ERUA
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PATHS Student Handbook

Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context

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1. Welcome to PATHS

Welcome to PATHS, a joint Master's programme in *Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context*.

PATHS is a two-year, full-time joint Master's programme taught in English and carrying a total of 120 ECTS credits. It is delivered by six partner universities in the European Reform University Alliance (ERUA): Europa-Universität Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder), New Bulgarian University, SWPS University, Università degli Studi di Macerata, Université Paris 8 Vincennes-Saint-Denis and the University of the Aegean. SWPS University is the coordinating institution.

The programme combines common core courses, methods training, mobility between partner universities, a compulsory internship and a jointly supervised Master's thesis. It is organised around three thematic paths: European border regimes, inclusion and protection of children and minors, and politics and policies of migration. This multidisciplinary curriculum is rooted in sociology as its leading discipline, while integrating critical perspectives from political science and public administration, law, and psychology.

[Website for the Candidates will be linked here]

2. How to use this handbook

This handbook is meant to help you navigate the programme from admission to graduation. It focuses on the information students most often need: how the programme is structured, where you will study, what support is available, what rules apply to progression and assessment, and what practical steps you need to plan for each mobility period.

For more detailed information, you will also receive or be referred to:

- course syllabi,
- the academic calendar,
- a mobility information package,
- local onboarding information at each host university,
- detailed guidance on internship and thesis requirements,
- partner-specific practical information.

3. PATHS in brief

PATHS lasts four semesters and requires the successful completion of 120 ECTS credits. A standard workload is 30 ECTS per semester, which equates to approximately 750–900 hours of student work. Across the consortium, one ECTS corresponds to 25–30 hours of student work.

The programme includes:

- Joint foundation courses,
- Path-specific courses, with mobility periods across partner universities,
- A compulsory internship worth 15 ECTS,
- A jointly supervised Master's thesis worth 30 ECTS,
- Courses from the disciplines of: sociology, political science and public administration, law, and psychology,
- A globally-recognised diploma issued mutually by 6 universities, of a joint, international study programme in migration studies.

4. Your study journey: where you will study and when

In a nutshell:

- **Degree:** Master of Arts (M.A.) – Joint European Degree,
- **Study Format:** Full-time, consecutive Master's program, mobility-based across partner universities,
- **Enrollment Period:** Winter Semester,
- **Standard Duration:** 4 semesters / 2 years,
- **Main Teaching Language:** English,
- **Start of Studies:** Fall Semester,
- **Discipline**: sociology (70% ECTS), political science and public administration (13% ECTS), law (10% ECTS), and psychology (7% ECTS).

Students of PATHS gain in-depth knowledge on forced migration, border management, and refugees' reception, struggles, and agency. Through mobility across European universities located in countries of transit and reception, hands-on research, and an international classroom environment, they develop interdisciplinary expertise, critical thinking, and practical research skills. The program combines seminars, fieldwork, and a professional internship, culminating in a joint master's thesis assessed by faculty from multiple partner institutions.
Your studies in PATHS are organised across four semesters:

Semester 1: Foundation

You begin at one of the entry universities: Europa-Universität Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder), Université Paris 8 or New Bulgarian University. At the same time, all students take joint online or hybrid foundation courses that establish common conceptual and methodological foundations.

Semester 2: Core methods and internship

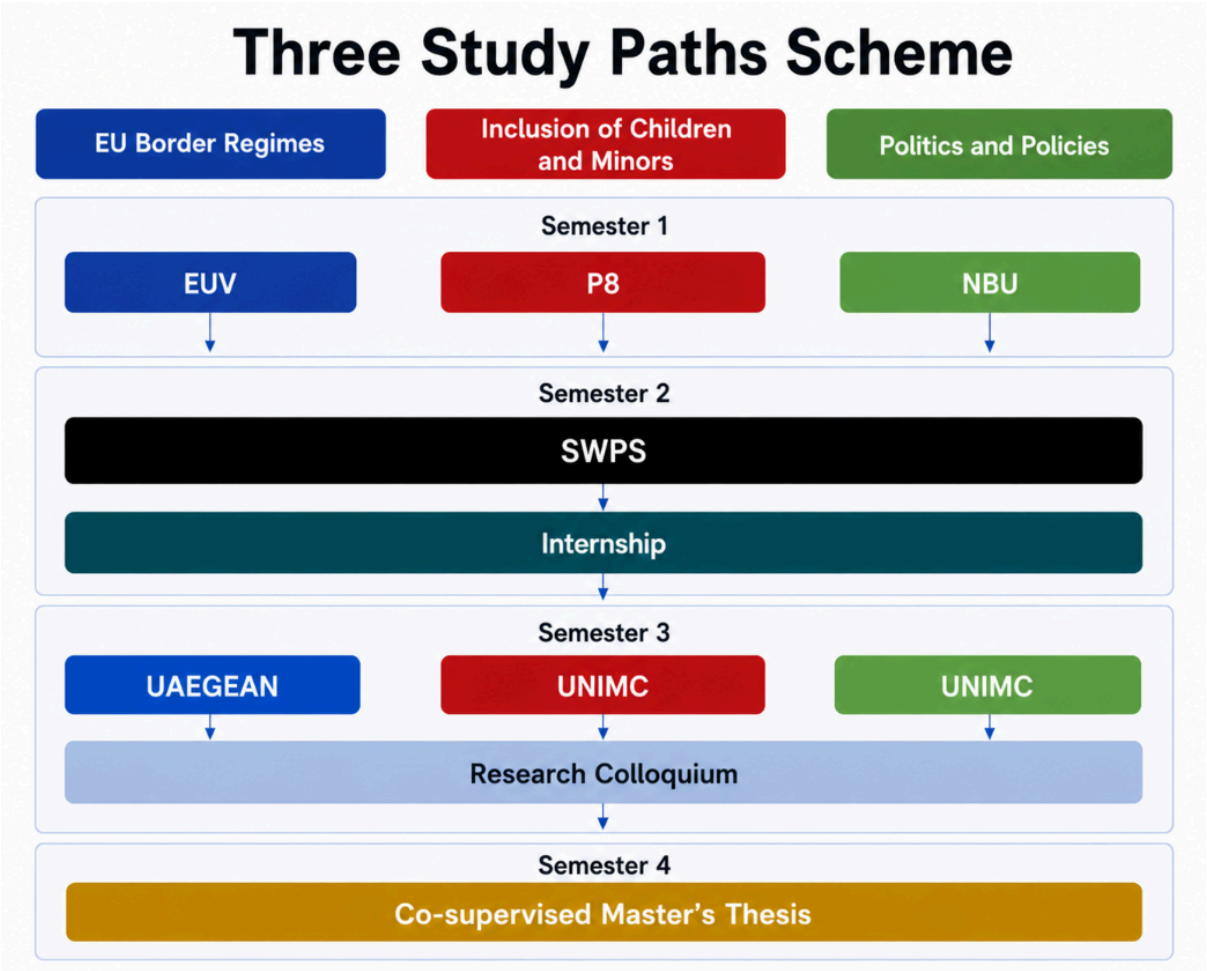
All students move to SWPS University in Poland to complete the Methods Block as a single cohort, followed by the compulsory internship.

Semester 3: Specialisation
You move to the university linked to your thematic path. Path modules are delivered at the University of the Aegean or the University of Macerata, depending on the path. All students also take the joint Research Colloquium.

Semester 4: Thesis
The Master's thesis is a mandatory 30 ECTS component completed in the final semester and must be written in English. Each thesis is co-supervised by academic staff from at least two different partner institutions relevant to the student's thematic path, and must be prepared in accordance with a shared academic standard, adopted across the consortium - to ensure consistency of quality, supervision, structure and assessment criteria. The defence is organised according to a shared standard, in hybrid format, with the student present physically together with at least one Committee member, while others may participate online.

Admission to the defence is granted only after the successful completion of all courses, the internship, and confirmation from all supervisors that the thesis is ready for examination.

More details on the thesis rules and regulations can be found in point 8 of the Handbook.



The title PATHS reflects the central academic focus of the programme: the diverse pathways of forced migration in Europe and within a wider global context. It refers both to the routes, experiences, and policy frameworks that shape contemporary migration processes, and to the educational pathways through which these issues can be studied in an interdisciplinary manner. To address the complexity of the subject effectively, the consortium has structured the curriculum into three distinct study paths, each offering a specialised perspective while contributing to a common understanding of forced migration.

Job perspectives

The programme's design reflects the urgent need for professionals who can operate across levels (local–national–European) and across domains (law and policy, border governance, social and psychological support, and communication of evidence), while maintaining a rights-based orientation and professional ethics in difficult environments.

Labour market and professional skills needs

In terms of labour market needs, the consortium has liaised closely with academic and non- academic stakeholders from the NGO sector as well as public and private organisations to identify both the specific qualifications increasingly expected in relevant job markets and the range of employment profiles for which qualified staff is urgently required. This work builds on established mechanisms of prior collaboration with state and civil-society institutions and on the feedback channels already developed through earlier cooperation. Given that there is no precise, harmonised statistical information capturing these niche and cross-sector employment profiles, the consortium combined desk-based review of sectoral demand drivers with targeted stakeholder consultation (interviews and focus groups) conducted across partner contexts to clarify concrete recruitment needs, competence gaps and opportunities for graduate placements.

Desk research confirms that demand is driven by sustained displacement and by expanding governance and implementation requirements across asylum, protection, integration and humanitarian response systems. UNHCR reports 123.2 million forcibly displaced people worldwide at the end of 202410. At EU level, implementation of the Pact on Migration and Asylum is explicitly framed as a capacity and delivery challenge during the transition period to June 2026, including the need to recruit, train and organise national systems around new procedures and safeguards11. Operational capacity-building demand is also reflected in large-scale technical assistance and training facilities (e.g., MIEUX reporting 15,000+ participants supported across 100+ countries)12. In parallel, global humanitarian planning continues to require large professional workforces and specialised skills: OCHA's Global Humanitarian Overview frames ~239 million people as being in need of humanitarian assistance and protection in 2026, and IOM's Global Appeal 2025 is costed at USD 8.2 billion to support ~101 million people, indicating sustained demand for staff in programme design, coordination, protection, and monitoring and evaluation.

Stakeholder consultations translate these system-level pressures into concrete competence requirements for professionals in the field. In Greece, qualitative consultation comprised 1 focus group and 26 semi-structured interviews with international organisations/NGOs, national/regional bodies and decision-makers. It documents concrete implementation bottlenecks that shape competence needs in the field,

including administrative barriers to accessing rights and services, fragmentation caused by a lack of coordination mechanisms across central government, local authorities and civil society, and housing constraints. The same material highlights the consequences of missing “pathway” design - i.e. the absence of integrated interventions that link housing with language/education and employability - raising risks of precarity and homelessness when support is short-term or discontinuous. This is corroborated by German stakeholder mapping based on engagement with approximately 22 institutions/organisations across the migration sector (including UNHCR, IOM Missing Migrants, ECRE, ENS, PICUM, BAMF and the Brandenburg State Officer for Integration). Across recruitment-experienced respondents, repeatedly essential skills cited include: practical policy-making competence with strong legal literacy (ability to read legal texts and assess application), data analysis and research skills, succinct professional writing for policy drafts/country briefs, and project management/coordination and networking skills; with additional emphasis on practical understanding of relief organisation and applied data tools (incl. mapping/visualisation). Constraints on internship hosting were also linked to sector funding pressures, with willingness higher where students can bring external funding.

Alongside public and third-sector recruitment, the consortium’s desk review and stakeholder feedback indicate a growing private-sector demand for professionals who can make refugee employment initiatives operational and compliant. Employer-facing networks such as the Tent Partnership for Refugees now bring together 500+ companies committed to hiring and supporting refugees, signalling that refugee labour-market inclusion is increasingly treated as a structured workforce issue rather than only corporate philanthropy14. Recent World Bank analysis under the Private Sector for Refugees (PS4R) agenda highlights that firms are often willing to engage but face practical bottlenecks - most notably legal and procedural uncertainty around work authorisation, limited capacity to navigate qualification recognition and documentation constraints, and persistent skills-matching challenges - which require dedicated internal or intermediary expertise to resolve. In practice, this translates into demand for staff who can combine regulatory and institutional literacy with applied programme delivery skills (e.g., designing lawful recruitment/onboarding pathways, coordinating with public and NGO actors, and using evidence to improve retention and progression), which aligns directly with the competence profile targeted by PATHS.

Rationale and specific objectives

Against this needs analysis, the programme addresses forced migration with a particular focus on Europe in a global context and meets the challenge of training experts who can understand differences in national needs and responses, while also overcoming narrow national agendas in order to contribute to European and global solutions consistent with European values.

PATHS offers a comprehensive academic and professional formation designed to:

- bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical policy implementation in migration management;
- address skill shortages in humanitarian, governmental, and non-governmental sectors dealing with migration, asylum, and integration;
- promote evidence-based policymaking, human rights awareness, and intercultural competence among future practitioners;

- foster European and international cooperation through mobility, research, and joint learning on global displacement trends;
- enhance the quality and relevance of higher education through innovative curricula addressing global challenges;
- strengthen international cooperation and mobility among higher education institutions;
- to promote inclusion, equity, and diversity by engaging students from refugee and migrant backgrounds.

Your in-depth and practice-oriented understanding of forced migration, border regimes, and migration governance equips you as a graduate of the European Border Regimes path to contribute to implementing social and sustainable as well as effective and evidence-based solutions in complex migration contexts at both European and global levels.

The program prepares you for professional fields such as:

- Migration management and border policy agencies at national and European levels,
- International organizations and NGOs working with refugees and displaced persons,
- Humanitarian and development organizations,
- Research institutions and think tanks focusing on migration and border studies,
- Policy advising and governmental institutions,
- Education, training, and intercultural mediation,
- Media, advocacy, and public information on migration issues and refugee rights.

5. Thematic paths

The programme offers three thematic paths:

1. European Border Regimes,
2. Inclusion of Children and Minors,
3. Politics and Policies of migration.

You indicate your preferred study path during the application process. Your motivation for the chosen path is taken into account in the selection process.

The European Border Regimes path of the Joint Master's Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context examines how borders are managed, how migration is governed, and how inequalities are shaped globally.
Students study the topic from a social science perspective, gaining theoretical foundations, methodological training and practical experience in transnational contexts. Students conduct research, complete an internship, and gain transnational experience in three different countries at the following universities:

1. European University Viadrina (Germany),
2. SWPS University (Poland),

3. University of the Aegean (Greece).

Global inequalities, geopolitical and ecological instability, and complex border policies shape the dynamics of forced migration in Europe and beyond. Effective approaches to migration management and border regimes require a deep understanding of the legal, institutional, political-economic, and technological dimensions of borders, as well as their social impacts and conflicts. In the European Border Regimes path, students gain in-depth knowledge of European border regimes, the externalization of borders, and the interactions between migration policies and processes and global as well as racialised inequalities. The curriculum combines theoretical knowledge, empirical research, practical internships, and transnational mobility between partner universities in Germany, Poland, and Greece. By integrating theory, analysis, and practical experience, students develop the skills to critically assess migration, border policies, and reception processes and to design ethical, socially just and evidence-based solutions.

The Inclusion of Children and Minors path of the Joint Master's Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context focuses on the specific experiences, rights, and support needs of children and young people affected by forced migration. Students will gain theoretical insights into intersectional approaches to the study of migration policies and experiences which integrate age as a key social category, and will understand how the sociology of migration intersects with the sociological study of lifecourses in the experiences of children and young people in situations of international migration and mobility across borders. A psychological perspective also forms an important component of this path, supporting the understanding of the specific needs, experiences, and developmental circumstances of children and young people in situations of migration. Having acquired a theoretical foundation the students will bring these conceptual foundations into use in the analysis of case studies of youth migration at different border sites and in countries of arrival.

The first semester of this pathway is delivered in Paris, France, where students examine the social and political, psychological, legal, and institutional dimensions of displacement in relation to minors and young people. The curriculum addresses issues such as age and intersectionality, lifecourse theory in migration, ontological insecurities of youth migration, border regimes and minority evaluations, identity formation, trauma, and the intersection of age, gender, and race within migration contexts.

Teaching is further enriched through the participation of guest lecturers from the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, who co-organise selected learning activities and contribute additional international perspectives. Students enrolled in this path undertake their mobility pathway across three countries, beginning at University of Paris 8 (France), continuing at SWPS University (Poland) for the common methodological semester, and concluding at the University of Macerata (Italy), where they further develop their thematic specialisation, along with an insight into the intercultural approach, that is essential for understanding migration processes.

The Politics and Policies of Migration path of the Joint Master's Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context examines migration governance, public policy responses, and the role of political institutions and civil society in shaping migration processes. The first semester of this pathway is delivered in Sofia, Bulgaria, at New Bulgarian University, where

students study the legal, political, and social dimensions of migration management in European and international contexts.

The curriculum addresses policy design and implementation, political debates surrounding migration, institutional responses to displacement, and the contribution of civil society actors in supporting migrants and influencing public discourse. Students enrolled in this path complete their mobility pathway across three countries:

1. New Bulgarian University (Bulgaria),
2. SWPS University (Poland),
3. University of Macerata (Italy).

The second semester within every study path of the Joint Master's Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context is delivered in Warsaw, Poland, at SWPS University, and is dedicated to the development of students' research skills and methodological preparation.

During this semester, all students follow a shared curriculum consisting of the courses on various research methods. These courses provide students with the theoretical foundations and practical tools required to design, conduct and evaluate research in the field of forced migration and related social phenomena. Particular emphasis is placed on data collection, analysis, ethical research practice, and working in diverse and multicultural environments.

The semester is intended to prepare students for evidence-based professional practice, future academic study, and research-oriented careers, while also creating a strong basis for the preparation of a research-based Master's thesis in the final stage of the programme. It is subsequently followed by a compulsory internship, through which students gain professional experience in relevant institutions and organisations - further details on the internships are provided in Paragraph 7.

Examples of typical thesis topics

Path 1:
"Externalization of European Bordering: The EU–Turkey Agreement and Its Social Consequences for Syrian Forced Migrants"

"Pushback Practices and Their Legal Contestation: Social Dynamics and Implications of International Adjudication"

"Digital Bordering and the Securitization of Migration: Social Technologies, Governance, and Everyday Impacts"

Path 2:
"Care Regimes and the Social Construction of Unaccompanied Minors in Reception Settings"

"Institutionalizing Care: Reception Systems, Labor Practices, and the Treatment of Unaccompanied Minors"

"Vulnerability as Policy: Social Practices of Care and the Categorization of Unaccompanied Minors"

Path 3:
“Institutional Actors in Migration Governance: National, Local, International, NGO, and Media Roles”

“The Securitization of Displacement: Political Framing and Policy Effects on Forced Migrants”

“Populist Discourses and the Securitization of Displacement: Sociopolitical Impacts on Forced Migration Policy”

6. What you will study

The curriculum combines common courses for all students and path-specific courses.

In the first semester, all students take two joint introductory courses, alongside path-specific courses at their entry university. In the second semester, all students take a common methods package at SWPS University:

1. Introduction to Social Research Methodology,
2. Quantitative Research Methods,
3. Qualitative Research Methods,
4. Research in Multicultural Settings,
5. Desk Research.

The internship is also completed in semester 2. In the third semester, all students take the Research Colloquium and path-specific courses at the relevant host university. Semester 4 is dedicated to the Master’s thesis.

Teaching in PATHS includes case-based learning, group work, joint online teaching, methods training, field- and service-based learning, and learning linked to internship and thesis work.

Click here to view all programme Course Cards

Semester	Path	Course Type	Course Title	ECTS	Delivery
Semester 1	ALL	Joint	Introduction to Concepts and Theories of (Forced) Migration	6	Online
	ALL	Joint	The Study of (Forced) Migration – Empirical Focus	6	Online
	The European Border Regimes	Path-Specific	Introduction to European Border Regimes	6	EUV
		Path-Specific	Forced Migration in the Context of Global Inequalities	6	EUV

		Path-Specific	Externalisation of European Borders	6	EUV
	Inclusion of Children and Minors	Path-Specific	Being Young at the Borders: Experiences of Young People in Forced Displacement	6	UP8
		Path-Specific	Childhood in Exile: Between Grief, Trauma, and Identity Reinvention	6	UP8
		Path-Specific	Age, Gender and Race in Migration Regimes	3	UP8
		Path-Specific	Approaches to Reception and Care of Minors	3	UP8
	Politics and Policies	Path-Specific	Migration Policy	6	NBU
		Path-Specific	Migration Politics	6	NBU
		Path-Specific	Migration and Civil Society	6	NBU
Total Semester 1				**30 ECTS**	

Semester	Path	Course Type	Course Title	ECTS	Delivery
Semester 2	ALL	Joint	Introduction to Social Research Methodology	3	SWPS
		Joint	Quantitative Research Methods	3	SWPS
		Joint	Qualitative Research Methods	3	SWPS
		Joint	Research in Multicultural Settings	3	SWPS
		Joint	Desk Research	3	SWPS

		Joint	Internship	15	SWPS
Total Semester 2				**30 ECTS**	

Semester	Path	Course Type	Course Title	ECTS	Delivery
Semester 3	ALL	Joint	Research Colloquium	6	Online
	The European Border Regimes	Path-Specific	From the Entry Points to the Social Terms of Coexistence	6	UAEGEAN
		Path-Specific	Civil Society at the Borders – Solidarity and Xenophobia	6	UAEGEAN
		Path-Specific	Reception and Identification Centres (RICs) and Non-Refoulement at the Borders	6	UAEGEAN
		Path-Specific	Risks and Uncertainties in Migration: Crossing Borders in the Era of Digitalization	6	UAEGEAN
	Inclusion of Children and Minors	Path-Specific	Child Migration and Social Psychology: Prejudice, Inclusion, and Identity	6	UNIMC
		Path-Specific	Development Economics – Inequality	4	UNIMC
		Path-Specific	Children's Rights in Comparative Law	8	UNIMC
		Path-Specific	Intercultural Communication	6	UNIMC
	Politics and Policies	Path-Specific	Migration Law	6	UNIMC
		Path-Specific	European Union Law	8	UNIMC
		Path-Specific	Development Economics – Inequality	4	UNIMC

		Path-Specific	Public Speaking and Leadership Development	6	UNIMC
Total Semester 3				**30 ECTS**	

Semester	Path	Course Type	Course Title	ECTS	Delivery
Semester 4	ALL	Path-Specific	Master's Thesis (Co - supervised by academics from two universities, relevant to the thematic path)	30	Hybrid
Total Semester 4				**30 ECTS**	

7. Internship

The internship is a compulsory part of the programme. It is worth 15 ECTS and takes place in semester 2. The internship is coordinated centrally to ensure quality and comparability across the consortium.

PATHS was designed with a strong research-practice link, and internship opportunities are intended to give students first-hand professional experience while also supporting empirically grounded thesis work where appropriate. Students are encouraged to identify and propose internship placements independently, provided that these meet the programme's established criteria and learning objectives. The internship may be carried out in a location selected by the student, including internationally. At the same time, institutional support is available throughout the process.

The consortium maintains a network of over 25 associated partner institutions, including non-governmental organisations, associations, foundations, public sector bodies, humanitarian aid organisations, and international organisations such as UNHCR and UNICEF, which offer internship placements to selected PATHS students.

Students can also access support related to career orientation and internship planning through host institutions and the programme.

Eligibility Criteria for Internship Organisations

Given the academic and professional profile of the programme, placements must meet a set of criteria relating to thematic relevance, operational context, and supervisory capacity. These criteria are designed to ensure that students can genuinely pursue and demonstrate the programme's learning outcomes during their placement.

Thematic Relevance

The host organisation's work must be substantively related to forced migration, refugee protection, asylum, integration, humanitarian assistance, or closely connected fields such as human rights, anti-discrimination, or migration policy. We advise students to consider the following types of organisations as a guide:

- Non-governmental organisations and civil society organisations working directly with refugees, asylum seekers, or internally displaced persons,
- International organisations with a mandate related to forced migration or humanitarian response,
- Public institutions and government bodies responsible for asylum procedures, reception, integration policy, or border management,
- Research centres, think tanks, and policy institutes with an active focus on migration, displacement, or refugee studies,
- Legal aid and advocacy organisations providing services to people with migration experience,
- Educational or community organisations running programmes for migrants and refugees,
- Research institutions and universities with active projects or centres focused on forced migration, displacement, or related social and legal phenomena.

Operational Context

The internship provider must be an active, functioning entity able to offer the student meaningful professional experience related to the programme's thematic scope. This means the student should have access to real tasks relevant to forced migration, regular interaction with professional staff, and an environment in which they can observe and participate in the organisation's day-to-day work.

Organisations that can only offer administrative or logistical support with no connection to the programme's learning outcomes would not normally meet this criterion.

Supervisory Capacity

The internship provider must be able to designate a named supervisor who will:

- Meet with the student at the beginning of the placement to agree on a plan of tasks aligned with the PATHS programme's learning outcomes,
- Provide day-to-day guidance and support to the student during the placement,
- Inform the professor teaching Internship course if significant difficulties arise during the placement,
- Complete the placement assessment report at the end of the internship, evaluating the extent to which the student has demonstrated the relevant learning outcomes. This step will be crucial in the student's performance evaluation and determine the grade given by the professor for the Internship course completion.

Placement Approval Process

All internship placements must be approved by the professor teaching Internship course before the internship begins. The following steps apply:

Step 1 — Student identifies a proposed organisation

The student identifies a proposed internship provider and confirms that it meets the eligibility criteria. We advise students to make initial contact with the organisation well in advance of the intended start date, and to discuss the expected tasks and supervisory arrangements before submitting their proposal.

Step 2 — Submission of placement proposal
The student submits a completed Consultation Form to their Internship course professor. The form captures the key information required to assess the suitability of the proposed placement, including details of the internship provider and its scope of work, the internship position details including the planned tasks, and the expected internship duration and workload.

Step 3 — Review and approval
The professor responsible for the Internship course reviews the Consultation Form against the eligibility and exclusion criteria set out in this framework, with particular attention to whether the proposed placement will allow the student to achieve the required learning outcomes. In cases of uncertainty or where additional information is needed, the professor may ask the student to provide clarification before a decision is made.

Step 4 — Internship
Once the placement is approved, the student begins the internship at the host organisation. The student is expected to take an active role in the work of the organisation, carrying out meaningful tasks under the guidance of their supervisor.Throughout the placement, the student documents their tasks, observations, and reflections on their professional development. This ongoing record forms the basis for the individual internship report submitted at the end of the semester, in which the student critically reflects on their experience, the challenges encountered, and the competences developed during the placement.

The student remains in regular contact with the Internship course professor during the placement and should notify them promptly if any significant difficulties arise.

Step 5 — Completion and assessment
Upon completion of the placement, the student submits their internship reports:

1. Report - part I - to be completed by the student (0 - 45 points)
Internship completion report including a description of the internship location, the role of the student in the company, a description of key tasks performed, reflections on the knowledge gained and skills and social competencies acquired, as well as a strategy for future professional activities.

2. Report - part II - to be completed by the internship provider (0 - 45 points)
A report including an assessment of the extent to which the student has achieved the learning outcomes during the internship and a justification for the grade awarded.

3. Student performance is also assessed during class sessions (0 - 10).

The professor teaching the Internship course awards a final grade on the basis of all three components.

8. Master's thesis

The Master's thesis is a mandatory 30 ECTS component completed in the final semester. It must be written in English. Each thesis is co-supervised by academic staff from at least two different partner institutions relevant to the student's thematic path.

The final assessment includes the written thesis and an oral defence. You can be admitted to the defence only after passing all courses, completing the internship and obtaining confirmation from all supervisors that the thesis is acceptable. The thesis is assessed by a joint evaluation committee appointed by the Governing Board.

Your Master's thesis defence is the final step of the programme. It is conducted before a Defence Committee composed of three members, each representing a different university relevant to the student's study path.

The Committee includes:

1. A Thesis Supervisor, who is a specialist in the subject of the thesis,
2. A Reviewer, who is a specialist in sociology or the secondary discipline of the thesis, they are a senior academic who evaluates your thesis,
3. A Chair of the Defence Committee, a specialist in sociology or the secondary discipline of the thesis, they lead the defence.

Where appropriate, a fourth Committee member (A Co-Supervisor) may be appointed.

If the Master's supervisor considers it is required - for example, if responders are members of a vulnerable group, or research questions touch upon a sensitive topic - a relevant ethic committee will be requested for approval.

No.	Formal Master Thesis Requirements	
1	**Time to complete the thesis**	The Master's thesis is finalised during the consultation period with the Advisor/s (Semester 4), and, following approval by the Thesis Supervisor, must be submitted no later than six weeks before the scheduled defence date
2	**Length of the thesis (text only, excluding the title page, table of contents, bibliography and appendices)**	80 pages
3	**Font name**	Times New Roman
4	**Font size**	12

5	**Line and paragraph spacing**	1.5
6	**Bibliography rules**	APA reference list rules
7	**Citing rules**	APA reference list rules
8	**Annexing rules**	Annexes should be included at the end of the document

Thesis defence format and preparations:

The thesis must be submitted no later than 8 weeks before the scheduled defence date. The student will receive the review of the thesis at least 1 week prior to the defence.

The defence is conducted in a hybrid format. The student must be physically present together with at least one member of the Committee, while other members may participate online.

The defence consists of approximately 30 minutes (maximum total duration: 45 minutes) for the presentation and defence of the Master's thesis.

The defence is formally assessed, and the result is communicated to the student immediately after the examination. The final grade is recorded on the diploma using the ECTS grading scale (in wording). Additionally, a written report of the defence is prepared, documenting the key elements and outcomes of the examination.

Thesis defence grading criteria:

The table below presents the proposed joint assessment criteria for Master's theses developed within the PATHS Joint Master in Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context. These criteria have been prepared as a common framework for thesis evaluation across the consortium and are submitted for consideration and approval by the Governing Board of the consortium, as well as by the relevant academic bodies of the partner universities.

No.	Assessment criterion	Category	Scale	Score
1	**Quality of the research question and thesis aims**, including the clarity and development of the research question, and the appropriate use of existing knowledge in formulating the research question, thesis aims, and research hypotheses and/or research questions	Substantive	0–5	
2	**Engagement with the literature and conceptual framework**, including the adequacy of the selection and use of sources, discussion of the current state of the art, and sufficient definition of central concepts	Substantive	0–5	

3	**Methodological adequacy**, including the suitability and justification of the selected method for testing the hypotheses and/or answering the research questions	Substantive	0–5	
4	**Documentation and transparency of the empirical approach**, including whether the research design and empirical procedure are clearly presented and comprehensible	Substantive	0–5	
5	**Analysis and interpretation of data**, including the extent to which the analysis is correctly conducted and contributes to answering the research question	Substantive	0–5	
6	**Conclusions and practical implications**, including the ability to formulate well-grounded conclusions and recommendations for practice	Substantive	0–5	
7	**Originality and academic contribution**, including independent thinking, creativity, critical reflection, compliance with the requirements for academic or expert work, and the potential for broader dissemination	Substantive	0–5	
			TOTAL SUBSTANTIVE CRITERIA (max. 35)	
8	**Consistency between the title, research question, and content of the thesis**	Formal	0–3	
9	**Formal structure and organisation of the thesis**, including the logical progression of chapters	Formal	0–3	
10	**Linguistic, editorial, and scientific writing quality**, including appropriate academic language, clarity of expression, and avoidance of unnecessary repetition	Formal	0–3	
11	**Appropriateness of style and register** to the leading discipline of the thesis	Formal	0–3	
12	**Scope and accuracy of citations, references, and bibliography** in accordance with APA standards	Formal	0–3	
			TOTAL FORMAL CRITERIA (max. 15)	

TOTAL: ____/ 50

Submission procedure

The Master's thesis is prepared during the diploma seminar cycle, comprising the seminar courses specified in the curriculum for the relevant field of study. Students are required to submit the thesis no later than the end of the semester in which the final seminar course

is completed. Theses must be submitted in accordance with the internal regulations and procedures of the relevant host university. Submission is considered complete upon uploading the thesis to the Academic Thesis Archiving System and obtaining formal approval from the thesis supervisor.

More detailed information on specific rules and regulations on thesis submission will be provided to the students admitted to the programme in the official programme Welcome Pack.

9. Admission: what you need to apply

There are different procedures depending on the specific situation of the candidates. Particularly, the process for all international applicants, including those from the EU, EFTA and OECD countries, as well as from the co-called "third countries" includes two-steps.

If you are not unsure of which procedure applies to your situation, please visit PATHS website's admissions procedure guide and / or contact: admissions@swps.edu.pl.
[*The final link and email address placed here will be leading to the PATHS admission dedicated website, which will explain the process in a manner modelled on the admissions page currently attached*]

Step 1 - Verification of eligibility
After you submit your application, your documents are reviewed to confirm whether they provide a valid basis for undertaking second-cycle studies in Poland. In some cases, you may be asked to provide an additional formal statement issued by the Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange (NAWA), confirming that your diploma meets the required standards for admission.

Step 2 - Programme selection process
Once the above requirements have been successfully met, your application will proceed to the standard selection process for the PATHS programme. From this stage onward, all candidates are assessed according to the same joint admission rules, as described below:

A) You must hold a Bachelor's degree or equivalent that gives access to Master's studies. The degree should be in social sciences or humanities. Degrees in other fields may also be considered if you can demonstrate relevant work experience in the field of migration or related areas.

Applicants holding a degree in one of the following disciplines are eligible to proceed in the selection process:

- philosophy,
- history,
- cultural and religious studies,
- ethnology and cultural anthropology,
- economics and finance,
- political science and public administration,
- psychology,
- sociology,
- socio-economic geography and spatial planning,

- international relations,
- management and quality sciences,
- law,
- education.

Applicants with a degree in another field may also be considered, provided they can demonstrate at least 12 months of professional experience in the area of migration, forced migration, human rights, social inclusion, public policy, international cooperation, psychosocial support, or related areas. This experience will be assessed by the selection panel based on the submitted documents (in particular the CV). Applications that do not meet this requirement will not be considered further.

B) You must also provide proof of English language proficiency at CEFR B2 level or higher. Click on the link below to read the details on the accepted certificates:
Review the list of language certificates recognised by the Republic of Poland.

C) All candidates are required to upload the following documents through the application form in the online admissions system:

- A cover letter, explaining their motivation for choosing a specific study path within the programme,
- A CV (Curriculum Vitae),
- Supporting documents confirming achievements, such as certificates or evidence of additional activities (e.g. volunteer work, internships, social engagement projects, or other relevant initiatives);
- Letter(s) of recommendation from academic or professional referees.

D) Applicants are required to indicate their preferred study path at the time of registration on the application form.

Candidates who do not fulfill the above described criteria will not be proceeded further.

E) Eligible candidates will take part in a selection examination conducted online, consisting of 30 single-choice questions in English. Passing this examination is a necessary but not sufficient condition as the structure of the examination allows for the assessment of key learning outcomes associated with first-cycle degree programmes in:

1. Sociology - 21 questions,
2. Political science and public administration - 4 questions,
3. Law - 3 questions,
4. Psychology - 2 questions.

Each section must be passed at a minimum level of: 11 in sociology, 2 in political science and public administration, 2 in law, and 1 in psychology. The example exam question will be available to be viewed on the programme website.

The selection process will include one examination session, scheduled for August 2026.

Scoring and ranking
The candidates can obtain a maximum of 100 points, including:

- Cover letter: 0-50 points,
- Supporting documents (achievements and experience): 0–20 points,
- Exam: 0-30 - candidates who do not achieve the above listed minimum score of 17 points in the examination, will not be eligible to proceed to the next stage of the admission process.

Applications are assessed by a Joint Admissions Committee consisting of representatives of partner universities. Candidates are ranked on the basis of their final score. Admission is granted within the available number of places for each study path. Candidates with the highest total scores will be offered a place in the programme.

Where the results do not allow the Joint Admissions Committee to reach a decision, an interview may be used as an exceptional additional assessment step under a common protocol.

For detailed application scoring rubric, please see the document attached below: Joint evaluation criteria for applications submitted to the PATHS Joint Master's in Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context.

Admission Calendar for the academic year 2026/2027:

Date	**Activity**
1 June	Opening of the admission call / commencement of the application period
31 July	Closing of the admission call / deadline for submission of applications
12 August	Entrance examination
13 August	Publication of admission results / candidates formally admitted to the programme
17-31 August	Online interview period (if applicable)
15 September	Latest date of publication of completed students list

Students will be notified as soon as their admission is confirmed internally. The dates of admission for the academic year 2026-2027 are adjusted to the accreditation deadline. The future admission process will be held starting in December.

10. Recognition of previous studies

For admission, SWPS University checks whether your previous qualification gives access to Master's studies and, where required by Polish law, may request confirmation from NAWA

for foreign qualifications. Recognition decisions are based on the level, profile and learning outcomes of the prior qualification.

Once enrolled, you may apply for exemption from specific courses on the basis of previous studies and/or relevant work experience. Please, contact the European Administrative Coordinator (see p.45), who will direct your application to the relevant approving body.

11. Assessment, grades and progression

Assessment in PATHS includes written assignments, policy briefs, case analyses, presentations, exams where relevant, internship-related work, and the Master's thesis and defence. Course-level assessment methods and criteria are communicated in advance through course documentation.

Credits earned at one partner university are automatically recognised across the consortium. A credit earned at any partner institution is treated as a PATHS credit within the programme.

Individual student contribution in group projects
During their studies, students will be assessed using various methods to evaluate the knowledge, skills and competences they have acquired during each of the courses and, consequently, will have the opportunity to experience different methods of course assessment.
In the case of courses assessed on the basis of a group project, criteria shall be applied to clearly distinguish the contributions of individual students within group tasks, with the aim of ensuring the reliability of individual assessment. The design and assessment of group work shall proceed as follows:

1. Design of group assignments

a) Each group assignment shall be structured to include clearly defined individual roles, responsibilities, or components.
b) Individual responsibilities must be explicitly aligned with the intended learning outcomes of the course.
c) Assessment criteria and grading structure shall be communicated to students in advance.

2. Allocation of responsibilities

a) At the outset of the assignment, each group shall document the allocation of tasks among members.
b) Any subsequent changes to roles must be recorded and, where required, approved by the teacher.

3. Documentation of contributions

a) Each student shall maintain a record of their individual contributions (e.g., contribution logs, tracked revisions, or process reports).
b) Documentation must be submitted alongside the group assignment as part of the assessment evidence.

c) Failure to provide adequate documentation may result in a reduction of the individual grade.

4. Assessment process

a) The assessment of group work shall consist of both:
- evaluation of the collective output, and
- evaluation of individual contributions.

b) Individual contributions shall be assessed using a standardized rubric provided in the course documentation.
c) Assessment shall incorporate multiple sources of evidence, including:
- teacher evaluation,
- structured peer assessment, and
- where applicable, self-assessment.

d) Peer assessment results shall be reviewed and moderated by the teacher to ensure fairness and consistency.

5. Individual verification

a) Teachers may require individual verification of student performance through methods such as:
- oral examination,
- written reflection, or
- targeted questioning.

b) Failure to demonstrate adequate understanding of the group work may result in adjustment of the individual grade.

6. Grading

a) Final grades for group assignments shall reflect both group and individual performance.
b) The weighting of components shall be specified in the course syllabus and may include:
- group product grade,
- individual contribution grade, and
- peer-assessment-based adjustment.

c) In cases of significant disparity in contributions, differentiated grading shall be applied.

7. Non-participation and dispute resolution

a) Cases of non-participation or unequal contribution shall be reported to the teacher without undue delay.
b) The teacher may require additional evidence or assign supplementary individual tasks.
c) Persistent non-participation may result in failure of the assignment or other academic consequences in accordance with the relevant regulations.

These rules shall be subject to periodic evaluation as part of the programme's quality assurance system.

Attendance in class
An attendance rate of at least 80% is required for all courses within the programme, therefore, students are required to sign attendance registers for all face-to-face classes in which they participate as part of the programme.

In situations when a student's absence over the duration of the entire course amounts to between 50% and 20%, the student will be given additional tasks by the course tutor, designed to support independent study of the missed material and ensure the learning outcomes are achieved.. If the number of absences exceeds the minimum attendance threshold of 50% of all classes within the course, this will result in automatic failure to pass the course and will require it to be retaken in the next academic year.

Grading

Each partner institution assesses courses and examinations according to its own local grading regulations. For transparency and consistency, all local grades are converted using the common Student Grade Conversion Table below and represented on the Diploma Supplement using the ECTS grading scale (A-F).

The final grade is calculated by the coordinating institution (SWPS University) and expressed according to the Polish grading system and also translated to the ECTS scale on the Diploma Supplement.

ECTS Grade	Definition	Poland (SWPS)	Germany (EUV)	France (UP8)	Italy (UniMC)	Bulgaria (NBU)	Greece (UAEGEAN)
A	Excellent	5.0	1.0 - 1.3	16 - 20	28 - 30 L	5.50 - 6.00	9.00 - 10.00
B	Very Good	4.5	1.7 - 2.0	14 - 15	25 - 27	4.50 - 5.49	7.50 - 8.99
C	Good	4.0	2.3 - 2.7	12 - 13	21 - 24	3.50 - 4.49	6.50 - 7.49
D	Satisfactory	3.5	3.0 - 3.3	11	19 - 20	3.01 - 3.49	5.50 - 6.49
E	Sufficient	3.0	3.7 – 4.0	10	18	3.00	5.00 - 5.49
F/FX	Fail	2.0	5.0	< 10	< 18	< 3.00	< 5.00

Examination:

Students must take exams in person at the institution delivering the course and in accordance with its schedule. Examination results from any partner university are fully and mutually recognized by all consortium members.

If you fail an examination, you are entitled to one re-sit opportunity for that course. The timing and format of the re-sit are determined by the institution that offered the course. If you do not pass a mandatory course after the final re-sit, you must re-take the course in order to remain eligible for graduation. The course can be re-taken parallelly during the next academic year, including at another institution under an Individual Organization of Studies (IOS) arrangement. While studying under the IOS, the student is required to complete any additional assignments and undergo assessments as specifically determined by the instructor in charge of the course.

Re-sit Policy:
Students who fail an examination are entitled to one re-sit opportunity for that course.

- The timing and format of the re-sit are determined by the institution that offered the course.
- Failure to pass a mandatory course after the final re-sit opportunity will require the student to re-take the course to be eligible for graduation.

12. Student rights and responsibilities

All students sign a Student Agreement. This document sets out your rights and obligations, including attendance, academic integrity, assessment rules, progression and re-sit rules, mobility obligations, and financial and administrative conditions. Complaints and appeals routes and timelines are to be communicated through the handbook.

During each mobility period within the PATHS programme, students are required to comply with the rules, regulations, and administrative procedures of the partner university at which they are currently enrolled or undertaking studies. This includes academic regulations, codes of conduct, examination procedures, attendance requirements, and student rights and responsibilities. PATHS students are subject to the same institutional standards and obligations as local students during their period of study at the respective host university.

13. Academic integrity

Students are expected to complete all coursework, research assignments, examinations, and the Master's thesis in accordance with the principles of academic integrity. This means submitting work that is honest, properly referenced, and based on the student's own learning and analysis. Breaches of academic integrity may lead to academic or disciplinary consequences under the regulations of the host institution and the consortium.

Plagiarism means presenting another person's words, ideas, data, or creative work as one's own without appropriate acknowledgement. This includes copying text from books, articles, websites, or another student's work, as well as close paraphrasing without citation. All sources used in assignments and research must be properly referenced according to the required academic style.
PATHS applies a zero-tolerance policy to plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct. All submitted work, including the Master's thesis, is checked using plagiarism-detection software licensed by the partner universities. Confirmed cases of misconduct are referred to the Governing Board and may result in sanctions ranging from a failing grade to expulsion from the programme.

Inappropriate use of AI tools includes using artificial intelligence applications to generate assignments, analyses, or research outputs and submitting them as original work without permission or disclosure. AI tools may only be used where explicitly permitted by the

lecturer or supervisor and must be used responsibly. Students remain fully responsible for the accuracy, originality, and proper citation of any work submitted.

Collusion means unauthorised collaboration between students or with other persons in the preparation of work that is intended to be completed individually. Discussing ideas with peers is often encouraged, but sharing answers, dividing individual assignments between several people, or submitting jointly prepared work as individual work is not permitted unless group work has been formally assigned.

Research ethics obligations apply particularly when students work with vulnerable groups, personal data, or sensitive topics, including issues related to forced migration, trauma, displacement, children, or legal status. Students must respect confidentiality, informed consent, privacy, and dignity of all participants. Where required, research projects must receive ethical approval before data collection begins. Supervisors and host institutions will provide guidance on applicable procedures.

Students who are uncertain whether a specific practice is permitted are encouraged to consult the relevant lecturer, supervisor, or programme coordinator in advance.

14. Tuition fees and financial support

The tuition fee is **EUR 9,000 per student per academic year**. SWPS University, as a coordinating institution, collects tuition fees and manages payments.

A tuition fee reduction scheme is available for students in need, based on verified individual financial circumstances and official documentation assessed by the Governing Board.

The tuition fee may be settled in two instalments of EUR 4,500 per semester, rather than as a single annual payment of EUR 9,000.

Specific rules and regulations regarding fee payments can be found in Student Contract.

The Governing Board oversees the student selection process and adopts the final admission decisions on the basis of the ranking list. Erasmus Mundus scholarships are awarded strictly in ranked order, in accordance with Erasmus Mundus rules and the ranking produced by the Joint Admissions Committee. A transparent reserve-list procedure is applied to reallocate scholarships that are declined, ensuring equal treatment of candidates and supporting timely cohort formation and reliable programme planning.

The agreed reduction levels are:

- 75% reduction for up to 15% of admitted students,
- 50% reduction for up to 30% of admitted students.

SWPS University, acting as coordinating institution, shall collect tuition fees and manage payments.

Costs of living in:

- European University Viadrina - app. EUR 950 in Frankfurt (Oder), if living in Berlin app. EUR 120, depending on accommodation and personal lifestyle;
- University of Paris 8 - Students should budget approximately €1200-€1400 per month for living expenses in Paris, depending on accommodation and personal lifestyle;
- New Bulgarian University - Students should budget approximately €800 per month for living expenses in Sofia, depending on accommodation and personal lifestyle;
- SWPS University - Students should budget approximately €750-€1250 per month for living expenses in Warsaw, depending on accommodation and personal lifestyle. For more detailed estimations please visit: SWPS Website;
- University of the Aegean - Students should budget approximately €700-€1100 per month for living expenses in Lesvos, depending on accommodation and personal lifestyle;
- University of Macerata - Students should budget approximately €800-€1250 per month for living expenses in Macerata, depending on accommodation and personal lifestyle.

15. Visa and residence matters

Because PATHS includes mobility between several countries, visa and residence planning is a core part of student preparation. The programme foresees guidance on visa and residence requirements, indicative timelines, required documentation, and the sequence in which documents are typically needed. Students are to receive this information in the Welcome Package and in pre-arrival guidance.

Students receive guidance on documents commonly needed for visa or residence procedures, such as proof of enrolment, insurance confirmation, housing confirmation and evidence of financial means. Support continues during the programme, including reminders and assistance related to renewals, changes of address, changes of host institution and extended stays for thesis work where relevant.

Visa and residence matters per country:

Germany:
Students who need a visa for Germany should apply for a “multiple entry” visa for study purposes at the German embassy or consulate in their country of residence well before travelling. Students from EU member states and some additional countries are exempt from this requirement, but all students should check the rules that apply to their citizenship and residence situation. Viadrina advises students not to enter Germany on a tourist visa, as a tourist visa cannot be converted into a long-term residence permit in Germany. (See EUV General information for incoming students).
Because Viadrina is located directly at the German-Polish border and some university

activities may involve the Collegium Polonicum in Słubice, students should make sure that their visa or residence status allows repeated border crossings between Germany and Poland. Viadrina specifically recommends that students check whether they need a multiple-entry visa and, where relevant, whether additional Polish visa arrangements are necessary.

After arrival, non-EU students who need to extend or formalise their stay should contact the Frankfurt (Oder) Immigration Office. Viadrina's guidance lists the Immigration Office in Frankfurt (Oder) as the local authority responsible for residence permits, work permits and changes in status, including internships or employment. (See EUV Visa).

Local support: Students should contact the PATHS local administrative coordinator for orientation and consult the general information for incoming students. Legal decisions remain the responsibility of the competent German authorities.

France:

The Long-Stay Visa Equivalent to a Residence Permit (VLS-TS) marked "student" allows international students to pursue higher education in France for a period of four months to one year. Upon its expiration, students must apply for a residence permit to continue their stay in France.

There is an official French visa website: france-visas.gouv.fr. Students are encouraged to consult it for all the information they need to prepare for their studies in France.

The Long-Stay Visa Equivalent to a Residence Permit (VLS-TS) marked "student" enables students to stay in France for 4 to 12 months to pursue higher education. It grants them the right to:

- Travel freely within all Schengen Area countries.
- Work 964 hours per year (approximately 20 hours per week) to supplement their income.
- Benefit from VISALE, a free student rental guarantee.
- Receive housing assistance (APL) from the CAF (Caisse d'Allocations Familiales).
- Extend their stay beyond the validity period of their residence permit.

If a student resides in one of the 46 countries covered by the "Études en France" procedure and requires a visa to study in France, they must first apply for enrollment in higher education via the Études en France platform. Their visa application will be automatically forwarded to the French consular authorities in their country of residence through this platform.

If a student does not reside in one of these countries but needs a visa to study in France, they should contact the French consular authorities in their country of residence.

The International Admissions Office at Paris 8 (also known as the "Bureau de l'admission des étudiants étrangers") is primarily responsible for managing the admission applications of international students who wish to enroll at the university. Here are its main roles:

- Processing Applications: It reviews and processes the applications of international students applying for programs at Paris 8, verifying their eligibility (degrees, language proficiency, etc.).
- Administrative Support: It assists students with the administrative steps related to their admission, such as validating foreign degrees or checking supporting documents (translations, certificates, etc.).

- Collaboration with Institutional Partners: It works closely with program directors, the French Ministry of Higher Education, embassies, Campus France (for countries involved in the "Études en France" procedure), and other French universities to facilitate the integration of international students
- Organization and Information Updates: It prepares admission campaigns, updates information sheets on procedures, and publishes this information on the university's website for international students.

Contact: +33(0)1 49 40 64 33 / +33(0)1 49 40 64 34 /+33 (0)1 49 40 73 06 / +33(0)1 49 40 71 03.

Bulgaria:
Legalization of stay in Bulgaria is a multi-step process. Students who need a visa for Bulgaria should apply for a visa for study purposes at the Bulgarian embassy or consulate in their country of residence well before travelling. Citizens of EU/EEA/Swiss states are exempt from visa requirements, but all students should check the entry and residence rules that apply to their nationality and current residence. We advise students not to enter Bulgaria on a short-stay tourist visa if they intend to stay for study, since a short-stay visa cannot be converted into a long-term residence permit in Bulgaria.

After arrival, non-EU students who need to formalise or extend their stay should contact the local Migration Directorate (Regional Directorate "Migration") of the Ministry of Interior responsible for their place of residence to apply for a residence permit for study, work permits (if applicable) or changes of status. Check the Bulgarian embassy/consulate and Ministry of Interior guidance for required documents, processing times and appointment procedures. New Bulgarian University has an International Students Office you can contact: Petya Georgieva at +359 2 8110 222, email: p.georgieva@nbu.bg.

Poland:
Legalization of stay in Poland is a multi-step process. Below you will find a useful check-list of steps that you must complete before you arrive in Poland. You may use the list as a step-by-step instructions and also as a handy checklist, as you proceed through the legalization process.

Check List

- ☐ Find out what documents are required to apply for a Visa and/or a Residence Card,
- ☐ Apply for a Visa at the Polish embassy or consulate,
- ☐ Book accommodation: Review information on accommodation options,
- ☐ Check options of health insurance policy for the duration of your stay in Poland,
- ☐ Obtain a credit card (e.g. VISA, Master Card, American Express, etc.),
- ☐ Book your flight / train to Poland,
- ☐ Check the options of transportation from your port of entry to your final destination in Poland

International students have two options to legalize their stay in Poland:

1. a visa,
2. a residence card.

Ad. 1: To obtain a visa, you should contact a Polish Embassy or a Consulate in your country of origin. There are two types of visas, the type you should choose to be able to spend a full semester of studies in Poland is “Type D Visa”.

- A national visa (type "D") allows a foreigner to enter Poland and stay within its borders for up to one year. The validity of such a visa depends on the purpose of travel. A national visa entitles a foreigner to travel to other countries of the Schengen Area for the maximum period of three months within a six month period.
- A Schengen visa (type "C") can be issued for a period of up to five months. This kind of visa allows a foreigner to remain within the Schengen Area for 90 days in any 180-day period. The visa indicates the number of entries to the Schengen Area that have occurred during the period of its validity.

Ad. 2: A Residence Card may be issued only to foreigners, who have already been granted a temporary or permanent residency in Poland, while their residency status is still valid. Holders of a Residence Card may cross the Polish national border numerous times, without the need to have a visa. Students who wish to apply for a Residence Card, should contact their Regional Administration Office (Voivodship Office). The Residence Card is usually issued for the period covering the duration of the academic year plus two additional months. A subsequent card may be issued for the period of three years, at the maximum. The Residence Card application process takes approximately 2 months.

To learn more about the legalization of stay in Poland, see the presentation on "Student Visas, Student Residence Cards, and Foreign Students and Graduates Working in Poland" prepared by the International Organization for Migration (IOM): Download presentation in English.

Administration Office (Voivodship Office):

WARSAW
Mazowiecki Urząd Wojewódzki
Pl. Bankowy 3/5
00-950 Warsaw
tel.: +48 22 695 69 95
e-mail: info@mazowieckie.pl
website

Students requiring legal advice on topics such as legalization of stay in Poland, lost Residence Card (Karta Pobytu), Polish visas, work permits, etc., may consult SWPS Offices:

Dr. Paweł Kowalski, Attorney at Law.

- Duration of a free consultation: 15 minutes,
- Wednesdays: between 15:30 and 17:00, via Hangout Meets,

To book an appointment please contact the Office for Accessibility, Scholarships and Student Activity at: biuro.zon@swps.edu.pl.

To obtain free legal advice, you may contact Stowarzyszenie Interwencji Prawnej (Legal Intervention Association), a non-profit organization specializing in providing legal assistance to foreigners:

Stowarzyszenie Interwencji Prawnej
ul. Siedmiogrodzka 5/51
01-204 Warsaw
tel.: +48 880 145 372
Office hours: Monday to Friday: 10.00–16.00

For more specific details and answers to the frequently asked questions for international students at SWPS University, please visit the SWPS WEBSITE.

Greece:

The University of the Aegean supports all prospective students (EU and Non- EU citizens) who will be coming to study in Lesvos, Greece. By founding the International Student Support Unit in Mytilene, Lesvos, an institutional structure was created operating under the Central Directorate of Studies and Student Welfare to best serve this purpose .

Students from the European Union can bypass bureaucratic procedures before arriving as they do not need a visa to enter Greece. Moreover, they do not have to apply for a residence permit, as they are entitled to the right of free movement within Greece. However, after three months of residence in Greece, they will need to visit their local police department to obtain a "Registration Certificate for EU Member State Citizens."

Non-European Union citizens must obtain a study visa to enter the country, which can take up to three months to process. You can apply for a student visa at the Greek Embassy or Consulate in your home country. Some countries also offer the option to apply online through the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs website. International students from all other countries than those stated above, who have acquired a student visa (H 1.1. "Studies") by the Greek Consular Authorities of their country of origin, are required to apply for a residence permit for studies within 90 days of their arrival in Greece. For national visa services you can contact the Global Visa Center World.

More explicitly, according to Article 105 (Law 5038/2023) regarding the general conditions for the right of residence for the purpose of studies, it is stated that:

1. The entry and residence of a third-country national in accordance with Chapter A of Part VI shall be subject to verification of supporting documents proving that the conditions of paragraph 2 of this Article and the respective conditions of Articles 106 and 108 are cumulatively fulfilled.
2. The entry and residence of third-country nationals in Greece for the purpose of studies or voluntary service shall be permitted, provided that the following general conditions are cumulatively met:
    a. they hold a valid passport or other travel document recognized by Greece, the validity of which extends at least three (3) months beyond the expiry of the entry visa, and they have obtained an entry visa for the purpose of studies or voluntary service,
    b. they submit parental consent or consent of the person exercising parental responsibility for the intended stay, if they are under eighteen (18) years of age,

c. they have full health insurance coverage for all risks normally covered for nationals,

d. they do not constitute a threat to public order, security, or public health,

e. they have paid the required fee, in accordance with point (d) of paragraph 1 of Article 171, only in the case of residence for the purpose of studies.

3. Students who are automatically covered by health insurance for all risks normally covered for nationals due to their enrollment in an educational institution shall be deemed to meet the condition of point (c) of paragraph 2.
4. Subject to more specific provisions of this Code, the competent authority for examining residence permit applications under this Article shall be the competent service of the relevant Decentralized Administration. The application shall be submitted in accordance with Article 10. If, at the time of application, the third-country national does not yet know their future address, a temporary address may be declared. In this case, the third-country nationals must declare their permanent address no later than the time of issuance of the residence permit provided for in Articles 106 and 108.

In Article 106 of the aforementioned Law, requirements about granting of a residence permit for study purposes (Residence permit type "H.1") are stated, as follows:

1. A third-country national who has obtained a national entry visa for studies in Greece shall submit an application in accordance with Article 10, provided that, in addition to the general conditions of Articles 8 and 105, the following conditions are cumulatively met:

   a) they have been accepted into a higher education institution in Greece to attend a study program,

   b) they possess sufficient resources to cover their living expenses during their stay, without recourse to the national social assistance system, as well as the cost of return travel. The assessment of sufficient resources is based on an individual examination of each case and takes into account resources deriving, inter alia, from grants, student scholarships, or other scholarships,

   c) they have paid the required tuition fees to the relevant higher education institution, where applicable.
2. Study programs also include attendance at Centers for the Teaching of the Greek Language and Culture operated by higher education institutions.
3. Where the study program to be attended by the third-country national requires sufficient knowledge of the Greek language as a condition for enrollment, the relevant educational institution shall carry out the necessary checks and issue the relevant certificate, which shall be submitted for the issuance of the residence permit.
4. The application referred to in paragraph 1 shall be accompanied by the required supporting documents set out in the decision of paragraph 1 of Article 176, which must be submitted in the Greek language.
5. Articles 10 and 15 shall apply to the examination of the application for the granting of the residence permit and the issuance of the relevant decision.
6. If, based on the submitted evidence, it is established that the conditions for studies are met, the competent authority shall grant the residence permit for study purposes (type "H.1") within sixty (60) days from the submission of the complete application by the applicant. The permit shall be issued using the uniform format established pursuant to paragraph 1 of Article 1 of Regulation (EC) No 1030/2002. In

the “remarks” field, the indication “student” shall be entered, along with information regarding the student’s access to the labor market. For students entering the European Union under a specific Union or multilateral program involving mobility measures, or under an agreement between two or more recognized higher education institutions, the residence permit shall include a reference to that specific program or agreement. Rejection decisions, which must include sufficient reasoning, shall be notified to both the applicant and the higher education institution.

Prospective students who wish to come to Greece and study at the University of the Aegean are strongly advised to visit the below linked website for more detailed information about legislation in force, useful links and required documents: https://www.aegean.edu/international-student-support-unit/.

Italy:

EU citizens do not need a visa to enter Italy.

BEFORE ARRIVAL

Non-EU citizens residing outside Italy are required to apply for a study visa (type D, "Exchange and mobility programme"). The procedure starts with the online pre-enrolment application through the UniversItaly portal of the Italian Ministry of University and Research. The University of Macerata will send a digital copy of the invitation letter to the student.

Once pre-enrolment has been completed and validated, students must apply for a visa at the Italian Embassy or Consulate in their country of residence, following the instructions provided by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI).

Non-EU students residing in another European Union country and holding a valid EU residence permit may be exempt from the visa requirement. To verify whether a visa is required, students are strongly encouraged to contact the Italian diplomatic authority in the country where they reside. If needed, the invitation letter must be requested from the University of Macerata, which will provide it in digital format.

Important information:

The list of required documents, as well as other key information for the visa procedure, may vary depending on the Consulate or Embassy; therefore, please refer to the specific information published on the website of the relevant Consulate or Embassy.

To obtain a Schengen visa, students must provide proof of valid health insurance covering the entire duration of their stay in Italy. The insurance must provide at least € 30,000 in coverage and include emergency medical treatment, hospitalisation, and repatriation.

Indicative timelines for pre-enrolment and visa applications are typically in late spring and summer for studies beginning in the fall semester. Students are strongly advised to check the specific schedule at the relevant Consulate or Embassy and to begin the process as early as possible due to potentially long processing times at visa offices.

UPON ARRIVAL

Non-EU students entering Italy with a visa must apply for a residence permit (*permesso di soggiorno*) no later than 8 working days after arrival. The application is submitted through designated post offices using a specific kit, including the required documentation and payment of a fee of approximately € 100. Applicants will then be required to attend an appointment at the local immigration office (*Ufficio Immigrazione*). The issuance of the final residence permit may take at least two months.

Students entering Italy under a visa exemption must complete a declaration of presence (*dichiarazione di presenza*) upon arrival.

Valid health insurance covering the entire length of the stay in Italy is required for all of these procedures.

LOCAL SUPPORT AND USEFUL SOURCES

The University of Macerata provides ongoing guidance and support throughout these procedures: international.desk@unimc.it

For further official information, students should refer to:

- Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI): https://vistoperitalia.esteri.it
- UniversItaly Portal (pre-enrolment for visa purpose): https://www.universitaly.it
- Italian State Police (residence permit): https://www.poliziadistato.it

In order to comply with all applicable requirements, students are encouraged to consult these official sources and remain in close contact with both the University of Macerata throughout the entire pre-arrival and post-arrival process, and, if required, the relevant Italian diplomatic authorities.

16. Arrival, onboarding and moving between countries

Before arrival, students receive a consolidated Welcome Package with host-specific annexes for each mobility location. It covers programme rules, mobility obligations, visa and residence requirements, insurance and health coverage, accommodation options, indicative cost-of-living information and practical settlement guidance such as banking, transport and local registration. A virtual onboarding session is also provided before arrival.

Upon arrival at each host university, students receive administrative onboarding covering enrolment, student identification, IT access, library access and local registration or residence procedures. Mobility transitions are supported through an arrival protocol that includes accommodation confirmation or help with short-term housing where needed, orientation to local services and emergency contacts, and a clear referral route for urgent issues.

The coordinating institution also functions as a permanent cross-cutting contact point throughout the programme to help ensure continuity across mobility periods.

What to do before you move

Before each move, all students should:

- ☐ check whether they need a visa or residence permit;
- ☐ ensure that their visa or residence status allows repeated travel between countries;
- ☐ arrange accommodation early, either through recommended organisation or, private housing;
- ☐ prepare proof of health insurance valid in respective countries;
- ☐ check enrolment, semester contribution and student ID requirements;
- ☐ attend the relevant online or in-person onboarding sessions;
- ☐ note the contact details of the local academic coordinator, local administrative coordinator, Department of International Affairs and emergency contacts.

Sustainable travel options

While planning your travel between the universities, please always keep in mind how you can keep your travel sustainable. In alignment with our commitment to environmental responsibility, students are encouraged to prioritize low-emission transport modes. Choosing rail or coach alternatives over short-haul flights significantly reduces the environmental impact of the program's mobility.

Inbound routes to Warsaw

From Paris to Warsaw
There are no direct train services. However, there is a possibility of a highly efficient rail connection by combining the TGV or ICE networks from Paris to Berlin with the direct EuroCity (EC) line to Warsaw. For those opting for coach travel, overnight routes are recommended to manage the significant transit time effectively. Students should consult operators such as FlixBus or Sindbad, where fares typically range between €20 and €30.

From Frankfurt (Oder) to Warsaw
The direct EuroCity (EC) train is the primary recommendation, completing the journey in under three hours. Tickets are available through operators such as PKP and Deutsche Bahn. Alternatively, frequent coach services, such as FlixBus, offer a highly cost-effective alternative with fares typically ranging from €20 to €40, although keep in mind that it takes significantly more time, even more than 6 hours.

From Sofia to Warsaw
Since rail logistics can be quite complex, international coach services are the most practical sustainable option. However, please be aware that one-way fares generally start at approximately €100. Given the considerable travel distance, selecting an overnight transit is also recommended to optimize travel time.

Outbound routes from Warsaw

From Warsaw to Macerata
Relocation on this route is serviced by the European night train network – including the ÖBB Nightjet or the EuroNight (EN) Chopin – to Vienna, followed by a connection to the Italian Trenitalia or Italo high-speed lines. Tickets may be purchased directly via official carrier websites or mobile applications. Alternatively, long-distance coach operators provide connections to the Marche region (typically requiring two or even three transfers).

From Warsaw to Lesvos
Due to the absence of direct rail or coach connections and the substantial travel duration involved, land-based transit for this route may be considered logistically and financially unfeasible. Should air travel be necessary, it is highly recommended to select itineraries with the fewest transfers and to utilize carbon offsetting programs offered by the carriers.

17. Accommodation

The programme documents foresee student guidance on accommodation options, indicative price ranges, warning signs for fraudulent offers, and practical settlement information before arrival. On arrival and during studies, host institutions are also expected to support students with accommodation-related issues, including short-term solutions where needed and advice on extensions, changes of accommodation and tenancy documentation required for residence formalities.

SWPS University
For detailed information on the below listed queries regarding accommodation and housing in Poland, especially:

- typical accommodation options,
- indicative monthly cost range,
- whether university housing is available,
- recommended housing platforms,
- common rental pitfalls,
- local housing contact,

please visit SWPS website: student accommodation.

European University Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder)
Housing information and guidance are provided through student-service channels and local support, with residence halls managed by Studierendenwerk Frankfurt (Oder) offering furnished accommodation near campus for approximately €190–€275 per month. For the current cost see Living, Housing, Leisure. These rooms typically include internet access and shared or private facilities, though many students also opt for housing in Słubice (Poland) due to lower costs – ranging from 430 to 845 PLN – and its convenient walking distance across the city bridge. The student residences are managed either by the "Studierendenwerk Ost:Brandenburg" or the residence hall administration in Slubice. Additionally, private housing and shared-flat rooms are available in Frankfurt (Oder) and

the surrounding region, generally costing between €200 and €400, but because capacity is limited, early application is highly recommended.

New Bulgarian University
NBU is located in the capital city of Sofia. It does not operate its own dormitories. To facilitate accommodation, preferential agreements are in place with accommodation providers, and the Erasmus+ coordinator can advise students on available options and practical steps.
Recommended housing platforms include Kitchen 59, Aviva Living, Flatimo.bg, and Forrent.bg, which provide a variety of verified listings suitable for international students. Students typically choose between private student residences, shared apartments, or individual studio flats. Indicative monthly accommodation costs in Sofia range from approximately €250 to €600, depending on the type of housing, location, and included amenities.
When searching for accommodation, students should be aware of common rental pitfalls such as misleading listings, unclear contract terms, or requests for large upfront payments without proper documentation. It is advisable to avoid making payments before viewing the property or signing a formal agreement.

For more information about the NBU partnerships with several student housing organizations, please visit the student accommodation webpage.

University of Paris 8
Paris 8 works with the local student housing agency (CROUS) to reserve rooms for international students in residences located near the campus, with options typically including shared or private rooms and communal spaces (kitchens, study areas and common rooms). Students are also directed to information resources for private rentals to support their housing search. Useful links:
https://www.crous-creteil.fr/,
https://www.crous-creteil.fr/logement/residence-internationale,
residences93-p8@crous-creteil.fr.

University of the Aegean
The University of the Aegean provides accommodation to a limited number of students in university residences. Student welfare structures provide information on eligibility criteria and required documentation. The University may provide free accommodation to a limited number of students on each island. Residences in Lesvos are located in the city of Mytilene, accommodation needs for students of several departments are covered through these arrangements. For more detailed information please visit the:
http://www1.aegean.gr/international/accomodation.html.

University of Macerata
Accommodation is allocated through the Regional Authority for the Right to Education (ERDIS Marche) via public calls for students who do not reside in Macerata, including international students. In addition, the university-affiliated service “Il Faro Housing” manages university residences and offers further housing solutions (e.g., hostels, apartments and guesthouses). A limited quota is reserved for incoming international and Erasmus students, and the International Office supports students in identifying suitable private options where needed.

The most common option is to rent a room in a private shared flat. Rooms are advertised on social media and online platforms.
The average cost of a room is around €200–€300. Useful link: https://ilfarohousing.it/.

18. Insurance, health and wellbeing

In case of the programme receiving the Erasmus Mundus Joint Master's grant:
All students (scholarship and non-scholarship holders) are covered by an insurance scheme compliant with Erasmus Mundus requirements for the full duration of the programme, including mobility periods, internships and thesis-related activities. Coverage terms, claim procedures and emergency contacts are communicated pre-arrival and reiterated at the start of each study period.

In case of the programme NOT receiving the Erasmus Mundus Joint Master's grant:

All international students must obtain medical insurance for the duration of their studies. You must provide the coordinating institution (SWPS University) with proof of a medical insurance policy to the Local Administrative Coordinator at the university where you are spending the given semester (all contact details can be found in Paragraph 20 of this Handbook). It is essential to have medical insurance in order to avoid expensive medical fees, in the event of a medical emergency or other health related matters. Some health insurance policy options include:

- The European Health Insurance Card,
- A private health insurance policy with an insurance company of the student's choice,
- Medical Insurance obtained with the International Student Identity Card (ISIC),
- In Poland: Insurance with Narodowy Fundusz Zdrowia (Polish National Healthcare System), commencing at the start of the academic year.

Polish National Health Fund (NFZ)
If you wish to purchase medical insurance policy from the Polish National Health Fund (NFZ), you must provide the following documents:

- 2 copies of a completed application form to join the National Health Fund (NFZ) health insurance,
- passport with a valid Polish visa or a residence card,
- your Student ID Card,
- an official confirmation of your student status (which you can obtain from the Center for Student Affairs at SWPS University),
- a document confirming your residence address in Poland.

Within 7 days of signing the contract, you must submit the ZUS ZZA Insurance Registration Form to the Social Security Institution (ZUS) branch competent for where you live, where you will be given an individual account number to pay your health insurance contributions to the Social Security Institution (ZUS). The form is available here.

More information on medical insurance for foreigners in Poland is available at www.migrant.info.pl.

112 European Emergency Number - Toll Free

112 is a universal European emergency telephone number. It can be dialled directly from a landline (including pay-phones) and mobile phones. No country or city code is needed. Since all EU member states are responsible for provision of their own emergency services, the caller may be transferred to a local operator upon placing a call with 112.

Wellbeing services

When it comes to wellbeing, support is offered for students on many levels across all universities. All the institutions provide a comprehensive safety net that covers many areas of student life from mental well-being to long-term career planning. If you find yourself in need of such support, please reach out to the Local Administrative Coordinator at the university where you are spending the given semester (all contact details can be found in Paragraph 20 of this Handbook) :

- **European University Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder)** – students can receive support with health, wellbeing, counselling, or social matters from the Local Administrative Coordinator and the Admission Office and/or Enrolment Office for enrolment-related matters.
- **New Bulgarian University** – student services are provided by the International Relations Office. Career support is offered through the Career Orientation Center.
- **University of Paris 8** – students can obtain administrative and practical support through the International Relations Office and student-support services. Digital student services are supported through an online portal enabling document management, course registration and communication.
- **University of the Aegean** – each university unit on all six islands includes a Student Welfare Office providing support and guidance on student benefits and services, including a dedicated Foreign Student Support Office function within student welfare arrangements.
- **University of Macerata** – students receive support from the International Office, supported by online resources and orientation activities for incoming cohorts. Students have access to psychological counselling and well-being services and activities offered through the University Sports Centre.

The European Health Insurance Card

The European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) is a free document that grants you access to medically necessary, state-provided healthcare during temporary stays abroad. The EHIC is designed for necessary and unplanned treatment – meaning it covers things like emergency room visits or sudden illness. Whether you are traveling for a semester exchange or a short holiday, the card is valid in all 27 EU countries, as well as Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. It ensures that if you require medical attention, you are treated under the same rules and at the same cost as the nationals of that country. Obtaining the card is highly recommended for any student traveling within Europe, as it acts as a vital safety net.

To receive your card, you must contact the national health insurance institution in your home country. The application process is generally straightforward and entirely free of

charge. Because the validity period of the card can vary significantly depending on your country of residence, it is best to apply well in advance of your departure and check with your local health authority regarding your card's expiration date.

***Health insurance in Germany / European University Viadrina**
Students studying at European University Viadrina must have health insurance that complies with German legal requirements. Health insurance information must be provided as part of the enrolment procedure at Viadrina. Students should contact a German statutory health insurance provider before arrival to clarify whether they need to take out German statutory health insurance or whether their existing insurance can be recognised for enrolment purposes. The health insurance provider then sends an electronic notification to Viadrina.

There are several statutory health insurance providers in Germany, and students may choose any provider. Viadrina's information notes that students have had good experiences with AOK Nordost and Techniker Krankenkasse (TK), both of which can assist students before arrival.

For students aged 30 or above, or students who have exceeded the 14th subject semester, the regular obligation to take out student statutory health insurance may no longer apply. These students must arrange voluntary statutory or private health insurance themselves. International students in this situation should check carefully whether the insurance they choose is accepted for enrolment and residence purposes in Germany and whether it provides sufficient coverage, including for pre-existing conditions, chronic illness, preventive care, and psychological or psychotherapeutic treatment.

Students should not assume that travel insurance or short-term private insurance is automatically sufficient for enrolment at a German university. The decisive question is whether the insurance is accepted for German enrolment and, where relevant, residence purposes.

19. Accessibility and disability support

Specific support measures for equal and inclusive access and for participants with individual needs
The PATHS consortium is committed to ensuring equal access and inclusive participation for all students throughout the duration of the programme, and to removing barriers across recruitment, selection, mobility and study participation. Partner universities undertake to provide learning environments that support accessibility in accordance with their national legislation and institutional policies, including access for students with disabilities, chronic health conditions, or other specific needs. Reasonable accommodations may include adjustments to teaching formats, examination arrangements, mobility planning, digital learning resources, and campus facilities, subject to local procedures at each host institution. Students are encouraged to inform the programme coordinators or relevant support services at an early stage so that appropriate measures can be arranged in a timely manner. Through close cooperation between partner institutions, the consortium seeks to minimise barriers to participation and to

ensure that all students are able to engage fully in the academic and mobility components of the PATHS programme.

Inclusive recruitment and selection
Outreach materials are designed to be accessible, eligibility requirements are clearly communicated, and selection uses standardised assessment criteria and bias-reducing safeguards. Information on support measures is communicated early to enable informed decision-making by applicants.

Inclusive learning environment
The programme applies inclusive teaching and assessment practices consistent with Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles where feasible: accessible learning materials, clear assessment criteria, and appropriate flexibility in learning and assessment formats while maintaining learning outcomes and academic standards.

Support for individual needs (including long-term impairments)
For students, staff and invited scholars with long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments, PATHS implements a coordinated support strategy to ensure that support follows with the participant across partners:

- Early identification and confidential disclosure mechanisms during admission and prearrival onboarding;
- Individual Support Plans coordinated across partners, covering reasonable accommodations (e.g., accessible housing and facilities, assistive technologies, adapted learning materials, alternative assessment arrangements, extended exam time where justified);
- Mobility continuity measures, including early planning of accessible accommodation and local services, and designated contact points at each institution;
- Financial support facilitation, including assistance with applications for the Erasmus Mundus special needs unit cost contribution where eligible.

These measures are implemented in compliance with applicable national regulations and institutional procedures, while ensuring consistent consortium-level coordination and accountability.

Environmental sustainability
PATHS integrates environmental sustainability into programme delivery primarily through how mobility is organised and supported. Building on ERUA's "slow/green mobility" approach, the consortium encourages students and staff to choose lower-emission travel options (rail, bus, ferry) where feasible and provides practical guidance on greener routes for each mobility transition. To make environmental impact more visible and support informed choices, PATHS will provide a travel carbon footprint calculator (or equivalent tool) as part of pre-departure guidance, allowing participants to compare travel options and document greener choices where relevant. Administrative processes are organised digitally wherever possible to reduce paper use and travel linked to programme management.

SWPS University
SWPS University is an equal opportunity higher education institution and welcomes students with special needs and special access requirements. Our Office for Accessibility, Scholarships and Student Activity supports students with special needs and provides them with optimal conditions for studying and for personal development. We take great care to create an inclusive environment for all students, no matter what their needs, to allow them to flourish and experience academic life in all its aspects. To read more about services and support at SWPS, please follow the link.

European University Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder)
Viadrina is committed to an inclusive and accessible environment for students with disabilities and chronic illnesses. The Counselling Service for Students with Health Impairments provides guidance on academic accommodations (including exam arrangements, lecture attendance and study materials). Students may request accessible lecture halls, elevators, ramps and specially equipped computer workstations (Accessibility at the Viadrina) . Digital services (online platforms, course materials and library services) are designed to be accessible, and students can receive support with adaptive technologies and software (e.g., for reading, writing or communication). Counselling and mentoring services are available where needed.

New Bulgarian University
The university environment is designed to comply with access requirements for people with physical disabilities. Building 1 has a panoramic elevator enabling access across five floors; Building 2 has elevators adapted for the same purpose. Five ramps support mobility across the campus. Visually impaired users benefit from a guidance path from the main entrance to the Library and from a dedicated reading area equipped with specialised hardware and software. The NBU provides specialized services for students with special needs, including remote assistance. For specific accessibility support, you can contact at mzdravkova@nbu.bg or by phone at +359 2 8110 134.

University of Paris 8
Campus access is supported through physical infrastructure (ramps, elevators and adapted restrooms) and personalised assistance via disability support services. The library provides assistive tools (e.g., screen readers, magnification software and Braille materials where required). Digital resources (e-books and audio materials) support accessible study formats.
For disability support at the University of Paris 8, the designated office is often referred to as the Accueil Handicap. While specific library support can be reached via handi.bu@univ-paris8.fr, general student disability services can be reached via email at handicap@univ-paris8.fr or by phone at +33 1 49 40 68 06.

University of the Aegean
The Department promotes equal access to academic studies for students with different abilities. Students with disabilities or special educational needs have access to faculty support, buildings and facilities, educational materials (printed and electronic), classrooms, internet services and IT applications. For more information please contact: merimna@aegean.gr.

University of Macerata

UniMC provides coordinated support through the Service for Inclusion and Right to Study for students with disabilities and specific learning disorders (SLD), based on an institutional regulation defining personalised measures (orientation, tutoring, mediation with academic staff and adapted workstations). Support may also assist international students with disabilities in managing residence permits, healthcare and housing. The university is implementing a progressive plan to remove architectural barriers and improve accessibility, supported by the "Unimc for Inclusion" framework and awareness initiatives (e.g., Inclusion Week). For more information please contact: servizio.disabilita@unimc.it or consulenza.psicologica@unimc.it.

20. Who to contact

The Parties designate SWPS University as the coordinating institution responsible for the joint administrative management of the programme. SWPS University appoints a European Administrative Coordinator, who will oversee administrative matters related to the implementation and day-to-day operation of the joint Master's programme.

The Parties jointly appoint a European Academic Coordinator, who is responsible for overseeing the academic aspects of the joint Master's programme. The European Academic Coordinator must be a faculty member employed by one of the partner institutions.

Each institution appoints a Local Academic Coordinator responsible for addressing any issues or disputes arising during the project. Each university shall also designate a Local Administrative Coordinator responsible for handling administrative and bureaucratic matters for the enrolled students. These coordinators shall act as liaisons for institutions and students.

The governance of the joint Master's programme is entrusted to a Governing Board, which is composed of:

- the European Academic Coordinator (Chair),
- the European Administrative Coordinator,
- the Local Academic Coordinators and Local Administrative Coordinators from each participating university, and
- the Student Board, composed of elected student representatives from among students enrolled in the programme (one per study path, per year).

The Governing Board is responsible for the overall strategic and operational management of the programme, including:

- Setting the programme's policies and overseeing its long-term direction.
- Overseeing the student selection process, reviewing applications against agreed criteria, and making final admission decisions.
- Monitoring the programme's academic quality, analysing student and staff feedback, and implementing enhancement measures.
- Approving final grades, ratifying thesis evaluations, and making the final decision on student graduation.

- Acting as the primary body for mediating and resolving student complaints and disputes that cannot be settled at the local level.

Each partner institution has one vote in the Governing Board, exercised by the Local Academic Coordinator or their formally designated delegate. In addition, the Student Board holds one collective vote, exercised by a designated representative. The Governing Board aims to make decisions by consensus. If consensus cannot be reached, decisions shall be made by majority vote. In the event of a tie, the European Academic Coordinator shall have the casting vote.

2.7 Each institution undertakes to:

- Participate in and contribute to programme management;
- Participate in meetings concerning this agreement;
- Promptly inform relevant academic bodies of any delays or issues affecting the programme;
- Ensure the accuracy of provided information and correct any errors without delay;
- Act in good faith, upholding the name, integrity, and reputation of all partner universities in accordance with their respective ethical codes.

Consortium Governance			
University	**Name**	**Role**	**Contact**
NBU	Ildiko Otova	European Academic Coordinator	iotova@nbu.bg
SWPS	Radosław Stanczewski	European Administrative Coordinator	rstanczewski@swps.edu.pl

Local Consortium Governing Bodies				
University	**Local Academic Coordinator**	**Contact**	**Local Administrative Coordinator**	**Contact**
EUV	Kira Kosnick	kosnick@europa-uni.de	Stefan Henkel	shenkel@europa-uni.de
NBU	Ildiko Otova	iotova@nbu.bg	Lilia Kolova	lkolova@nbu.bg
UAEGEAN	Nagopoulos Nikolaos	N.Nagopoulos@aegean.gr	George Strogylopoulos	gstrogylopoulos@aegean.gr
UniMC	Edith Cognigni	edith.cognigni@unimc.it	Tobia Ciarrocchi	tobia.ciarrocchi@unimc.it
UP8	Ilaria Pirone	ilaria.pirone@univ-paris8.fr	Yann Lafferrerie	yann.lafferrerie@univ-paris8.fr
USWPS	Agnieszka Golińska	agolinska@swps.edu.pl	Dominika Rudol	drudol@swps.edu.pl
Admissions Office	Please reach out to the European Administrative Coordinator			
Visa/residence Support	Please reach out to the relevant Local Administrative Coordinator in the country for which you are applying for a visa			
Housing Support	Please reach out to the relevant Local Administrative Coordinator in the country for which you are looking for housing support			
Wellbeing/ counselling Support	Please reach out to the relevant Local Administrative Coordinator at the university you are currently studying			
EMERGENCY	Please call 112, if the emergency is not health related, please reach out to the relevant Local Administrative Coordinator at the university you are currently studying			

21. Complaints, appeals and when things go wrong

The programme documents state that complaints and appeals routes and timelines should be clearly communicated through the handbook.

The Quality Assurance (QA) mechanisms are designed to ensure the continuous monitoring and improvement of the programme's academic quality and operational effectiveness. A core principle is the commitment to excellent academic quality, which all partners shall maintain by ensuring they have the specific expertise, experience, and teaching capacity required for their role in the Consortium. The QA framework is aligned with the principles of the *European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes*, promoting coherent standards, joint responsibility, and cross-border transparency.

Governance
The governance of the programme's quality assurance is entrusted to specific bodies established by the Governing Board, ensuring both operational oversight and external strategic guidance:

- Quality Assurance Committee (QAC): The Governing Board establishes a permanent Quality Assurance Committee to oversee all QA procedures. This committee is responsible for monitoring the programme and proposing corrective or enhancement measures to the Governing Board.
- External Advisory Board: This is a consultative body composed of recognized experts from outside the consortium with experience in migration issues or joint programme administration. The Board's primary role is to provide strategic advice to help maintain the relevance and innovation of the curriculum.

Internal Quality Assurance Procedures
The QAC is responsible for implementing the following internal mechanisms:

- Comprehensive Feedback Collection: The committee collects and analyses feedback from multiple sources, including:
    - Anonymous student feedback questionnaires after each semester.
    - Feedback from teaching and administrative staff.
    - Input from external reviewers.
- Annual Meetings with Students: The QAC organizes annual meetings with student representatives to discuss the programme's quality.
- Monitoring of Academic Standards: The committee actively monitors the consistency of grading and assessment standards across the consortium's partner institutions.
- Annual Reporting: The QAC prepares and presents an annual quality assurance report to the Governing Board, which includes analysis of feedback and provides recommendations for improvement.

External Quality Assurance Procedures
In addition to internal monitoring, the consortium is committed to validating its academic standards and ensuring the programme's relevance through two key external procedures:

- Periodic Evaluation: The consortium will undergo periodic external evaluation in accordance with the national accreditation requirements of the partner countries.
- Strategic Review by External Advisory Board: The External Advisory Board contributes to external quality assurance by offering an independent perspective on the programme's academic direction and relevance.

22. Graduation and your final degree

After successful completion of the programme, SWPS University awards a joint diploma on behalf of all partner institutions. The degree is recognised by all partners and corresponds to the national qualifications listed in the consortium documentation.

To graduate, you must successfully complete all required courses, the internship and the Master's thesis, including the oral defence.

23. Final checklist for students

Before the programme starts:

- ☐ confirm your place,
- ☐ complete enrolment,
- ☐ prepare visa/residence documents if needed,
- ☐ arrange accommodation,
- ☐ review the mobility pathway,
- ☐ attend the virtual onboarding.

Before each mobility:

- ☐ check your travel and housing arrangements,
- ☐ check visa/residence validity,
- ☐ review local registration requirements,
- ☐ note your local contacts,
- ☐ make sure you know when and where teaching starts.

Before the internship and thesis:

- ☐ confirm the relevant deadlines,
- ☐ check supervision arrangements,
- ☐ make sure all administrative requirements are completed.