



w sprawie oceny programowej ex-ante programu studiów wspólnych "PATHS" Joint Master's Degree in Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context opracowanego w ramach sojuszu ERUA<sup>1</sup> na poziomie studiów drugiego stopnia

§ 1

Na podstawie art. 249 ust. 1 pkt 2 w zw. z art. 258 ust. 1 pkt 3 i 7 ustawy z dnia 20 lipca 2018 r. – Prawo o szkolnictwie wyższym i nauce (t.j. Dz. U. z 2024 r. poz. 1571 z późn. zm.) Prezydium Polskiej Komisji Akredytacyjnej, po zapoznaniu się ze stanowiskiem Uczelni oraz raportem zespołu oceniającego, wydaje ocenę:

pozytywną

§ 2

Prezydium Polskiej Komisji Akredytacyjnej stwierdza, że proces kształcenia programu studiów "PATHS" Joint Master's Degree in Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context opracowanego w ramach sojuszu ERUA na poziomie studiów drugiego stopnia umożliwia studentom osiągnięcie założonych efektów uczenia się. Wszystkie kryteria określone w międzynarodowych standardach w zakresie zapewniania jakości kształcenia na studiach wspólnych *European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes* zostały spełnione, co zgodnie z ust. 3 pkt 1 załącznika nr 3 do Statutu PKA uzasadnia wydanie oceny pozytywnej.

§ 3

Następna ocena programowa studiów "PATHS" Joint Master's Degree in Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context na Uczelni wymienionej w § 1 powinna nastąpić w roku akademickim 2031/2032.

§ 4

1. Uczelnia niezadowolona z uchwały może złożyć wniosek o ponowne rozpatrzenie sprawy.
2. Wniosek, o którym mowa w ust. 1, należy kierować do Polskiej Komisji Akredytacyjnej w terminie 14 dni od dnia doręczenia uchwały.
3. Na składającym wniosek o ponowne rozpatrzenie sprawy ciąży, na podstawie art. 245 ust. 4 ustawy Prawo o szkolnictwie wyższym i nauce, obowiązek zawiadomienia Ministra Nauki i Szkolnictwa Wyższego o jego złożeniu.

§ 5

Uchwałę Prezydium Polskiej Komisji Akredytacyjnej otrzymują:

1. Minister Nauki i Szkolnictwa Wyższego,
2. Rektor Uniwersytetu SWPS w Warszawie,
3. (do wiadomości) Rektorzy: Europa-Universität Viadrina Frankfurt, New Bulgarian University, Università degli Studi di Macerata, Université Paris 8 Vincennes-Saint-Denis, University of the Aegean.

§ 6

Uchwała wchodzi w życie z dniem podjęcia.

Przewodniczący  
Polskiej Komisji Akredytacyjnej

Janusz Uriasz

on the ex-ante programme evaluation of the "PATHS" Joint Master's Degree in Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context developed within the ERUA<sup>2</sup> alliance at the second cycle level

§ 1

Pursuant to Art. 249 sec. 1 item 2 in conjunction with Art. 258 sec. 1 items 3 and 7 of the Act of 20 July 2018 - Act on Higher Education and Science (i.e. Journal of Laws of 2024, item 1571, as amended), the Presidium of the Polish Accreditation Committee, after examining the University's statement and the evaluation team's report, issues the following assessment:

positive

§ 2

The Presidium of the PKA Polish Accreditation Committee notes that the educational process of the "PATHS" Joint Master's Degree in Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context developed within the ERUA alliance at the second cycle level enables students to achieve the assumed learning outcomes. All criteria set out in the international standards for assuring the quality of learning and teaching in joint programmes, the *European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes*, have been met, which justifies a positive assessment in accordance with paragraph 3 point 1 of Annex No. 3 of the PKA Statute.

§ 3

The next program evaluation of the "PATHS" Joint Master's Degree in Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context studies at the University referred to in § 1 should take place in the academic year 2031/2032.

§ 4

1. A university dissatisfied with the decision may submit a request for reconsideration of the case.
2. The application under paragraph 1 should be submitted to the PKA Polish Accreditation Committee within 14 days of notification of the decision.
3. The person submitting the application for reconsideration of the case is obliged to inform the Minister of Science and Higher Education about the submission of the application in accordance with Article 245(4) of the Higher Education and Science Act.

§ 5

The decision of the Presidium of the Polish Accreditation Committee is received by:

1. Minister of Science and Higher Education,
2. Rector of the SWPS University of Warsaw,
3. (for information) Rectors: Europa-Universität Viadrina Frankfurt, New Bulgarian University, Università degli Studi di Macerata, Université Paris 8 Vincennes-Saint-Denis, University of the Aegean.

§ 6

The resolution shall enter into force on the day of its adoption.

President  
of the Polish Accreditation Committee

Janusz Uriasz

*Translated version; original version in Polish prevails*

<sup>1</sup> (1) Uniwersytet SWPS w Warszawie / SWPS University of Warsaw (Coordinator – Degree awarding party), (2) Europa-Universität Viadrina Frankfurt (Degree awarding party), (3) New Bulgarian University (Degree awarding party), (4) Università degli Studi di Macerata (Degree awarding party), (5) Université Paris 8 Vincennes-Saint-Denis (Degree awarding party), (6) University of the Aegean (Degree awarding party).

<sup>2</sup> (1) SWPS University of Warsaw / Uniwersytet SWPS w Warszawie (Coordinator – Degree awarding party), (2) Europa-Universität Viadrina Frankfurt (Degree awarding party), (3) New Bulgarian University (Degree awarding party), (4) Università degli Studi di Macerata (Degree awarding party), (5) Université Paris 8 Vincennes-Saint-Denis (Degree awarding party), (6) University of the Aegean (Degree awarding party).

## Reply to the Panel Report

Name of the programme: "PATHS" Joint Master on Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context

Coordinating university: SWPS University in Warsaw / Uniwersytet SWPS w Warszawie

On behalf of the consortium partners, SWPS University would like to thank the panel members for their thorough and professional evaluation of the joint master's programme "PATHS" Joint Master on Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context." We appreciate both the positive assessment of the programme as a whole and the recommendations aimed at further improving its formal, procedural and documentary framework prior to the launch of the first edition. Below, we provide responses and comments regarding all criteria, with particular focus on those areas where only partial fulfilment was granted.

### 1. ELIGIBILITY

#### 1.1. Status - Achieved

We have no further comments.

#### 1.2. Joint design and delivery - Achieved

We have no further comments.

#### 1.3. Cooperation agreement - Achieved

##### Recommendation(s):

The Consortium Agreement should include information on the mobility of teachers.

**Response:** The consortium takes note of the recommendation concerning the inclusion of provisions on teacher mobility in the Consortium Agreement. The partners confirm that academic staff mobility forms part of the implementation logic of the programme and has been discussed at consortium level from the outset. The relevant provisions have been added to the Annex 1 of the Consortium Agreement, which **can be viewed attached to this response as Annex 6.**

### 2. LEARNING OUTCOMES

#### 2.1. Level - Achieved

##### Recommendation(s):

1. Ensure comprehensive inclusion of all learning outcomes, specifically addressing the missing FM\_W09 indicator in Paragraph 2.1.4.

**Response:** The consortium acknowledges the panel's comment concerning the missing reference to learning outcome FM\_W09. This omission resulted from an inconsistency in the documentation rather than from the design of the programme itself. This matrix of intended learning outcomes has now been revised in order to ensure completeness and full internal consistency. **The corrected version is attached as Annex 1.**

## 2.2. Disciplinary field - Achieved

### Recommendation(s):

1. Revise the curriculum (matrix) to ensure a more balanced distribution of disciplinary perspectives across all specialization tracks so that knowledge in psychology, legal studies, and political science is accessible to all students, regardless of their chosen path.
2. Ensure clearer and more transparent communication of the specific orientation, disciplinary composition, and intended profile of each track, so that prospective students are fully aware of the differences and can choose the track that best matches their educational objectives and expectations.
3. Specify ISCED codes for disciplinary fields to their clearer international classification and comparability.

**Response:** The consortium has taken note of the recommendation concerning the clearer communication of the disciplinary composition of the three pathways and the transparency of their academic profiles. We would like to stress that the programme was designed as an interdisciplinary master's degree with a common overall profile and differentiated thematic pathways. At the same time, in order to make this structure more transparent to candidates and external stakeholders, the revised documentation explains more clearly the disciplinary contribution of sociology, political science, law and psychology across the programme and within each pathway. **The revised matrix and accompanying syllabus documentation attached as Annex 1 are intended to support this clarification.**

## 2.3. Achievement - Achieved

### Recommendation(s):

1. Perform a comprehensive review of ILOs to resolve procedural inconsistencies between the summary matrix and individual course syllabi. This review should ensure that all programme level learning outcomes are systematically integrated across multiple modules within each track to guarantee that all students achieve all LOs, regardless of their chosen pathway.
2. Specify the criteria for selecting host organizations and clarify the mechanisms through which specific knowledge and skills (notably FM\_W08 and FM\_U07) are acquired and assessed during the internship phase.

**Response:** The consortium acknowledges the recommendation to ensure full consistency between the programme-level learning outcomes matrix and the individual course syllabi. Following the site visit, the partner universities carried out a joint review of the syllabus documentation and of the matrix of learning outcomes. As a result, the documentation was revised in order to remove inconsistencies, improve alignment between programme-level and course-level outcomes, and ensure that the achievement of intended learning outcomes is reflected more precisely across the three pathways. **The revised documents are attached as Annex 1.**

The consortium also takes note of the panel's comments regarding the internship component. **In response, the partners have prepared a more formalised internship framework, attached as Annex 4 - Joint internship framework and requirements to the PATHS Joint Master's in Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context**, setting out the main principles governing the academic purpose of the internship, the criteria for the

selection and approval of host institutions, the roles of the student, academic supervisor and host institution, and the general mechanisms for monitoring and assessment of internship-related learning outcomes, including a detailed report on the internship preparation, progression and completion phases.

#### 2.4. Regulated professions - Not relevant

### 3. STUDY PROGRAMME

#### 3.1. Curriculum - Achieved

The consortium takes note of the panel's observations regarding the need for clear reinforcement of learning outcomes across the curriculum and for greater precision in the organisation of internship-related learning. As indicated above, the course syllabi and the learning outcomes matrix have been revised to improve coherence and internal alignment. In parallel, the consortium has developed the **Joint internship framework and requirements to the PATHS Joint Master's in Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context, attached as Annex 4**, with the aim of ensuring a transparent and comparable implementation model across the three programme pathways.

#### 3.2. Credits - Achieved

##### Recommendation(s):

1. Ensure that a consistent credit-to-hour conversion ratio is uniformly reflected.
2. Ensure that contact hours and independent study hours are reported using identical metrics to facilitate easier cross-institutional comparison.
3. Eliminate contradictory credit values for the same learning activities.

**Response:** The consortium acknowledges the comments concerning the documentary inconsistencies in the presentation of ECTS values and contact hours. These inconsistencies were of a technical and editorial nature and did not affect the intended structure of the programme as a 120 ECTS second-cycle degree.

In response, the course documentation has been revised accordingly. A consistent credit-to-hour conversion ratio has been applied uniformly across all course components (1 ECTS = 25 hours). Furthermore, both contact hours and independent study hours are reported using standardized metrics, ensuring clarity and facilitating cross-institutional comparability. Finally, any previously identified contradictory credit values have been eliminated, and all courses follow a consistent structure and composition, aligned with the ECTS framework. **The relevant documentation can be viewed in the document package attached as Annex 1.**

#### 3.3. Workload - Achieved

##### Recommendation(s):

1. Ensure formal alignment with the 120 ECTS framework and correct the current clerical error.
2. Monitor the disparities in contact hours across the three tracks.

**Response:** The consortium acknowledges the panel's comment concerning the clerical error in the description of the total workload and confirms that the programme is fully

designed as a 120 ECTS second-cycle degree corresponding to the applicable European framework. The partners have conducted a thorough review of the course cards and ensured that, following the necessary corrections (as also detailed in Criterion 3.2), the distribution of contact hours and student workload across the three pathways is standardized and evenly balanced. Any remaining differences are attributable solely to the specific nature of individual courses. Nevertheless, irrespective of the pathway chosen, the programme's learning outcomes are achieved in a consistent and standardized manner.

## 4. ADMISSION AND RECOGNITION

### 4.1. Admission - Partially Achieved

The consortium fully acknowledges the panel's recommendation to further formalise and clarify the admissions framework. **In response, the partners have developed a shared admissions assessment rubric, the Joint evaluation criteria for applications to the PATHS Joint Master's in Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context, attached as Annex 2**, which specifies the criteria used in the evaluation of applications and provides a more transparent basis for the allocation of points within the admission procedure.

The purpose of this rubric is to strengthen comparability and transparency in the assessment of candidates across the consortium, including with regard to academic preparation, motivation, prior experience relevant to the field, and overall readiness to undertake second-cycle studies in an interdisciplinary programme focused on forced migration.

The consortium also confirms that the final admissions documentation will be publicly available prior to the launch of recruitment and will include the following:

- the list of required documents;
- the procedural timeline and deadlines;
- the role and scope of the entrance examination;
- the circumstances in which an interview may be conducted;
- the treatment of non-standard and non-Bologna qualifications;
- the principles applied when professional or voluntary experience is taken into account.

Below, we provide responses and comments regarding each of the recommendations.

#### Recommendation(s):

1. Implement a robust mechanism within the admissions process to verify that all incoming students possess the necessary Level 6 knowledge in sociology, legal studies, political science, and psychology.

**Response:** The consortium fully acknowledges the panel's recommendation to implement a robust mechanism within the admissions process to verify that all incoming students possess the necessary Level 6 knowledge in the disciplines constituting the programme. Therefore, in response, the partners have developed a comprehensive entrance examination whose structure reflects the interdisciplinary composition of the programme (**Annex 2 - Joint evaluation criteria for applications to the PATHS Joint Master's in**

**Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context).** For each admission cycle, the questions will be developed by the programme's teaching staff with expertise in the relevant disciplines, and sample questions will be made available to candidates on the programme's webpage. Passing this examination is a necessary condition that addresses the panel's additional comment regarding the absence of a minimum admission score.

2. Formalize the weighted scoring rubric by explicitly defining the assessment criteria and descriptors used to award points within each admission component.

**Response:** The consortium fully acknowledges the panel's recommendation to formalize the weighted scoring rubric by explicitly defining the assessment criteria and descriptors used to award points within each admission component. A consortium-wide rubric has been jointly prepared and can be viewed in the attached **Annex 2 - Joint evaluation criteria for applications to the PATHS Joint Master's in Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context.**

3. Define transparent criteria for the assessment of professional experience by specifying what kinds of experience are regarded as sufficiently relevant and which forms of evidence are acceptable.

**Response:** The consortium fully acknowledges the panel's recommendation to define transparent criteria for the assessment of professional experience by specifying what kinds of experience are regarded as sufficiently relevant and which forms of evidence are acceptable. A consortium-wide rubric has been jointly prepared and can be viewed in the attached **Annex 2 - Joint evaluation criteria for applications to the PATHS Joint Master's in Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context..**

4. Specify the circumstances under which interviews may be conducted to ensure equal treatment of applicants and a transparent decision-making process.

**Response:** The consortium fully acknowledges the panel's recommendation to specify the circumstances under which interviews may be conducted. In fact, this is treated as an extraordinary circumstance when an agreement cannot be reached, and it should be subject to a written protocol. A consortium-wide rubric has been jointly prepared and can be viewed in the attached **Annex 2 - Joint evaluation criteria for applications to the PATHS Joint Master's in Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context..**

5. Clarify the assessment of non-standard and non-Bologna qualifications by setting out the admission procedures and eligibility criteria.

**Response:** The consortium fully acknowledges the panel's recommendation to clarify the assessment of non-standard and non-Bologna qualifications by setting out the admission procedures and eligibility criteria. The relevant procedures are based on the provisions of the Act on Higher Education and Science, ([Prawo o szkolnictwie wyższym i nauce](#)) in particular: Article 70 (sections 5c, 5d, 5e, 5f, 5g), Article 323 (sections 1c, 1d), as well as Articles 326a and 327.

With regard to internal university regulations, the rules governing the admission of international applicants are set out in Appendix 4, specifically §§ 15 and 6, to the [Conditions, Procedures and Deadlines for Admission to Studies at SWPS University for the Academic Year 2026/2027](#). This document defines the rules applicable to all international

applicants, including those from the EU, EFTA and OECD countries, as well as from third countries.

The general rules governing the admission of such candidates to second-cycle studies can be described as a two-step procedure:

Step I. Based on the preliminary review of the documents submitted by the candidate, a decision is made as to whether, in accordance with the regulations, the application documents are sufficient to constitute a valid basis for undertaking second-cycle studies in Poland, or whether the candidate is additionally required to provide a formal statement issued by the Director of the Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange (NAWA) confirming that the document may serve as a basis for admission.

In addition, candidates are required to demonstrate proficiency in the language (in this case English) of instruction in accordance with the applicable [Regulation](#) of the Minister of Science and Higher Education .

Step II. Once the above-mentioned conditions have been met, the remaining rules apply as for other candidates as per the joint admission rules described in the **Annex 2 - Joint evaluation criteria for applications to the PATHS Joint Master's in Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context.**

There is also a dedicated section in the **Student Handbook** (see **Annex 3, Section 9**) that presents the admission framework in a more user-friendly manner while retaining all substantive content.

6. Ensure procedural transparency by providing a clear timeline of administrative steps, a definitive list of required documentation, and strictly defined deadlines, all communicated to prospective applicants well in advance.

**Response:** The consortium fully acknowledges the panel's recommendation to ensure procedural transparency by providing a clear timeline of administrative steps, a definitive list of required documentation, and strictly defined deadlines. A consortium-wide rubric has been jointly prepared and can be viewed in the attached **Annex 2 - Joint evaluation criteria for applications to the PATHS Joint Master's in Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context.**

In summary, all admission procedures are now specified directly in **Annex 2**. Additionally, subject to final approval, the detailed rules will be formalized in the appendix to the Conditions, Procedures, and Commencement and Finalization Dates of Admissions for Studies at SWPS University in the 2026/2027 Academic Year, which will subsequently be made publicly available to candidates on the programme's webpage.

## 4.2. Recognition - Achieved

### Recommendation(s):

1. Present the recognition framework in a clear and accessible manner in the student handbook so that candidates are fully informed in advance; particular attention should be paid to explaining any institution-specific differences in recognition practices and relevant contact details across the partner HEIs.

**Response:** The consortium takes note of the recommendation to present the recognition framework more clearly in student-facing documentation. In response, due to many possible cases **the relevant contact point is provided in the Student Handbook attached as Annex 3 (Section 10)**. Depending on the nature of the inquiry and the specific circumstances, the question will be directed to the appropriate office within the respective institution. This approach also facilitates the accumulation of knowledge and supports the development of a Q&A section on the programme's webpage.

*Please note that the attached version of the Student Handbook contains the substantive content intended for review purposes; the final graphic design, layout, and visual elements are currently being finalised and will be made available to students once the admissions process can formally begin.*

## 5. LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

### 5.1. Learning and teaching - Achieved

#### **Recommendation(s):**

1. Formalize consortium-wide procedures for academic supervision, internship placement approval, and the verification of internship learning outcomes to ensure consistent quality and monitoring across all partner institutions and three programme paths.

**Response:** The consortium acknowledges the panel's recommendation concerning the need to formalise consortium-wide procedures for academic supervision, internship placement approval, and the verification of internship learning outcomes. **In response, the partners have prepared an internship framework, attached as Annex 4**, which is intended to provide a clearer common basis for the implementation, supervision and assessment of the internship component across the consortium.

The consortium agrees that, given the programme's mobile and multi-institutional nature, these procedures should be clearly documented. The attached guidelines serve as operational guidance and will be updated annually – based on experience gained during the programme's implementation – should the need arise to supplement them with further specifications.

### 5.2. Assessment of students - Partially Achieved

The consortium fully acknowledges the panel's comments regarding constructive alignment and consistency in assessment methods. Following the site visit, the partner universities carried out a review of the course syllabi and of the learning outcomes matrix, with the aim of improving the correspondence between intended learning outcomes and the methods used to assess them. **This review has resulted in revised syllabi and revised mapping documentation, attached as Annex 1.**

The consortium also takes note of the panel's recommendations concerning shared guidelines for thesis supervision, a consortium-wide grading framework, and the organisational conditions for thesis defence. **In response, the partners have prepared common guidelines for Master's thesis supervision, assessment and defence, attached as Annex 5 - Proposed joint formal requirements for Master Theses delivered within the PATHS Joint Master's in Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context.** The purpose of this document is to support a more coherent approach to supervisory

responsibilities, evaluation criteria and the organisation of the final examination phase across the consortium.

Below, we provide responses and comments regarding each recommendation.

### **Recommendation(s):**

1. Eliminate the option to choose between individual and group work for the same learning outcomes to ensure that all students are evaluated against a consistent and reliable benchmark.

**Response:** The consortium acknowledges the panel's recommendation concerning the elimination of the option to choose between individual and group work for the same learning outcomes. The required changes have been implemented and can be viewed in the **revised syllabi and revised mapping documentation, attached as Annex 1**, to ensure that all students are evaluated against a consistent and reliable benchmark.

2. Ensure that knowledge, skills, and social competences are each verified through appropriate and distinct methods.

**Response:** The consortium acknowledges the panel's recommendation concerning the verification of knowledge, skills, and social competences through appropriate and distinct methods. The required changes have been implemented and can be viewed in the **revised syllabi and revised mapping documentation, attached as Annex 1**.

3. Implement clear criteria to distinguish individual contributions within group tasks to protect the validity of individual certification.

**Response:** The consortium acknowledges the panel's recommendation concerning the distinguishing individual contributions within group tasks. The required rules have been implemented to protect the validity of individual certification and **can be viewed in the Student Handbook attached as Annex 3 (Section 11)**.

4. Define the repercussions of falling below the 80% attendance requirement, clarifying whether there are mechanisms to compensate for missed hours and whether a failure to meet this threshold leads to an automatic course failure.

**Response:** The consortium acknowledges the panel's recommendation concerning the need to clearly define the repercussions of falling below the 80% attendance requirement, to clarify the compensation mechanisms for missed hours, and whether a failure to meet this threshold leads to an automatic course failure. The required rules have been implemented and **can be viewed in the Student Handbook attached as Annex 3 (Section 11)**.

5. Establish shared guidelines for supervisors to align academic expectations and ensure consistent guidance for the student.

**Response:** The consortium acknowledges the panel's recommendation concerning the establishment of shared guidelines for supervisors. A consortium-wide rubric to align

academic expectations and ensure consistent guidance for the student has been jointly prepared and can be viewed in the **Proposed joint formal requirements for Master Theses delivered within the PATHS Joint Master's in Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context, attached as Annex 5.**

6. Adopt a consortium-wide grading rubric for both the dissertation and oral defence to ensure 30 ECTS are awarded based on identical qualitative criteria across all partners.

**Response:** The consortium acknowledges the panel's recommendation concerning the assurance of 30 ECTS to be awarded based on identical qualitative criteria across all partners. A consortium-wide grading rubric for both the dissertation and oral defence has been jointly prepared and can be viewed in the **Proposed joint formal requirements for Master Theses delivered within the PATHS Joint Master's in Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context, attached as Annex 5.**

7. Define administrative policies for hybrid or online thesis defences to manage resource requirements and ensure the long-term feasibility of convening multi-partner boards.

**Response:** The consortium acknowledges the panel's recommendation concerning defining the administrative policies for hybrid or online thesis defences. A consortium-wide rubric to manage resource requirements and ensure the long-term feasibility of convening multi-partner boards has been jointly prepared and can be viewed in the **Proposed joint formal requirements for Master Theses delivered within the PATHS Joint Master's in Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context, attached as Annex 5.**

## 6. STUDENT SUPPORT - Achieved

### Recommendation(s):

1. Detail support services, clarify mobility pathways, and proactively address common student concerns in a handbook to ensure institutional transparency.
2. Include a curated list of accommodation options within the student handbook to streamline the housing search and reduce the administrative burden on mobile students.
3. Consider the feasibility of securing reserved short-term accommodation options to ensure a smoother mobility experience throughout the programme, particularly in emergency cases related to housing.

**Response:** The consortium agrees with the panel that, in a programme of this nature, student support must be communicated in a clear and centralised manner. **To this end, the consortium has prepared the Student Handbook, attached as Annex 3.** The document is intended to serve as a practical guide for candidates and future students and covers, inter alia, the overall structure of the programme, mobility arrangements, academic and administrative support, recognition, progression rules, and key practical information relevant to study across several countries and institutions.

The consortium will continue to update the handbook regularly - based on experience gained during the programme's implementation – should the need arise to supplement them with further specifications.

## 7. RESOURCES

### 7.1. Staff - Achieved

#### **Recommendation(s):**

1. Document the workload percentage allocated to the PATHS programme for both academic and administrative personnel to ensure operational sustainability.
2. Explicitly outline the management and administrative staffing dedicated to the programme at each partner institution to guarantee the smooth execution of the complex six-country mobility framework.
3. Create a formal plan for staff development and recruitment contingencies to mitigate the risk of expertise loss and ensure continuity in the event of key personnel departures.

**Response:** The consortium appreciates the panel's positive assessment of the academic and institutional resources underpinning the programme. Information on the academic staff involved in programme delivery, as well as relevant administrative contacts, will be made publicly available through the programme information channels before the launch of the first cycle.

The consortium also takes note of the recommendation concerning staff continuity and will address this aspect as part of its broader implementation and quality assurance planning.

### 7.2. Facilities - Achieved

We have no further comments.

## 8. TRANSPARENCY AND DOCUMENTATION - Partially Achieved

#### **Recommendation(s):**

1. Transition all conceptually planned materials, including recruitment rules, the student handbook, and the programme guide, into finalized, publicly accessible documents in English before the first admission cycle commences.
2. Consolidate all programme-related information into a single web portal to ensure prospective students, especially non-EU applicants, have a coherent and reliable entry point for navigating the six-country mobility framework.
3. Ensure that all essential details regarding eligibility, fees, and academic regulations are not only drafted but fully verifiable and transparent to stakeholders to achieve full compliance with the transparency criteria.

**Response:** The consortium fully acknowledges the panel's conclusion that the transparency framework is conceptually well designed, but that some important elements were not yet fully published and verifiable at the time of the ex-ante evaluation.

In response, the consortium would like to indicate that substantial progress has been made since the site visit. **Most importantly, the Student Handbook has now been prepared and is attached as Annex 3.** In addition, the consortium confirms that the final admissions rules, revised course documentation, internship framework, and other essential programme materials will be made publicly available in English before the opening of the first admissions cycle.

The consortium also agrees with the recommendation that programme-related information should be accessible through one coherent and reliable entry point. For this reason, the partners consolidate key programme information within a dedicated website for PATHS, so that prospective students and admitted students can access clear and centralised information on admissions, eligibility, fees, mobility obligations, academic regulations, support services, and the structure of the programme. The webpage is currently in the final stage of preparation and will be updated and made available upon the formal launch of the programme admissions process, subject to a positive decision from the PKA.

The consortium treats this issue as a priority not only from the perspective of formal compliance, but also because clear and accessible documentation is essential for a genuinely joint and mobility-based programme, particularly for candidates from outside the EU and from different higher education systems.

## 9. QUALITY ASSURANCE - Achieved

### Recommendation(s):

1. Consolidate the common requirements into a single, comprehensive document that clearly defines the hierarchy between joint programme-level policies and local institutional regulations.
2. Create unified templates for data collection and annual local reporting to ensure that Local Academic Coordinators provide consistent and comparable indicators to the QAC.
3. Establish a clear mechanism for publishing summaries that inform students of the specific changes made in response to their feedback, thereby closing the quality loop.
4. Schedule a pilot QA review after the first semester to test the efficiency of the information flow between the Local Coordinators and the Governing Board, identifying any logistical challenges early.

**Response:** The consortium appreciates the panel's positive assessment of the programme's quality assurance architecture and takes note of the recommendations aimed at further strengthening its coherence and operational clarity.

In particular, the consortium agrees on the need:

- to consolidate common programme-level requirements in a clearer and more comprehensive form;
- to further standardise templates for data collection and local reporting;
- to improve communication to students and stakeholders regarding follow-up actions taken in response to feedback;
- to verify the functioning of the QA flow at an early stage of implementation.

These recommendations have been taken into account in the further development of the programme's joint quality assurance framework. The consortium considers the first semester of programme delivery to be a particularly important stage for testing the practical effectiveness of information flows, reporting arrangements, and improvement mechanisms, and therefore agrees with the panel's suggestion that an early pilot review will be useful.

## LIST OF ANNEXES:

- Annex 1. Revised matrix of intended learning outcomes and revised course cards,**
- Annex 2. Joint evaluation criteria for applications to the PATHS Joint Master's in  
Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context,**
- Annex 3. Student Handbook,**
- Annex 4. Joint internship framework and requirements to the PATHS Joint Master's in  
Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context,**
- Annex 5. Proposed joint formal requirements for Master Theses delivered within the  
PATHS Joint Master's in Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context,**
- Annex 6. Revised Annex 1 of the Consortium Agreement of the European Reform  
University Alliance Joint Master's Degree Programme in Forced Migration:  
Europe in a Global Context document.**



**Polska Komisja Akredytacyjna**  
**PKA Polish Accreditation Committee**

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## **PANEL REPORT**

Name of the programme:

**"PATHS" Joint Master on Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context**

Coordinating university:

***SWPS University in Warsaw / Uniwersytet SWPS w Warszawie***

**Warsaw, 2026**



PKA Polish Accreditation Committee  
Polska Komisja Akredytacyjna

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*Evaluation coordinated by the PKA Polish Accreditation Committee in accordance with the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes based on the procedures formed by IMPEA project.*

*Ariadna Stupelka*

*Emilia Bricolo*

*T.G.*

*K. K.*

*AK*



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Quality Assurance agency coordinating the review

*Please provide a description of the coordinating quality assurance agency, including its role in the national higher education system, its independence, alignment with European standards, and the legal basis for conducting the evaluation.*

The quality assurance agency responsible for coordinating the evaluation of the joint master's programme "PATHS" Joint Master on Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context is the Polish Accreditation Committee (PKA).

The Polish Accreditation Committee is a statutory body operating within the Polish higher education system, entrusted with ensuring compliance of higher education institutions and their programmes with established quality standards. Established as the State Accreditation Committee on 1 January 2002, PKA performs its functions independently, with the objective of enhancing the quality of higher education in Poland. Its statutory tasks include, in particular, the evaluation of higher education institutions and study programmes, as well as the formulation of recommendations aimed at improving educational quality.

In the performance of its duties, PKA conducts external quality assurance procedures in accordance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). These procedures are subject to periodic external review at the European level, which assesses the extent to which PKA complies with the applicable standards and best practices within the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), thereby contributing to the continuous improvement of its activities and reinforcing its international standing.

The evaluation of the joint master's programme "PATHS" Joint Master on Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context was conducted pursuant to Article 258(1)(7) of the Act of 20 July 2018 – Law on Higher Education and Science (consolidated text: Journal of Laws of 2024, item 1571). In accordance with the applicable procedure, the Polish Accreditation Committee carried out a site visit at SWPS University. The evaluation was initiated following an application submitted by SWPS University to the Polish Accreditation Committee on 25 November 2025 for the accreditation of the aforementioned joint programme, in accordance with the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes.

### Names of the universities participating in the consortium

*Please list the universities participating in the consortium for the joint programme, indicating their roles (e.g., coordinating institution, degree-awarding partners, mobility partners).*



The program is run under umbrella of the European Reform University Alliance by the universities:

1. SWPS University (USWPS) - Higher education institution / Degree awarding institution /Coordinator;
2. Europa-Universität Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder) (EUV) - Higher education institution / Degree awarding institution / Full Partner in the consortium;
3. New Bulgarian University (NBU) - Higher education institution / Degree awarding institution / Full Partner in the consortium;
4. Università degli Studi di Macerata (UniMC) - Higher education institution / Degree awarding institution / Full Partner in the consortium;
5. Université Paris 8 Vincennes-Saint-Denis (UP8) - Higher education institution / Degree awarding institution / Full Partner in the consortium;
6. University of the Aegean (UAEGEAN) - Higher education institution / Degree awarding institution / Full Partner in the consortium.

*Joint programme description: number of credits, teaching modality, multidisciplinary aspects, language of teaching, professional skills and academic education provided in the programme.*

The joint master's programme "PATHS" Joint Master's Degree in Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context is a second-cycle programme (EQF level 7) with a duration of two years (120 ECTS credits), jointly delivered by six higher education institutions forming part of 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. The European Reform University Alliance (ERUA) is a transnational university alliance established under the European Universities Initiative, bringing together eight reform-oriented higher education institutions with established academic profiles in the social sciences and humanities. The alliance is characterised by a shared commitment to advancing the role of universities in fostering democratic, inclusive, and diverse European societies.

Within this institutional framework, the programme is delivered in English and has a research-oriented profile. It is academically grounded in sociology as the leading discipline and complemented by contributions from political science, law, and psychology. The curriculum integrates a jointly developed core component focused on theoretical approaches and empirical research on (forced) migration, alongside three interrelated thematic pathways: (1) European border regimes, (2) inclusion and protection of children and minors, and (3) migration politics and policies. The programme is designed in response to a clearly identified and increasing demand within European and international institutions, non-governmental organisations, and public administration bodies for qualified specialists capable of operating at the intersection of asylum law, border governance, child protection, and psychosocial support for persons experiencing forced migration.



**Its general objectives are to:**

- provide a high-level interdisciplinary education that enables students to understand and critically analyse forced migration in its historical, legal, political, psychosocial and socio-economic dimensions, with particular attention to Europe in a global context;
- support the development of evidence-informed, rights-based approaches to migration and asylum policy and practice;
- strengthen the European Higher Education Area and the ERUA alliance through a fully joint, mobility-based master's programme;
- prepare graduates for professional careers in public institutions, international organisations, NGOs, research institutes and civil-society organisations working in the field of migration, human rights and social inclusion.

**Assessment of standards**

<b>Standard</b>	<b>Assessment Achieved/Partially Achieved/Not Achieved</b>
1. ELIGIBILITY	<i>Achieved</i>
1.1. Status	<i>Achieved</i>
1.2. Join Desing and Delivery	<i>Achieved</i>
1.3. Cooperation Agreement	<i>Achieved</i>
2. LEARNING OUTCOMES	<i>Achieved</i>
2.1. Level	<i>Achieved</i>
2.2. Disciplinary field	<i>Achieved</i>
2.3. Achievement	<i>Achieved</i>
2.4. Regulated Professions	<i>Achieved</i>
3. STUDY PROGRAMME	<i>Achieved</i>
3.1. Curriculum	<i>Achieved</i>
3.2. Credits	<i>Achieved</i>
3.3. Workload	<i>Achieved</i>
4. ADMISSION AND RECOGNITION	<i>Partially Achieved</i>
4.1. Admission	<i>Partially Achieved</i>
4.2. Recognition	<i>Achieved</i>
5. LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT	<i>Partially Achieved</i>
5.1. Learning and Teaching	<i>Achieved</i>
5.2. Assessment of students	<i>Partially Achieved</i>
6. STUDENT SUPPORT	<i>Achieved</i>
7. RESOURCES	<i>Achieved</i>



7.1. Staff	<i>Achieved</i>
7.2. Facilities	<i>Achieved</i>
8. TRANSPARENCY AND DOCUMENTS	<i>Partially Achieved</i>
9. QUALITY ASSURANCE	<i>Achieved</i>

**The strengths of the programme:**

1. The PATHS programme is driven by a clear institutional mandate and the active commitment of those involved in the design of the programme: academic staff, adminin, external stakeholders. This shared determination across the six universities ensures the degree serves as a primary initiative, providing the long-term stability and professional energy needed for a high-quality student experience.
2. The programme capitalizes on of the location of partner universities at key migration nodes. Through a structured mobility matrix, students engage in situated learning by moving from entry points (Aegean) through transit corridors (Sofia/Macerata) to destination hubs (Frankfurt/Paris). This framework ensures that theoretical study is grounded in the authentic socio-political contexts of the entire migration route, offering a level of experiential depth unavailable in nationally-framed programmes.
3. There is a strong alignment between the academic offer and external professional requirements. The curriculum is the result of a systematic gap analysis involving international and local stakeholders, ensuring that learning outcomes meet the real-world needs of the migration and asylum sector.
4. The inclusion of fieldwork, internships, and case-based teaching ensures that high-level theoretical objectives are grounded in operational reality. Furthermore, the programme's focus on rights-based approaches and democratic inclusion aligns directly with the strategic priorities of the European Union and the European Reform University Alliance (ERUA).



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## GLOSSERY

<b>DAI</b>	Degree awarding institutions
<b>EQF</b>	European Qualifications Framework
<b>EUV</b>	Europa-Universität Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder)
<b>FQ-EHEA</b>	Framework for Qualifications in the European Higher Education Area
<b>HEI</b>	Higher education institution
<b>MP</b>	Mobility partner
<b>NBU</b>	New Bulgarian University
<b>PATHS</b>	“PATHS” Joint Master on Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context
<b>SER</b>	Self-evaluation report. “PATHS” Joint Master on Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context
<b>USWPS</b>	SWPS University
<b>UniMC</b>	Università degli Studi di Macerata
<b>UP8</b>	Université Paris 8 Vincennes-Saint-Denis
<b>UAEGEAN</b>	University of the Aegean



## GENERAL INFORMATION

### 1) BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROCEDURE

*Please provide general overview of the principles of the procedure, including short overview of the joint programme under assessment.*

The accreditation procedure for the joint master's programme "PATHS" Joint Master on Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context is conducted by the Polish Accreditation Committee (PKA) in accordance with the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes. This framework, adopted by the Ministers of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) in May 2015, establishes a common set of principles for the evaluation of joint programmes across participating countries.

The evaluation is carried out in line with the methodology developed within the IMPEA project, which aims to streamline quality assurance processes for joint programmes through transparent, coherent, and harmonised procedures. The procedure encompasses a comprehensive assessment of the programme's design, structure, delivery, and its compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), with particular emphasis on the joint nature of the programme and the implementation of mandatory mobility components.

The "PATHS" Joint Master's Degree in Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context is a second-cycle programme (EQF level 7) with a duration of two years (120 ECTS credits), jointly delivered by six higher education institutions that are members of 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. The European Reform University Alliance (ERUA), established under the European Universities Initiative, is a transnational consortium comprising eight reform-oriented universities with established academic strengths in the social sciences and humanities. The alliance is united by a shared commitment to enhancing the role of higher education institutions in fostering democratic, inclusive, and diverse European societies. Within this institutional framework, the programme is delivered in English and has a research-oriented profile. It is academically anchored in sociology as the leading discipline and complemented by contributions from political science, law, and psychology. The curriculum integrates a jointly developed core component focused on theoretical approaches and empirical research on (forced) migration, alongside three interrelated thematic pathways: (1) European border regimes, (2) inclusion and protection of children and minors, and (3) migration politics and policies.

### 2) PANEL OF EXPERTS

*Please provide short information about the procedure for selection and nomination of the experts panel, the list of experts, their affiliation and role in the panel.*



The accreditation procedure for the joint master's programme "PATHS" Joint Master on Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context is conducted by the Polish Accreditation Committee (PKA) in accordance with the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes. This framework, adopted by the Ministers of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) in May 2015, establishes a harmonised set of principles and standards for the evaluation of joint degree programmes across the EHEA. The evaluation is carried out on the basis of the methodology developed within the IMPEA project, the objective of which is to facilitate and streamline quality assurance procedures for joint programmes through the application of transparent, consistent, and harmonised processes.

The procedure comprises a comprehensive assessment of the programme's design, organisational structure, and delivery, as well as its compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). Particular emphasis is placed on the joint nature of the programme, including the effectiveness of inter-institutional cooperation and the implementation of mandatory mobility components.

In order to align the panel's composition with the standards set out in the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes, PKA reached out in writing to the following organizations to nominate experts:

1. Accreditation, Certification and Quality Assurance Institute (ACQUIN), Germany;
2. National Evaluation and Accreditation Agency (NEAA), Bulgaria;
3. National Agency for the Evaluation of Universities and Research Institutes (ANVUR), Italy;
4. High Council for the Evaluation of Research and Higher Education (HCÉRES), France;
5. Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (NAHE), Greece.

The experts nominated by these agencies were selected from academic fields such as 0314 Sociology and cultural studies, 0312 Political sciences and civics, 0421 Law, 0313 Psychology.

The evaluation panel for the accreditation of the "PATHS" Joint Master on Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context programme is composed of four experts and a secretary of the panel.

1. **Ariadna Strugielska, PhD**, Chairperson of the Evaluation Team, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń. Prof. Strugielska leads the evaluation process and is responsible for overseeing the formulation of the evaluation and the structure of the visitation report. She is involved in assessing the study programme, its joint design and delivery, as well as its compliance with European quality standards. Additionally, he evaluates the programme's learning outcomes and the assessment methods used.
2. **Emanuela Bricolo, Professor**, an academic expert from University of Milan Bicocca, specializing in the Department of Psychology. Professor Bricolo contributes her expertise primarily in assessing the level and disciplinary field of the programme, as well as its



achievement of learning outcomes. She also plays a key role in evaluating the learning and teaching methods, as well as the overall quality assurance processes.

3. **Jakub Grodecki**, a labour expert from EURASHE. Mr. Grodecki is responsible for evaluating the programme, joint design, and implementation of the programme. He also supervises the process of recognizing qualifications and evaluating resources to determine if the programme meets the required standards for effective implementation.
4. **Kateryna Shalimova**, a student expert representing the European Students' Union, with a background in accreditation of higher education study programmes. She is affiliated with Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv and the National Agency for Higher Education Quality Assurance (NAQA). Ms. Shalimova focuses on evaluating the curriculum, ECTS credits, workload, and student support to determine if the programme aligns with student needs and academic standards. She also contributes to the evaluation of recruitment processes and recognition of qualifications.
5. **Karolina Martyniak**, Secretary of the evaluation panel, works with the Polish Accreditation Committee (PKA) Bureau. Ms. Martyniak plays an administrative and organizational role, ensuring that the evaluation process runs smoothly and efficiently.

### 3) INFORMATION ON THE PROGRAMME

Name of the programme:

"PATHS" Joint Master on Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context

EQF level:

7

QF-EHEA level:

Second-cycle

Degree awarded:

Master

Number of ECTS points:

4 semesters / 120 ECTS

Number of years:

2 years

ISCED field(s) of study:

0314 Sociology and cultural studies, 0312 Political sciences and civics, 0421 Law, 0313 Psychology



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The Consortium:

The Consortium responsible for the degree ('Degree Awarding Party(ies)' – DAP) is formed by the following institutions:

- USWPS / Poland – Coordinating Party;
- EUV / Germany;
- NBU / Bulgaria;
- UniMC / Italy;
- UP8 / France;
- UAEGEAN / Greece.



## 1. ELIGIBILITY

### 1.1. STATUS

*The institutions that offer a joint programme are recognised as higher education institutions by the relevant authorities of their countries. Their respective national legal frameworks enable them to participate in the joint programme and to award a joint degree. The institutions awarding the degree ensure that the degree belong to the higher education degree systems of the countries in which they are based.*

#### **Analysis:**

The six institutions that offer the PATHS Joint Master's Degree in Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context are all recognised as higher education institutions by the relevant authorities of their countries and all confirm that the European Approach is allowed by their respective national QA agencies. Their respective national legal frameworks enable them to participate in the joint programme and to award a joint degree. The institutions awarding the degree ensure that the degree belong to the higher education degree systems of the countries in which they are based.

Each student who successfully completes the degree programme receives a joint Master's degree testified by a joint diploma issued in Polish and English and accompanied by a comprehensive diploma supplement.

#### **Documentary evidence:**

- SER: all six partners are listed as both higher education institutions and degree-awarding institutions (SER p. 6, Table "List of institutions delivering the programme"); each institution's national QA agency is identified (ACQUIN, NEAA, PKA, ANVUR, HCERES, HAHE), and all confirm the European Approach is permitted (SER p. 7, Table "Accreditation status per institution"); a Consortium Agreement for 2025–2031 formalises governance, QA, mobility and degree-award arrangements (SER p. 4–5); the programme was designed jointly by academic staff and administrative coordinators from all six degree-awarding universities, with endorsement by ERUA governance bodies (Vice-Rector's Council for Education and Board of Rectors) (SER p. 3–4); joint academic responsibilities are clearly distributed, including shared thesis supervision by at least two partner universities (SER p. 9–10).

- Annex 1: Documents supporting the legal status of the partner institutions
- Annex 2: Cooperation agreement
- Annex 3: Documents supporting each partner's legal basis for participating in the joint programme and (joint) degree awarding rights
- Annex 12: Diploma supplement (sample)



**Assessment:**

Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
x		

**Recommendation(s):**

**1.2. JOINT DESIGN AND DELIVERY**

*The joint programme should be offered jointly, involving all cooperating institutions in the design and delivery of the programme.*

*The institutions awarding the degree/s should ensure that the degree/s belong to the higher education degree system at the countries in which they are based.*

**Analysis:**

The PATHS programme is the result of a deliberate, multi-year collaboration within the European Reform University Alliance (ERUA). Following an extensive internal mapping of research and teaching portfolios in 2023, the partners jointly identified forced migration as a key area of strategic convergence. To move beyond traditional mobility schemes, a dedicated joint working group was established to co-design the degree.

The PATHS Joint Master's Degree in Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context has been jointly conceptualised and designed by six degree-awarding universities of 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.

All consortium partners actively participated in defining the core learning outcomes and the programme's specialized three-track structure - focusing on border regimes, children and minors, and politics and policies. This collective approach extended to the design of the mobility framework and the systematic integration of multi-sectoral feedback from NGOs, public bodies, and international organizations.

The programme exhibits a high degree of collaborative delivery, evidenced by the joint development of core online introductory modules in Semester 1 and a shared research colloquium in Semester 3. These shared elements ensure that all students - regardless of their mobility path - receive a standardized theoretical, methodological, and ethical foundation. Finally, each Master's thesis is co-supervised by faculty from at least two partner universities and the examination board for the thesis includes academics from more than one partner institution, ensuring that the final assessment reflects the joint nature of the programme.



Other aspects of jointness include: joint eligibility criteria and admission procedures for candidates, joint governance structure for the programme, jointly agreed participation costs, joint internal QA processes.

The Master's programme corresponds to Level 7 of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the equivalent level in the National Frameworks of the six universities.

**Documentary evidence:**

- SER
- Annex 2: Cooperation agreement
- Annex 3: Documents supporting each partner's legal basis for participating in the joint programme and (joint) degree awarding rights
- Annex 4: List of intended learning outcomes, including: matrix of alignment with Framework for Qualifications in the European Higher Education Area (FQ-EHEA) and matrix of alignment with applicable national qualifications framework
- Annex 5: Course syllabi

**Assessment:**

Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
x		

**Recommendation(s):**

### 1.3. COOPERATION AGREEMENT (THE CONSORTIUM AGREEMENT)

*In the annex to the report (plus annexes)*

*The agreement covers in particular the following issues:*

- *Denomination of the degree/s awarded in the programme.*
- *Coordination and responsibilities of the partners involved with regard to management and financial organisation (including funding, sharing of costs and income, etc.).*
- *Admission and selection procedures for students.*
- *Mobility of students and teachers.*
- *Examination regulations, student assessment methods, recognition of credits and degree awarding procedures in the consortium.*

**Analysis:**

European Reform University Alliance Joint Master's Degree Programme in Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context Consortium Agreement 2025-2031 includes a preamble and 20 articles: Article 1 - Subject of the Agreement and Programme Description; Article 2 - Programme Management; Article 3



- Academic Programme; Article 4 - Admission Conditions and Procedures; Article 5 - Student Mobility; Article 6 – Fees, Article 7 – Diploma, Article 8 - Enrolment, Credit Recognition and Transfers, Article 9 - Assessment, Final Examination and Transcript Transfer, Article 10 - Quality Assurance, Article 11 - Partner University Commitments, Article 12 - Rights and Duties of Students, Article 13 - Publicity and Promotional Materials, Article 14 - Duration of the Agreement, Article 15 - Arbitration in Case of Disputes, Article 16 - Personal Data Protection, Article 17 - Withdrawal and Termination, Article 18 - Force Majeure, Article 19 - Language, Article 20 - Amendments to the Agreement. There are six annexes to the Consortium Agreement: Annex 1 - Programme Description, Annex 2 - Tuition Fees and Financial Provisions, Annex 3 - Quality Assurance, Annex 4 - Admission Criteria and Procedures, Annex 5 - List of Coordinators and Contact Persons, Annex 6 - Agreement on Joint Administration of Personal Data.

The Consortium Agreement covers the denomination of the degree awarded in the programme, coordination and responsibilities of the partners involved with regard to management and financial organisation (including funding, sharing of costs and income), admission and selection procedures for students, mobility of students, examination regulations, student assessment methods, recognition of credits and degree awarding procedures in the consortium. It also encompasses information on the legal framework including the cooperating institutions' rights and obligations, the academic programme, mobility paths and periods of realisation, admission and selection procedures, submission of applications for admission, mobility, assessment of achievement, degree/s awarding and recognition and students available services, public available information on the programme, academic, administration and services staff responsible for mobility, quality assurance, including the internal quality assurance system, financial management, the recognition of the credits awarded and the courses offered by each institution. The agreement does not include information on the mobility of teachers.

**Documentary evidence:**

- Annex 2: Cooperation agreement

**Assessment:**

Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
x		

**Recommendation(s):**

1. The Consortium Agreement should include information on the mobility of teachers.



## 2. LEARNING OUTCOMES

### 2.1. LEVEL

*The intended learning outcomes are aligned with the corresponding level in the Framework for Qualifications in the European Higher Education Area (FQ-EHEA), as well as the applicable national qualifications framework(s).*

#### **Analysis:**

The documentation (SER - Chapter 2) provides a comprehensive and transparent mapping of the Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) for the PATHS programme, ensuring full alignment with EQF Level 7 and the FQ-EHEA second-cycle descriptors.

The ILOs are logically structured into three core domains: knowledge (FM\_W01–W09), skills (FM\_U01–U10), and responsibility and autonomy (FM\_K01–K05), with each outcome clearly mapped to higher-level descriptors such as integration of knowledge, judgment, and autonomous learning. Furthermore, the consortium effectively demonstrates how these 24 programme-level outcomes harmonize with the various national qualification frameworks of the partner institutions.

The extensive nature of these ILOs reflects a highly ambitious academic agenda. By requiring students to synthesize advanced perspectives from sociology, political science, law, and psychology within the context of forced migration, the programme sets a rigorous standard consistent with Master's-level expectations. However, this level of interdisciplinarity necessitates stringent admission criteria to ensure that incoming students possess the foundational breadth required to meet such multifaceted objectives.

Ultimately, the ILO descriptions are characterized by their clarity and conciseness. The consistent distinction between knowledge, skills, and competencies – duly supported by the detailed course syllabi in Annex 5 – provides a robust framework for independent evaluation and continuous quality monitoring.

#### **Documentary evidence:**

- SER
- Annex 5: Course syllabi
- Information provided during the site visit

#### **Assessment:**

Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
x		



### Recommendation(s):

1. Ensure comprehensive inclusion of all learning outcomes, specifically addressing the missing FM\_W09 indicator in Paragraph 2.1.4.

## 2.2. DISCIPLINARY FIELD

*The intended learning outcomes should comprise knowledge, skills, and competencies in the respective disciplinary field(s).*

### Analysis:

The Self-Assessment Report underscores the multifaceted nature of forced migration by embedding sociology, law, political science, and psychology into the programme's Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs). For instance, within the knowledge domain, specific outcomes are clearly mapped to sociology (FM\_W01), legal studies (FM\_W03), psychology (FM\_W04), and political science (FM\_W06). However, the academic orientation remains somewhat opaque at the international level because the disciplinary fields are not currently identified by their specific ISCED codes, which limits the transparency of the programme's profile for external stakeholders and international recognition.

While the overarching ILOs appear comprehensive on a conceptual level, the operational structure of the three specialized tracks – Track 1 (EU Border Regimes), Track 2 (Inclusion of Children and Minors), and Track 3 (Politics and Policies) – reveals a significant imbalance in disciplinary exposure. These tracks share a very limited common core, consisting only of two introductory courses, an internship, and methodology modules. As a result, the curriculum mapping on pages 44–45 of the SER suggests that the multidisciplinary promise of the programme is not uniformly realized across all paths.

Specifically, the distribution of courses does not guarantee equal access to the core disciplines for all students: those in Track 1 are not exposed to psychology, while those in Track 2 do not receive substantive instruction in legal studies. Only Track 3 provides a curriculum that encompasses all four disciplinary fields. Furthermore, the common learning activities are heavily weighted toward sociological methodology, which potentially leaves students in the first two tracks without the necessary skills or competencies in at least one of the foundational disciplines promised by the programme-level ILOs. This discrepancy suggests that while the programme is multidisciplinary in its design, it is highly specialized in its execution, potentially leading to divergent graduate profiles depending on the chosen track.

### Documentary evidence:

- SER
- Information provided during the site visit



**Assessment:**

Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
x		

**Recommendation(s):**

1. Revise the curriculum (matrix) to ensure a more balanced distribution of disciplinary perspectives across all specialization tracks so that knowledge in psychology, legal studies, and political science is accessible to all students, regardless of their chosen path.
2. Ensure clearer and more transparent communication of the specific orientation, disciplinary composition, and intended profile of each track, so that prospective students are fully aware of the differences and can choose the track that best matches their educational objectives and expectations.
3. Specify ISCED codes for disciplinary fields to their clearer international classification and comparability.

### 2.3. ACHIEVEMENT

*The programme should be able to demonstrate that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.*

**Analysis:**

The detailed course syllabi in Annex 5 specify course-level learning outcomes that are generally aligned with the overarching programme objectives, indicating a conceptually coherent design capable of delivering the intended competencies.

The alignment between ILOs and specific track activities is summarized in Annex 4, providing a high-level overview of the curriculum. Nevertheless, as noted in the analysis of Section 2.2, the current structure does not guarantee that every learning outcome is achieved across all three tracks. In several instances, specific outcomes for certain tracks are associated exclusively with the introductory courses or the internship, rather than being reinforced throughout the curriculum. This concern is compounded by procedural inconsistencies between the course-level ILOs listed in Annex 5 and the summary matrix in Annex 4, which introduces uncertainty regarding whether all students, regardless of their chosen track, will successfully meet the full suite of programme objectives.

A cornerstone of the PATHS curriculum is the mandatory internship in the second semester, which carries 15 ECTS (300 hours of workload). This component is designed to bridge the gap between advanced academic research and practical engagement with institutions focused on forced migration or policy-making. While the internship effectively reinforces the programme's interdisciplinary and practice-oriented character, the mapping in Annex 4 reveals a heavy reliance on this single activity for the achievement of several key outcomes. Specifically, for certain tracks, outcomes such as FM\_W08 (knowledge) and FM\_U07 (skills) are linked solely to the internship. This creates a high-stakes



dependency on the quality of external placements; however, the documentation lacks a detailed description of the criteria for selecting and vetting host organizations to ensure they can provide the specific academic and professional environment required to fulfil these outcomes.

The programme concludes with a final semester dedicated entirely to the Master's thesis, which serves as a vital capstone project. This allows students to synthesize their learning and demonstrate the achievement of the cumulative ILOs under the joint supervision of academic staff from two partner universities, providing a robust mechanism for finalizing the student's specialized expertise.

**Documentary evidence:**

- SER
- Annex 4: Matrix of alignment of learning outcomes
- Annex 5: Course syllabi
- Information provided during the site visit

**Assessment:**

Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
x		

**Recommendation(s):**

1. Perform a comprehensive review of ILOs to resolve procedural inconsistencies between the summary matrix and individual course syllabi. This review should ensure that all programme-level learning outcomes are systematically integrated across multiple modules within each track to guarantee that all students achieve all LOs, regardless of their chosen pathway.
2. Specify the criteria for selecting host organizations and clarify the mechanisms through which specific knowledge and skills (notably FM\_W08 and FM\_U07) are acquired and assessed during the internship phase.

## 2.4. REGULATED PROFESSIONS

*If relevant for the specific joint programme, the minimum agreed training conditions specified in the European Union Directive 2005/36/CE, or relevant common training frameworks established under the Directive, should be taken into account.*

Not relevant.



### 3. STUDY PROGRAMME

#### 3.1. CURRICULUM

*The structure and content of the curriculum should be fit to enable the students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.*

##### **Analysis:**

The curriculum is organized around a logical progression that integrates theoretical foundations with advanced empirical research and professional application. During the first semester, the programme employs a hybrid delivery model to balance consortium-wide cohesion with thematic depth. Joint online introductory courses establish a shared conceptual framework in forced migration across the consortium, while site-specific modules allow students to engage with their chosen specialized paths. The second semester's concentration at the SWPS University provides students with a substantial methodological toolkit, specifically emphasizing research in multicultural settings and ethical reflection, both of which are indispensable for the field. The concurrent internship serves as a vital bridge, allowing students to test theoretical research designs against the operational realities of host institutions. As the programme moves into the third semester, the shift toward problem-based learning and interactive seminars encourages higher-level analytical engagement. A key feature of this phase is the Joint Research Colloquium, which acts as a quality assurance mechanism by facilitating multi-perspective feedback from across the consortium.

The fourth semester culminates in the co-supervised Master's thesis. This arrangement ensures that the joint nature of the degree is upheld through the end of the study cycle, allowing students to synthesise their internship experiences and methodological training into a final project. Throughout this process, the programme draws on the multi-institutional expertise of its staff. The panel observes that the interplay between online and on-site formats is a deliberate pedagogical choice that facilitates a continuous exchange of knowledge between the students and a diverse pool of specialised experts across the European partner institutions.

Finally, the programme maintains a clear orientation toward the labour market, integrating non-academic stakeholders and prioritising transversal skills, such as intercultural communication and teamwork in multi-actor environments, thus preparing graduates for the complexities of professional practice. This comprehensive approach ensures that students are well-equipped for roles in NGOs, international organisations, and public administration. Importantly, the site visit confirmed that non-academic stakeholders are interested in further collaboration, including participation in the teaching process.

By systematically bridging foundational theory, rigorous methodology, and professional practice, the structure and content of the curriculum are effectively designed to enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes. The deliberate sequencing of modules ensures that students



progressively build the specialized competencies required for EQF Level 7, moving from conceptual understanding to autonomous research and practical application. Consequently, the pedagogical framework acts as a functional vehicle that directly supports the attainment of the programme's multidisciplinary objectives.

**Documentary evidence:**

- SER
- Annex 6: Structure of the curriculum / study plan

**Assessment:**

Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
x		

**Recommendation(s):**

### 3.2. CREDITS

*The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) should be applied properly and the distribution of credits should be clear.*

**Analysis:**

The PATHS programme correctly adheres to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), distributing a total of 120 ECTS over four semesters with a consistent allocation of 30 ECTS per semester. While the fundamental ECTS principles are integrated across the programme, several technical incongruencies within the documentation warrant attention to ensure full transparency and clarity for students.

Although the programme and all participating universities utilize ECTS to quantify student workload, the documentation reflects an inconsistent approach to credit-to-hour conversion. The Self-Assessment Report indicates that one ECTS credit ranges between 25 and 30 hours, yet the course syllabi in Annex 5 show no such variability, consistently applying a rigid ratio of 1 ECTS = 25 hours. This lack of precision complicates the verification of actual student workload across the multi-institutional framework.

Furthermore, while most syllabi provide a breakdown of contact hours versus independent study, the communication of this data lacks uniformity across the consortium. Different partner universities utilize varying formats - expressing contact time as either hours per week or total hours per semester - which hinders the ability to compare workloads across different mobility tracks.

Finally, significant discrepancies exist between the centralized curriculum table in Annex 6 and the individual syllabi in Annex 5. Certain learning activities are assigned conflicting credit values; for example, the course "Externalization of European Borders" is listed as both a 6 ECTS and a 9 ECTS



module. Given that the programme consists entirely of mandatory courses with no elective options, such contradictory information is potentially misleading and risks creating confusion regarding the definitive path to achieving the 120 ECTS required for graduation.

**Documentary evidence:**

- SER
- Annex 5: Course syllabi
- Annex 6: Structure of the curriculum / study plan

**Assessment:**

Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
x		

**Recommendation(s):**

1. Ensure that a consistent credit-to-hour conversion ratio is uniformly reflected.
2. Ensure that contact hours and independent study hours are reported using identical metrics to facilitate easier cross-institutional comparison.
3. Eliminate contradictory credit values for the same learning activities.

### 3.3. WORKLOAD

*A joint bachelor programme will typically amount to a total student workload of 180-240 ECTS-credits; a joint master programme will typically amount to 90-120 ECTS-credits and should not be less than 60 ECTS-credits at second cycle level (credit ranges according to the FQ-EHEA); for joint doctorates there is no credit range specified. The workload and the average time to complete the programme should be monitored.*

**Analysis:**

The PATHS programme is a two-year, second-cycle degree requiring 120 ECTS for graduation, as documented in Annexes 2 and 6 of the Self-Assessment Report (SER). The programme is structured over four semesters, with a consistent allocation of 30 ECTS per semester, aligning it with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (FQ-EHEA). However, a significant clerical error appears in Section 3.3 of the SER, which incorrectly cites a total workload of 4500–5400 hours (equivalent to 180 ECTS); based on standard ECTS principles, the actual workload for this programme corresponds to 3000–3600 hours, encompassing lectures, seminars, independent study, assessment, the internship, and the Master’s thesis.

While formally monitored by the consortium, the distribution of contact hours across the specialized tracks reveals notable disparities. For instance, in the first semester, while all students complete 30



ECTS - including 12 ECTS from joint online courses - the remaining 18 ECTS reflect vastly different instructional formats:

- Track 1: Comprises seminars totalling approximately 100 contact hours.
- Track 2: Combines lectures and seminars for a total of 105 contact hours.
- Track 3: Relies exclusively on lectures, totalling 180 contact hours.

While the credit value remains uniform, these substantial variations in face-to-face instruction versus independent study across partner institutions could lead to perceived inequities in student workload.

**Documentary evidence:**

- SER
- Annex 2: Cooperation agreement
- Annex 5: Course syllabi
- Annex 6: Structure of the curriculum / study plan
- Information provided during the site visit

**Assessment:**

Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
x		

**Recommendation(s):**

1. Ensure formal alignment with the 120 ECTS framework and correct the current clerical error.
2. Monitor the disparities in contact hours across the three tracks.

## 4. ADMISSION AND RECOGNITION

### 4.1. ADMISSION

*The admission requirements and selection procedures should be appropriate in light of the programme's level and discipline.*

**Analysis:**

The admission process for "PATHS Joint Master's in Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context" is centrally administered by SWPS University, as the coordinating institution. SWPS is responsible for managing the application procedure, collecting the admission fee required under Polish law, administering the entrance examination and finalizing enrolment.



The admission requirements described in the SER are appropriate for a second-cycle program. Applicants must hold at least a bachelor's degree or an equivalent qualification that gives access to Master's-level studies. In the case of foreign qualifications, SWPS University verifies the diploma and, where necessary, seeks confirmation from the Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange (NAWA).

Applicants are required to submit a set of documents through the online SWPS recruitment system (<https://rekrutacja.swps.pl/login>), including:

- a CV;
- recommendation letter(s);
- English-language competence at CEFR level B2 evidence;
- a motivation letter, which is expected to explain the applicant's motivation for joining the program and for selecting a particular study path, while also demonstrating prior engagement with issues such as migration, human rights or social inclusion;
- evidence of extracurricular or professional activities in the field (voluntary work, internships or similar initiatives) is particularly relevant in cases where the applicant's previous degree is not in the social sciences or humanities, as it helps the Admissions Committee assess his/her preparedness for the program.

While the program formally requires a degree in the social sciences or humanities, the panel notes that these fields are highly heterogeneous. Consequently, such qualifications do not inherently guarantee that applicants possess the specialized foundational knowledge required in migration, human rights, or social inclusion. Moreover, the possibility of admitting candidates based on their professional experience further broadens the range of possible entry profiles. The panel did not receive sufficiently clear information on how substantial or professionally relevant such experience must be, nor what types of supporting evidence are considered acceptable for demonstrating its applicability. As a result, there is a significant risk that admitted students may enter the program with highly diverse academic and professional backgrounds and without a sufficiently comparable foundation for second-cycle studies in the suggested field. Without ensuring Level 6 (Bachelor's level) knowledge, skills, and competencies in sociology, legal studies, political science, and psychology, the programme's ability to deliver a curriculum at a consistent and rigorous Master's level across the entire cohort may be compromised, potentially hindering the achievement of ILOs.

In addition to the documentary analysis, all applicants are further assessed at an entrance examination (obligatory under the Polish law). As was confirmed during the meeting with the PATHS coordinators, the entrance exam syllabus is currently being developed collaboratively by partner universities. The exam is intended to assess candidates' general understanding of social and migration issues, focusing on reading and analysing a related text. Following the examination, applications are reviewed by a Joint Selection Committee composed of representatives of all partner institutions, which makes the final admission decisions.



During the site visit, the PATHS coordinators clarified that admissions are based on a weighted scoring system, which foresees the following distribution of points:

- cover letter, 0-50 points;
- entrance examination, 0-30 points;
- other application documents, 0-20 points.

While the allocation of points across the different admission components was defined during the meetings, neither the report nor the coordinators could explain which specific criteria are used to award higher or lower scores within each component. The absence of such assessment descriptors reduces transparency and may give rise to concerns regarding consistency and fairness in the admission process.

Additionally, no minimum admission score appears to be set for entry to the program - this might create a further risk that, particularly in the first year of implementation, when the number of applicants may be relatively low, candidates may all be admitted due to the absence of a minimum admission threshold, particularly if the number of eligible applicants remains below the available capacity.

According to the information provided during the meetings, online interviews may also be conducted in exceptional situations, for example when the committee is unable to reach a decision or candidates achieve the same ranking score. The panel considers the current criteria for these exceptions to be too broad. For the admission process to be fully transparent, the consortium should specify the exact conditions under which an interview becomes mandatory, thereby eliminating any potential for arbitrary selection.

The consortium aims to reach a balanced number of students at each track, while maintaining a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 15 students per each. Applicants indicate their preferred mobility path at the time of admission. However, where a track is oversubscribed, candidates may be advised or requested to consider an alternative track.

The selection criteria themselves appear relevant, as they consider prior studies and professional experience related to migration and human rights, supplemented by the coherence of motivation and recommendation letter(s). At the same time, the admission system would benefit from greater formalization and transparency as well as providing explicit guidelines regarding the assessment and enrolment of applicants from non-Bologna degree structures.

All in all, the standard is only partially achieved at this stage due to significant gaps in the transparency and rigor of the admission process, particularly regarding the verification of foundational Level 6 (Bachelor's level) competencies. While the programme requires a degree in the social sciences or humanities, the high heterogeneity of these fields, combined with the possibility of admitting candidates based on loosely defined professional experience, creates a risk that students lack a comparable academic foundation in sociology, legal studies, political science, and psychology.



**Documentary evidence:**

1. SER
2. USWPS admission portal website (<https://rekrutacja.swps.pl/login>)

**Assessment:**

Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
	x	

**Recommendation(s):**

1. Implement a robust mechanism within the admissions process to verify that all incoming students possess the necessary Level 6 knowledge in sociology, legal studies, political science, and psychology.
2. Formalize the weighted scoring rubric by explicitly defining the assessment criteria and descriptors used to award points within each admission component.
3. Define transparent criteria for the assessment of professional experience by specifying what kinds of experience are regarded as sufficiently relevant and which forms of evidence are acceptable.
4. Specify the circumstances under which interviews may be conducted to ensure equal treatment of applicants and a transparent decision-making process.
5. Clarify the assessment of non-standard and non-Bologna qualifications by setting out the admission procedures and eligibility criteria.
6. Ensure procedural transparency by providing a clear timeline of administrative steps, a definitive list of required documentation, and strictly defined deadlines, all communicated to prospective applicants well in advance.

## 4.2. RECOGNITION

*Recognition of qualifications and of periods of studies (including recognition of prior learning) should be applied in line with the Lisbon Recognition Convention and subsidiary documents.*

**Analysis:**

Recognition of qualifications and periods of study in the PATHS Joint Master's programme is governed by the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and the relevant national legal frameworks applicable in the partner countries. All recognition decisions are based on the level, profile and learning outcomes of the prior qualification, as well as any refusal must be justified.

Students may apply for recognition of prior learning in the form of exemptions from specific courses based on previous studies and/or relevant professional experience. This process is handled on a case-



by-case basis by the partner institution responsible for delivering the respective course, with the aim of ensuring that the prior learning is consistent with the programme's curriculum and intended learning outcomes. According to documents outlining procedure for recognition of qualifications, recognition of study periods, study performances and examination performances (validation) is decided by committees at each partner institution. All recognised exemptions must remain compatible with the overall requirement of 120 ECTS and must be documented transparently in the student's transcript.

At the admission stage, the SWPS University, as the coordinating institution, is responsible for verifying whether applicants' Bachelor's degrees or equivalent qualifications provide access to Master's-level studies. Where required, confirmation may also be sought from the Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange (NAWA), which serves as Polish ENIC-NARIC centre.

To better support the PATHS students in this regard, each partner institution appoints one administrative and one academic coordinator to provide guidance, consultation and assistance to the students, including in matters related to academic recognition and study progression. However, given that information on recognition applied by each partner university is scattered across the partners' websites and internal university policies sometimes not available in English, the process may be considerably complicated for the student, hindering their general awareness of recognition arrangements within the PATHS programme.

**Documentary evidence:**

- SER
- Annex 6: Structure of the curriculum / study plan

**Assessment:**

Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
x		

**Recommendation(s):**

1. Present the recognition framework in a clear and accessible manner in the student handbook so that candidates are fully informed in advance; particular attention should be paid to explaining any institution-specific differences in recognition practices and relevant contact details across the partner HEIs.



## 5. LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

### 5.1. LEARNING AND TEACHING

*The programme should be designed to correspond with the intended learning outcomes, and the learning and teaching approaches applied should be adequate to achieve those. The diversity of students and their needs should be respected and attended to, especially in view of potential different cultural backgrounds of the students.*

#### **Analysis:**

The structure of the PATHS programme (Section 3 of SER) and the content of its curriculum (Annex 6) are designed to enable students to achieve the intended programme learning outcomes, as evidenced in the matrix of alignment of learning outcomes in Annex 4.

The PATHS programme uses a modern teaching framework, reflected in the provided course syllabi, that focuses on real-world application. Students work with case-based learning using actual materials like asylum files, policy papers, and NGO reports. This approach is strengthened by teaching students in local areas where forced migration is an active issue, making the lessons more relevant. Since the programme uses a blended learning setup, it encourages students to work together in small groups and learn from one another. Moreover, the programme systematically integrates diversity- and ethics-sensitive approaches across its pedagogical framework. In the area of course design, the curriculum emphasizes critical awareness of researcher positionality, power asymmetries, and trauma-informed methodologies. This ethical commitment extends to classroom management through the implementation of protocols for respectful dialogue and the deliberate inclusion of diverse perspectives. Finally, the programme provides structured support for internships and fieldwork, incorporating preparation and debriefing sessions to address the emotional and ethical complexities inherent in sensitive migration research.

The internship is presented in the SER as an important bridge between research-based learning and professional practice. It is carried out in institutions active in the field of forced migration or migration policy and is intended to provide structured opportunities for service- and field-based learning under academic supervision. The panel notes that the SWPS University is responsible for the academic design and assessment of the internship module, which supports coherence within the joint programme. However, the academic supervision model, the verification of internship learning outcomes, and the way in which placements are approved and monitored across the consortium are not clearly articulated.

The panel further considers that the programme is appropriately designed for a diverse student cohort. Given its international, interdisciplinary and mobility-based character, PATHS is likely to attract students with different academic backgrounds, cultural experiences and prior exposure to migration-related issues. The teaching and learning approaches described in the SER, including blended learning,



collaborative formats, diversity-sensitive teaching, and explicit attention to positionality and intercultural interaction, indicate that the programme is prepared to respond to such diversity in a constructive and academically appropriate manner.

**Documentary evidence:**

- SER
- Annex 4: List of intended learning outcomes, including: matrix of alignment with Framework for Qualifications in the European Higher Education Area (FQ-EHEA) and matrix of alignment with applicable national qualifications framework
- Annex 5: Course syllabi of all partners
- Annex 6: Structure of the curriculum / study plan

**Assessment:**

Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
x		

**Recommendation(s):**

1. Formalize consortium-wide procedures for academic supervision, internship placement approval, and the verification of internship learning outcomes to ensure consistent quality and monitoring across all partner institutions and three programme paths.

## 5.2. ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS

*The examination regulations and the assessment of the achieved learning outcomes should correspond with the intended learning outcomes. They should be applied consistently among partner institutions.*

**Analysis:**

The examination regulations and assessment methods are generally designed to verify the attainment of the intended learning outcomes (ILOs). However, the panel identifies several misalignments in course syllabi at both institutional and consortium levels that may undermine the validity and comprehensiveness of the assessment process. To begin with, there is a discrepancy between specific ILOs and the assessment methods used at individual partner universities. For example, while the course, e.g. "Intercultural Communication", aims to prepare students to "cooperate and mediate in multicultural teams," it allows students to opt out of group presentations in favour of a 100% weighted written exam. By making group-based assessment optional, the course cannot ensure that all students have achieved the necessary competencies in teamwork and mediation. Similarly, relying on written essays for verifying "participating in academic and expert debates" ("Child Migration and Social Psychology: Prejudice, Inclusion, and Identity" and relying on "presentation or reading diary" for verifying the ability "to articulate knowledge and criticism in both writing and orally" ("Introduction to European Border Regimes") lack constructive alignment.



A significant concern identified across the syllabi is the singular reliance on individual or group assignments as the sole method of assessment for knowledge, skills, and social competences simultaneously. Utilizing a single assessment format to verify such diverse categories of learning outcomes diminishes the accuracy of the evaluation. Social competences, in particular, require dynamic or participatory assessment methods that a written assignment or a standard group project cannot fully capture.

This issue is further compounded by the procedural inconsistency of allowing assessments to be completed as either an individual or a group project in as many as 12 courses (e.g. "Migration Politics", "Externalization of European Borders", "Introduction to concepts and theories of (forced) migration", "The Study of (Forced) Migration – Empirical Focus"). This "either/or" approach creates a fundamental discrepancy in the unit of certification; while an individual project reflects independent research and cognitive gain, a group project reflects a composite of teamwork dynamics and peer mediation. Because these two formats measure inherently different skill sets, the final grade ceases to be a standardized indicator of achievement across the cohort. Furthermore, without clearly defined individual grading rubrics for the group option, the construct validity of the results is weakened, as it becomes impossible to isolate an individual student's mastery of the subject matter from the collective performance of the group.

Finally, the panel seeks further clarification regarding the mandatory 80% attendance requirement included in all syllabi. While attendance often supports social integration, the documentation does not fully outline the consequences of falling below this threshold. Specifically, it is unclear whether students are provided with opportunities to compensate for absences or if they might risk failing the course regardless of having met all ILOs. Without further details, the requirement may be perceived as an administrative procedure rather than a transparent pedagogical tool.

The PATHS programme operates under a coordinated examination framework where each partner university administers assessments according to a shared set of standards, while respecting local academic calendars and regulations. This ensures that students are provided with consistent, advance information regarding the format, criteria, and timing of evaluations, whether they are conducted on-site or through approved online modalities. A defining feature of this joint framework is the automatic and universal recognition of academic results across the entire consortium. Credits awarded by any of the six partner institutions contribute directly toward the 120 ECTS required for the degree, eliminating the need for redundant examinations or secondary validation. To maintain a high level of comparability and fairness, the consortium utilizes a standardized grade conversion system. This system translates local grades into a common scale for all progression decisions and ensures that the final Diploma Supplement presents a transparent, unified record of the student's academic achievement across the programme.

The consortium operates under a common framework for re-sits to ensure consistent remediation standards. Students who fail a course are typically granted one re-sit opportunity at the host institution; further failure requires re-taking the module to fulfil graduation requirements. Study progression is



strictly credit-based, governing the transition between semesters and thesis eligibility. While cases of repeated failure are managed according to the host institution's national regulations, these actions remain aligned with the shared standards defined by the consortium to ensure equitable treatment across the partnership.

The Master's thesis (30 ECTS) serves as the programme's capstone evaluation, designed to verify the attainment of the highest-level learning outcomes. The panel identifies clear pedagogical and structural benefits in the requirement for joint supervision by academic staff from two partner universities. This supervisory synergy effectively ensures that student research is informed by diverse academic traditions and remains closely aligned with the individual's specific mobility trajectory. Furthermore, the mandatory inclusion of an international examination board for the oral defence ensures that the final assessment is measured against a unified, consortium-level benchmark. However, the panel notes several procedural and academic vulnerabilities that warrant attention. While the dual-supervision model is conceptually strong, it presents potential operational challenges; without a common supervisory protocol, students risk receiving conflicting feedback from supervisors operating under different national academic cultures. This risk of inconsistency extends to the assessment criteria. While the programme requires both a written work and an oral defence, there is an absence of a unified grading rubric shared across the consortium. Given that the thesis carries 25% of the total degree weight, any variation in how quality is defined between partner institutions could lead to inconsistencies in final grade classifications. Finally, the logistical complexity and administrative resource requirements of convening multi-partner examination boards for every student remains a concern. The framework currently lacks a formalized policy regarding the role of hybrid or online formats, which is necessary to ensure the long-term sustainability of this joint requirement.

All in all, the panel concludes that the standard is partially achieved at this stage due to a significant constructive misalignment and procedural inconsistency across at least half of the curriculum. The current assessment framework often fails to provide a robust verification of specific ILOs and the widespread practice of offering alternative assessment formats for the same course creates a discrepancy in the unit of certification, making the resulting grades inconsistent across the cohort.

**Documentary evidence:**

- SER
- Annex 5: Course syllabi of all partners
- Annex 7: Students' assessments regulations

**Assessment:**

Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
	x	



### Recommendation(s):

1. Eliminate the option to choose between individual and group work for the same learning outcomes to ensure that all students are evaluated against a consistent and reliable benchmark.
2. Ensure that knowledge, skills, and social competences are each verified through appropriate and distinct methods.
3. Implement clear criteria to distinguish individual contributions within group tasks. to protect the validity of individual certification.
4. Define the repercussions of falling below the 80% attendance requirement, clarifying whether there are mechanisms to compensate for missed hours and whether a failure to meet this threshold leads to an automatic course failure.
5. Establish shared guidelines for supervisors to align academic expectations and ensure consistent guidance for the student.
6. Adopt a consortium-wide grading rubric for both the dissertation and oral defence to ensure 30 ECTS are awarded based on identical qualitative criteria across all partners.
7. Define administrative policies for hybrid or online thesis defences to manage resource requirements and ensure the long-term feasibility of convening multi-partner boards.

## 6. STUDENT SUPPORT

*The student support services should contribute to the achievement of the intended learning outcomes. They should take into account specific challenges of mobile students.*

### Analysis:

According to the SER, university websites and the information confirmed during the meetings with different focus-groups, the PATHS programme offers a broad range of student support services aimed at helping students achieve the intended learning outcomes.

To ensure academic and operational consistency, the programme relies on a collaborative support structure consisting of:

- 1) the European Coordinator, responsible for overseeing the academic coherence and integrity of the programme across the full two-year curriculum;
- 2) a Local Academic Coordinator at each host university, responsible for addressing institution-specific academic issues and resolving scholarly disputes on site;
- 3) a Local Administrative Coordinator at each partner university, responsible for supporting students with administrative procedures, national bureaucracy, and access to local services.



Additionally, on-site support within all tracks is provided. Universities involved in the PATHS programme already have substantial experience in hosting international students and participating in joint or multiple-degree programmes. Furthermore, generally informative digital environments are designed to make student life easier and support more accessible. Comprehensive support will be provided throughout studies, including integration, language resources, academic and career guidance, housing, inclusion and support for students with special needs, as well as sports and leisure facilities. Although it may differ in its formats depending on the institution, it is equal in terms of effort, scope and outcomes.

International Offices and related bodies (e.g. Centres for Student Affairs at the SWPS University) will start developing connections with incoming students before arrival to secure their organisational and legal readiness. Throughout the study process these departments will act as the main providers on behalf of each HEI, clarifying key organisational particularities, timelines, study and assessment formats and other practical issues.

Given the mobility-based and multi-country nature of the programme, the practical organisation of internships is closely linked to student support arrangements. During the site visit, the consortium indicated that students would receive guidance in identifying placements and that internships would be supported through academic supervision and a broader network of associated stakeholders. Nevertheless, the available documentation does not yet sufficiently explain how students will be supported in practice regarding placement search, accommodation, local study conditions, and the coordination of internship-related logistics.

Student onboarding is jointly established across the consortium upon arrival and usually includes introductory sessions such as welcoming days and buddy programs as well as tutoring, organised by International Offices (UP8, NBU), Student Support Centres (SWPS, European University Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder)), Info Point (UniMC), Secretariat for administrative matter (University of Aegean).

To diminish potential language barriers, language departments of some HEIs offer certified language courses, while others combine language classes and cultural programs, ensuring informal integration. As it was noted during the visit, this aspect is important not only for academic integration, but also for everyday life, e.g. to interact with administrative, legal and financial institutions or to rent off-campus accommodation.

While the provision of accommodation support varies in its level of centralization and specific form, this service is addressed by each partner institution in the following way:

- 1) SWPS University offers student dormitories in Warsaw and additional private accommodation options (<https://tinyurl.com/5w9p6f65>);
- 2) European University Viadrina provides extensive website-based information on dormitories in Frankfurt (Oder), cheaper student halls in Słubice, as well as private housing options;



- 3) At University Paris 8 it is possible to live on campus, in private student halls or rentals (<https://www.univ-paris8.fr/en/-accommodation->);
- 4) Free housing options (subject to availability) were mentioned by representatives of University of Aegean during the visit (<http://www1.aegean.gr/international/accomodation.html>);
- 5) University of Macerata reserves a number of places for international students and complements this with the Il Faro Housing service and other housing options, such as hostels, apartments, guesthouses (<https://www.unimc.it/en/services/useful-information/accomodation-in-macerata>);
- 6) New Bulgarian University does not have its own dormitories but it cooperates with other HEIs and advises students on rentals;

While various housing options exist and specific room allocations may be reserved for international cohorts, the panel observes that the consortium currently lacks a unified housing support framework.

The programme utilizes a network of specialized Career Centres across the consortium, including the Office of Career Services at SWPS University, the Center for Career Development and Educational Resources at New Bulgarian University, and the University Common Service for Information, Guidance and Professional Integration (SCUIO-IP) at University Paris 8. These centers, supported by dedicated e-portals, facilitate student engagement with the labour market by coordinating employer cooperation, structured internship planning, and job-seeking strategies. Students benefit from high-visibility recruitment events, such as NBU's Job Fairs and the Salone di Orientamento at University of Macerata, as well as specialized individual counselling in English provided by University of Aegean.

Health and psychological support (available in English) are provided across the consortium, although in different formats: there are medical centres and Student Welfare Offices/Psychological Counselling Centres (or similar departments) on campus providing emergency aid. In addition, universities cooperate with local hospitals, maintain dedicated systems for reporting and responding to sexist and sexual violence, discrimination and harassment functions, offer free individual psychological sessions and group mindfulness activities.

The inclusion framework is comprehensively established across all partner universities, reflecting a commitment to safeguarding equal rights and providing equitable conditions for the entire student body in the following way:

- 1) Office for Accessibility, Scholarships and Student Activity of USWPS is in charge for providing assistants, sign-language interpreters, stenographers, mobility specialists and possible modifications to examination procedures; the library is equipped with specialised tools to meet the needs of users with disabilities (speech synthesiser, stationary reading system for people with visual impairments, software capable of conversing printed materials into digital format etc);



- 2) EUV's Office for students with disabilities and chronic illnesses ensures equal rights and provides students with special needs with access to Viadrina's infrastructure through, e.g., single individual accommodation and examination adjustments;
- 3) Accessible infrastructure, specialised resources for students with disabilities and adapted learning materials, including audio-format literature and electronic resources for students with visual impairments are available at NBU;
- 4) UAEGEAN's infrastructure is made accessible for students with special needs;
- 5) Service Accueil Handicap at UP8 welcomes, advises and supports students with disabilities and students with health issues on a case-by-case basis, assessing their needs, setting up and coordinating Student Disability Support Plans;
- 6) UniMC provides personalised inclusion support (for example, note-taking and lecture support), assistive technologies (e.g. smarten, Livescribe) and transportation assistance within the municipality of Macerata.

Digital services, learning resources and library infrastructure are well developed across the alliance and contribute significantly to the academic community. They include informative websites, developed library e-services along with computerised reading halls, institutional emails and virtual university portals, multimedia technologies.

Social integration is another important component supporting students' everyday life. All partner institutions maintain active student-led initiatives that coordinate a wide range of campus events, including organized visits to museums and theatres, the formation of cultural interest groups, and opportunities for participation in various sports activities. These social frameworks are essential for fostering a sense of community and enhancing the cultural competencies of students as they navigate their mobility pathways.

At cooperating universities there are financial opportunities for students, such as low-cost or free meal options, discounted (sometimes free) public transport passes and scholarships/financial aid from universities and the state. While the formal documentation currently focuses on these broad benefits, the interviews highlighted that specific financial support structures for the PATHS programme are being developed. These additional details are expected to be shared as the programme continues to evolve, further enhancing the comprehensive support offered to students.

The panel acknowledges that the programme offers a comprehensive support infrastructure encompassing academic coordination, administrative assistance, and dedicated services for social integration, housing, and career development. It is evident that the consortium is proactive in addressing persistent challenges; however, several areas require sustained attention to ensure a consistent student experience. Notable concerns include visa processing complexities, particularly at the University of Macerata and the European University Viadrina, as well as housing market constraints, which students in similar programmes have identified as a significant barrier.



All in all, the inherent complexity and diversity of these support formats underscore the need for a student handbook which would provide a single, transparent point of reference for all participants.

**Documentary evidence:**

1. SER
2. Partner universities' websites:
  - SWPS University:  
[https://english.swps.pl/?\\_gl=1\\*73ksvm\\*\\_up\\*MQ..\\*\\_ga\\*NDgwMTM1MDE5LjE3NzU4NTg3MTk.\\*\\_ga\\_WD92PFT6KH\\*cze3NzU4NTg3MTgkbzEkZzAkdDE3NzU4NTg3MTgkajYwJGwwJGgxMzI4NjY1ODkx](https://english.swps.pl/?_gl=1*73ksvm*_up*MQ..*_ga*NDgwMTM1MDE5LjE3NzU4NTg3MTk.*_ga_WD92PFT6KH*cze3NzU4NTg3MTgkbzEkZzAkdDE3NzU4NTg3MTgkajYwJGwwJGgxMzI4NjY1ODkx)
  - European University Viadrina: <https://www.europa-uni.de/en/studium/studieneinstieg/campus-leben/campus-auf-einen-blick/index.html>
  - University of Macerata: <https://www.unimc.it/it>
  - University of Aegean: <http://www1.aegean.gr/international/default.htm>
  - University Paris 8: <https://www.univ-paris8.fr/en/-university->
  - New Bulgarian University: <https://nbu.bg/en>
3. Presentations supplemented during the visit

**Assessment:**

Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
x		

**Recommendation(s):**

1. Detail support services, clarify mobility pathways, and proactively address common student concerns in a handbook to ensure institutional transparency.
2. Include a curated list of accommodation options within the student handbook to streamline the housing search and reduce the administrative burden on mobile students.
3. Consider the feasibility of securing reserved short-term accommodation options to ensure a smoother mobility experience throughout the programme, particularly in emergency cases related to housing.



## 7. RESOURCES

### 7.1. STAFF

*The staff should be sufficient and adequate (qualifications, professional and international experience)*

#### **Analysis:**

The staffing of the PATHS Joint Master on Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context is sufficient and adequate to ensure the effective delivery of the programme. The academic staff involved across the partner institutions possess appropriate qualifications, including postdoctoral, habilitated and professorial profiles, and demonstrate expertise directly relevant to the interdisciplinary scope of the programme, notably in forced migration, border regimes, migration governance and law, inequality and intersectionality, child protection, and advanced social-science methods. The composition of the academic team is well aligned with the thematic structure of the curriculum and with the intended learning outcomes of the programme.

The panel notes that the programme is firmly embedded in the academic strengths of the participating institutions. The geographical and thematic positioning of partner universities provides a strong basis for the implementation of the three study paths and for the program's broader European and global perspective on forced migration. The cooperation within the ERUA Alliance constitutes an important strategic and academic foundation for the programme and strengthens its credibility as a genuinely joint initiative. The academic profiles of the institutions complement each other well and create a coherent framework for joint delivery.

The staff presented in the Self-Evaluation Report and discussed during the meetings with the panel demonstrated strong ownership of the programme and a clear understanding of its rationale, structure and intended impact. The discussions held during the site visit confirmed that the programme is not a merely formal consortium arrangement, but a well-considered and academically grounded joint degree developed through close collaboration among the partners. Staff members appeared committed to the programme's long-term success and capable of delivering it in an international and mobile learning environment. This institutional and academic ownership is an important strength of the programme.

The research experience, international engagement and practice-oriented expertise of the teaching staff are particularly well suited to a programme addressing such a complex and socially relevant field. The combination of academic competence and links to professional practice supports the research-based and applied character of the curriculum, including the supervision of internships and Master's theses. Overall, the staff resources are adequate not only in formal terms, but also in relation to the programme's joint, interdisciplinary and international character.

A concern noted by the panel is the uneven distribution of named staff across partner institutions. EUV lists five named staff members; USWPS three; UAEGEAN three; UniMC two; UP8 two; and NBU one.



Given that NBU leads the Migration Politics and Policies path, a single named academic raises questions about teaching capacity, contingency arrangements and supervision load at that institution however the staff present at the meeting with the assessment team stated that the institutions are fully aware and capable of handling the teaching delivery. Furthermore, the SER does not provide information on expected staff-to-student ratios or the proportion of each staff member's workload allocated to the PATHS programme. Nor does it describe administrative or programme management staffing. For a complex six-country mobility programme, the absence of this information makes it difficult to assess whether the overall staffing provision is sustainable in the medium term. No staff development or recruitment contingency plans are described for the event of key staff departures.

**Documentary evidence:**

- Meeting with academic staff
- Meeting with the coordinators of the PATHS programme
- Annex 8: Academic staff CVs
- SER

**Assessment:**

Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
x		

**Recommendation(s):**

1. Document the workload percentage allocated to the PATHS programme for both academic and administrative personnel to ensure operational sustainability.
2. Explicitly outline the management and administrative staffing dedicated to the programme at each partner institution to guarantee the smooth execution of the complex six-country mobility framework.
3. Create a formal plan for staff development and recruitment contingencies to mitigate the risk of expertise loss and ensure continuity in the event of key personnel departures.

## 7.2. FACILITIES

*The facilities provided should be sufficient and adequate in view of the intended learning outcomes (including necessary IT infrastructure).*

**Analysis:**

The facilities made available by the partner institutions are sufficient and adequate for the delivery of the PATHS programme and support the achievement of its intended learning outcomes. Across the consortium, students have access to appropriate teaching and learning spaces, digital infrastructure, libraries and electronic resources, student support services, accessibility arrangements and international student support mechanisms. The infrastructure described in the Self-Evaluation Report



demonstrates that all participating institutions are capable of hosting students within a demanding joint and mobility-based Master's programme.

The panel notes the strong institutional basis provided by the partner universities and the benefits stemming from their cooperation within the ERUA Alliance. The alliance framework facilitates not only academic collaboration but also creates a supportive environment for the organisation of student mobility, access to institutional services, and the development of a shared international learning experience. The location of the institutions in diverse migration-related contexts further enhances the educational value of the programme and contributes meaningfully to the learning environment available to students.

The site visit and accompanying discussions confirmed that the infrastructure available at the coordinating institution, SWPS University, as well as at the partner universities, is appropriate for the programme's needs. This includes classrooms, seminar and meeting spaces, library access, IT solutions, digital learning tools, and student support structures. The institutions also appear aware of the practical needs of incoming and mobile students and have established relevant support mechanisms related to onboarding, administrative assistance, and local integration. While the practical organisation of mobility across several countries will require continued coordination, the facilities themselves provide a sound basis for implementation.

The panel notes that in a programme of such a complex and mobile character, the adequacy of facilities depends not only on the existence of local infrastructure, but also on the clarity and coordination with which students are guided through it. This applies in particular to the use of different digital systems and learning platforms across partner institutions, as well as to practical matters such as accommodation support and access to local study facilities. In the panel's view, these joint and operational aspects should be explained clearly and coherently to students in a dedicated student guide, so that the multi-institutional structure of the programme does not create unnecessary barriers in navigating academic and practical arrangements.

Overall, the panel considers that the facilities available across the consortium are not only formally adequate, but also well matched to the international, interdisciplinary and mobility-based character of the programme. The infrastructure and support environment are sufficient to ensure appropriate study conditions for the first cohorts of students.

**Documentary evidence:**

- SER
- The site visit at USWPS and the on-line visits of facilities dedicated to the PATHs programme at partner universities

**Assessment:**

Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
x		



**Recommendation(s):**

## **8. TRANSPARENCY AND DOCUMENTATION**

*Relevant information about the programme like admission requirements and procedures, course catalogue, examination and assessment procedures etc. should be well documented and published by taking into account specific needs of mobile students.*

**Analysis:**

The Self-Evaluation Report presents a well-structured and comprehensive concept for the transparency and documentation of the PATHS Joint Master on Forced Migration: Europe in a Global Context. According to the documentation submitted, the consortium intends to make available a broad and relevant set of information in English, including the programme description, intended learning outcomes, course catalogue, module and course descriptions, academic calendar, mobility information package, admissions requirements and procedures, assessment methods, progression rules, and student support information relevant to mobile learners. The report also indicates that this information is to be made available through a dedicated programme web presence, partner university pages and alliance-level communication channels.

The panel acknowledges that the documentation framework, as described in the Self-Evaluation Report, corresponds well to the needs of a joint and mobility-based programme. This is particularly important in the case of PATHS, where students will study across several institutions and national contexts and therefore require clear, accessible and centrally organised information regarding admissions, mobility arrangements, progression rules, local support services and the overall logic of the programme. The consortium appears aware of these needs, and the discussions during the site visit confirmed that tools such as a student guidebook and additional practical guidance materials are being prepared.

At the same time, the panel notes that a significant part of the transparency framework still relies on documentation that is planned, being drafted, or expected to be published by the SWPS University and the programme management before the public announcement and launch of recruitment. This applies in particular to the final publication of detailed recruitment rules, the student guide, the programme guide, and other operational documents necessary for candidates and future students to make informed decisions and navigate the programme successfully. While the intentions and general structure are appropriate, the panel was not in a position to verify the full availability and public accessibility of all these materials at the time of the evaluation. However, it is worth noticing the advanced stage of the preparation considering the review process being carried in an ex-ante format.

The panel notes the importance of ensuring high levels of procedural transparency and informational clarity regarding the admissions process and the dissemination of student support details. Although the programme documentation refers to a step-by-step admissions framework and to supporting



materials for mobile students, the criterion requires that such information be not only conceptually planned but also actually documented, published and accessible in due time. In the panel's view, the fulfilment of Criterion 8 therefore depends on the consortium ensuring that all essential information is made publicly available in English before the opening of the first admissions cycle. This is particularly relevant for applicants from different higher education systems and for non-EU candidates, who may depend heavily on clear guidance concerning eligibility, required documentation, timelines, mobility obligations, fees, academic regulations and support arrangements.

The panel also underlines the importance of having one coherent and reliable entry point for programme information. Given the multi-institutional structure of PATHS, transparency cannot depend solely on dispersed institutional pages or internal coordination. The dedicated programme documentation should provide a stable and comprehensive reference framework for applicants and students throughout all semesters of the programme. In this context, the timely finalisation and publication of the student guide and related programme documentation will be essential.

Overall, the panel finds that the consortium has designed an appropriate transparency framework and demonstrates awareness of the specific documentation needs of a joint programme. However, because important elements of this framework are not yet fully published and verifiable, the criterion is considered only partially fulfilled at this stage.

**Documentary evidence:**

- SER
- Annex 5: Course syllabi of all partners
- Annex 6: Structure of the curriculum / study plan
- Annex 7: Official documents indicating admission requirements and selection procedures
- Annex 8: Official documents outlining procedure for recognition of qualifications
- Annex 9: Students' assessments regulations
- Annex 12: Diploma supplement (sample)

**Assessment:**

Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
	x	

**Recommendation(s):**

1. Transition all conceptually planned materials, including recruitment rules, the student handbook, and the programme guide, into finalized, publicly accessible documents in English before the first admission cycle commences.
2. Consolidate all programme-related information into a single web portal to ensure prospective students, especially non-EU applicants, have a coherent and reliable entry point for navigating the six-country mobility framework.



3. Ensure that all essential details regarding eligibility, fees, and academic regulations are not only drafted but fully verifiable and transparent to stakeholders to achieve full compliance with the transparency criteria.

## 9. QUALITY ASSURANCE

*The cooperating institutions should apply joint internal quality assurance processes in accordance with part one of the ESG.*

### **Analysis:**

The programme demonstrates a sophisticated governance model that distributes QA responsibility across a Governing Board, a permanent Quality Assurance Committee (QAC), and Local Coordinators. The formal inclusion of a Student Board and an External Advisory Board ensures that both learner perspectives and professional expertise are structurally embedded in the decision-making process, directly addressing ESG 1.1 and 1.9.

The framework establishes a multi-dimensional feedback system that captures input from students, academic staff, administrative personnel, and internship providers. The use of anonymous evaluations and annual QAC-student meetings creates a systematic cycle of continuous enhancement rather than a purely compliance-based approach.

The panel acknowledges the commitment to a joint grade conversion table and the systematic monitoring of the student lifecycle (admission through completion), which indicates a strong focus on maintaining comparable standards across the six-country consortium, vital for the integrity of a joint degree.

The panel concludes that the documentation explicitly maps its processes to specific ESG standards, particularly regarding information management, public information, and the ongoing monitoring and periodic review of programmes.

At the same time, the panel observes that although the consortium commits to common requirements, the reliance on each partner's own internal QA regulations alongside the joint framework creates potential for procedural overlap or inconsistency. It is not entirely clear how the programme-level QAC resolves conflicts if a local institutional policy contradicts a joint consortium decision. Furthermore, the decentralized nature of data collection (handled by Local Coordinators) may lead to uneven data quality or delays. The framework lacks a description of a centralized digital QA platform or standardized reporting template to ensure that data from all six institutions is truly comparable and actionable in real-time. Next, while the system describes how feedback is collected, there is less emphasis on how the results of QA exercises and the subsequent corrective measures are communicated back to the students and stakeholders. Transparency in how improvements are implemented is essential for maintaining a high-quality QA culture. Finally, for a programme involving six countries, the administrative burden of coordinating annual reports, curriculum reviews, and board meetings is



significant. The documentation does not specify the dedicated administrative support or budget allocated to the QAC to ensure these processes remain sustainable.

**Documentary evidence:**

- SER
- Annex 11: Relevant documents constituting internal quality assurance system,
- Meeting with the coordinators of PATHS and quality assurance team

**Assessment:**

Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
x		

**Recommendation(s):**

1. Consolidate the common requirements into a single, comprehensive document that clearly defines the hierarchy between joint programme-level policies and local institutional regulations.
2. Create unified templates for data collection and annual local reporting to ensure that Local Academic Coordinators provide consistent and comparable indicators to the QAC.
3. Establish a clear mechanism for publishing summaries that inform students of the specific changes made in response to their feedback, thereby closing the quality loop.
4. Schedule a pilot QA review after the first semester to test the efficiency of the information flow between the Local Coordinators and the Governing Board, identifying any logistical challenges early.



**PKA Polish Accreditation Committee**  
**Polska Komisja Akredytacyjna**

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## **Annexes**

1. Site visit agenda
2. The Consortium Agreement (the Cooperation Agreement)
3. Annexes to the Consortium Agreement