

## Erasmus+ Policy Statement 2021-27

The Paris Lodron University Salzburg (PLUS) is a public university that meets the highest standards in teaching and research. Students can choose from 30 different degree programmes, which are divided into Bachelor's, Master's, PhD and diploma programmes. In addition, the University of Salzburg also offers numerous part-time University Programmes for Further Education, some of which are run together with other educational institutions. Of currently 18.245 students enrolled at the University of Salzburg, approximately 33% come from abroad - either taking part in a mobility program or studying independently. Over the last 29 years, the PLUS has not only established a wide network of more than 300 Partner Universities within Erasmus+ Programme Countries, but also with more than 50 universities within Erasmus+ Partner Countries and has coordinated various Erasmus KA2 projects.

The PLUS focuses on qualitative international networks with leading universities in Europe and the world. Continuing participation in the Erasmus+ programme supports the international education and career development of students and staff. In this context, the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education 2021-2027 is explicitly included in the PLUS policy. The activities within the key actions in the ERASMUS+ programme pursue the creation of a large European Education Area in which learning and studying, teaching and instructing, training and working are possible across borders. This requires a broad cooperation in teaching- and mobility-projects between international partners on the one hand and the mutual recognition of qualifications as well as learning periods acquired abroad on the other hand. The Paris Lodron University of Salzburg is clearly committed to these objectives. Through its constant commitment to the European projects SOCRATES, Lifelong Learning and ERASMUS+, the PLUS constantly expanded the opportunities for academic education and sustainable personal development of its students and graduates. Furthermore, the PLUS aims to provide its academics with excellent research conditions and international visibility through appropriate resources focusing on both internal and external networking along the principles of the Erasmus+ programme internationalisation, innovation, sustainability and digitalisation of teaching, research and administrative processes.

### Internationalization Strategy and Erasmus+

Until now, the Erasmus+ programme (along with former European programme generations) has been instrumental for the PLUS in scaling up successful practices and enhancing cooperation with more than 380 higher education institutions in Europe and worldwide.



It was particularly important in supporting the implementation of worldwide exemplary mobility projects financed by the European Commission, such as Joint European Master Erasmus Mundus, SIGMA, gSMART, DC LEAD and COPERNICUS. Furthermore, Erasmus+ supported numerous Curriculum Development or Capacity Building/Strategic partnerships as well as Jean Monnet projects. All of them are strengthening the EU-commitment to promoting citizenship, fundamental freedoms, tolerance and non-discrimination through education. Among institutions of higher education, the PLUS is known as a key member of a developing worldwide academic community and as a reliable partner to address global challenges.

Continuing the participation in the new Erasmus+ programme generation, the PLUS wants to further contribute to help to build the European Education Area underpinned by six dimensions: quality, inclusion and gender equality, green and digital transitions, teachers, higher education, a stronger Europe in the world.

Initiatives will *inter alia* look at ways to enhance quality, particularly in regards to basic research and digital skills and to make PLUS more inclusive and gender sensitive. They will help strengthen understanding of climate change and sustainability, to foster the development of a “greener” education infrastructure at the PLUS as well as to support teaching and engagement in a European University Alliance.

All these strategic objectives are embedded in the institutional Internationalization Strategy and will help to implement four academic principles, taking into account its strengths and weaknesses, in order to enhance international visibility and positioning. The PLUS has set out the following overall four academic guiding principles that are considered as an imperative strategic framework for the implementation of the ongoing and future ERASMUS+ activities at Salzburg:

1. **Digital Life:** A broad view of digitisation: from technology to ethics, from mobility to robotics. Digitisation serves people. We want to communicate advantages and benefits and orientate teaching and research accordingly.
2. **Development & Sustainability:** Development and sustainability belong together, and along with them comes the analysis of sustainable ideas, concepts and social developments. With an interdisciplinary range of courses on the subjects of environment and technology, we identify long-term future perspectives for development and meaningful growth.



3. **Art in Context:** The PLUS is integral to Salzburg as a city of culture, both geographically and in terms of our engagement with art. We analyse and appreciate art in its various contexts – social, political, environmental - and thus consider it as a form of action and participation. Scientific research and art together create a holistic view of life, for which the PLUS should take a leading role in promoting.
4. **Health & Mind:** The PLUS also has a broader view when it comes to the topic of health. This does not just concern a healthy body. It is about the concept of mental, social and economic health, about individual and social well-being.

### **Implementation of Erasmus Mobility**

Academic and administrative structures for organizing and implementing student and staff mobility are well established for each mobility phase for both outgoing and incoming mobilities. The PLUS encourages vulnerable groups and minorities.

Erasmus exchange activities between partners and other institutions are only to be carried out within the framework of a previously concluded inter institutional agreement (iia) - where applicable. Such agreements define the respective responsibilities of the individual parties as well as their obligations, e.g. with regard to the selection, preparation, admission and integration of mobile students and to apply common quality criteria.

### **SELECTION**

Home institutions are responsible for the selection and awarding procedure of the students and staff following the requirements of the Erasmus+ programme guide, such as:

- Ensuring fair, transparent and proper selection criteria (grade ranking, language competences, letter of motivation, etc.)
- archiving of the process
- Compliance with the principles of non-discrimination, in particular the equality of women and men as well as the integration and promotion of the mobility opportunities for socially disadvantaged students
- Encouragement and support of socially disadvantaged students or students with special needs to participate in mobility program

At the University of Salzburg, the appointed academic coordinator on departmental level is responsible for the selection of candidates and the academic mentoring of students, for signing the (Online) Learning Agreement (LA) and the guidance in the PLUS learning environment. Student selection is based on academic merit, motivation, objectives and educational recommendations. All applicants have to select subjects or do research in study programme relevant fields of study.

#### RECOGNITION

PLUS uses the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) grading scale, which grants comparability of courses and recognition at home and sending country institutions. Before the start of their stay abroad, students receive information on the university, the course programme, the requirements in terms of subject and language, the necessary credits/ECTS (recognition) and local grading system. Hereby, the implementation is based on the ECTS standards for academic transparency and recognition of the study achievements abroad agreed upon. An individual (Online) Learning Agreement (LA) is concluded before the start of the study, which is only valid if signed by all responsible parties. At the end of the mobility phase, the PLUS issues a Transcript of Records (ToR) with a complete record of the achievements for incoming students of partner universities. The University of Salzburg also accepts to mutually recognize the listed achievements of PLUS outgoing students provided the academic supervisor has approved them beforehand.

#### DISSEMINATION

PLUS advertises the program and disseminates information at events, such as the annually held International Week or Erasmus+ Day. Current information is constantly available at the PLUS homepage and distributed using social media channels. PLUS students and staff are informed about the exchange activities by departments' responsible persons and by the International Relations Department's employees during public lectures, seminars, office hours, online consultation sessions and different training modules.

Participants will constantly receive support and information by the PLUS International Relations Department as well as by the academic coordinator at every stage of their mobility.

With the award of the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education, the Paris Lodron University of Salzburg commits itself to the principles and requirements anchored in the programme as well as their compliance.

Salzburg, May 4<sup>th</sup> 2021

  
  
Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Hendrik Lehnert  
Rector Paris Lodron University Salzburg

  
Mag. Peter Mayr, MA  
Head International Relations Department