winter semester 2018/19. The two partner universities are keen to carefully evaluate and further develop the cooperation. Both partner universities have the same mission regarding the direct training of psychotherapists on an academic level which is highly gratifying and of great importance for the international orientation of the faculty of Psychotherapy Science.

Finally, we should mention our efforts in China. Due to the poor psychosocial care situation in China, the need to realise a direct university training in psychotherapy has arisen.

Please describe your institution's strategy for the organisation and implementation of international (EU and non-EU) cooperation projects in teaching and training in relation to projects implemented through the Erasmus + Programme. If not applicable, please provide an explanation.

The double degree Master programme, which was created by SFU and UCU, will be supported by KA 107 student mobility grants. In addition, a project with a Swedish educational organization and with a French university - in cooperation with our Paris location - is planned.

It can be said that we have not yet been able to fully exploit the capacities provided by Erasmus+. The inclusion of our locations has resulted in a higher activity potential.

Please describe the expected impact on the modernisation of your institution in terms of the policy objectives (for each of the five priorities of the modernisation agenda) that you seek to achieve through your participation in the programme.

Priority 1 - Raising the level of education to meet Europe's needs for academics and researchers

The declared goal of the SFU is to train sought-after personalities who, in their thinking and acting, take responsibility for the global social, political and societal issues of the 21st century. This includes a cross-border dialogue and exchange in teaching and studies as well as in research and development.

As a private university, the SFU offers study programmes with a high level of employability. Of particular importance with regard to the faculties of Psychotherapy Science and Psychology is the need to meet the demand for academics in the field of mental health, which goes hand in hand with progressive mechanisation and the dissolution of traditional lifestyles. Both faculties provide relevant research results on many psycho-scientific relevant areas. The recently established Faculty of Law has a special focus on European Law, which is of great relevance in the merging European area. The necessity of training highly qualified physicians at the SFU's Faculty of Medicine is beyond question. These goals are supported by mobility.

Priority 2 - Improving the quality and relevance of higher education

As a private university, the SFU places particular emphasis on good student support. Courses take place in small groups, so that a lot of time can be devoted to student questions. The supervision of final theses is close meshed. The SFU is convinced that international exchange is an essential part of a high-quality and attractive education, which is becoming increasingly important in a globalised world. Students should thus acquire the necessary skills and an intercultural perspective in order to survive as graduates in globalised competition and at the same time strengthen European values.

Priority 3 - Strengthening quality through mobility and cross-border cooperation

Participating in mobility programmes such as Erasmus+ involves constant cooperation with other universities, mainly - but not exclusively - in the context of drawing up Learning Agreements and Transcripts of Records. In this context, concise descriptions of courses and modules are of great relevance. Through the close exchange in these areas, standards of other universities become visible and lead to a continuous evaluation of one's own way of thinking and acting. Students with international experience take a lot of the academic and cultural background of the partner university with them, which (can) have a stimulating effect.

Priority 4 - Making the knowledge triangle work: linking higher education, research and business for excellence and regional development

SFU as a private university with expertise in psychotherapy science and psychology has established psychotherapeutic and psychological outpatient clinics at its locations; at the Vienna location there is both a children's outpatient clinic and an outpatient clinic for adults. In addition to the high quality of care which the SFU can thus guarantee, students can complete the required practical placements under supervision there. At the same time there is added value for the local community. In addition to treating patients, the outpatient clinics also conduct research.

In January 2019, the SFU will launch a project on phenomenological research of values held by Muslims – and thus contribute its expertise to the political organisation of a peaceful coexistence of diverse groups of the population.

Priority 5 - Improving governance and funding

The Erasmus+ programme will significantly increase the mobility rate, as otherwise it would not be possible to finance mobility adequately. It is desirable to improve the funding of the programme in order to further increase the number of mobile students, professors and staff.