

fuTUre fit International: TU the World.



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Executive Summary

With the internationalization strategy **fuTUre fit International**, **TU Wien** is positioning itself as a "creative urban tech university. Unlimited." in the global scientific community. **Internationalization is seen as a strategic cornerstone** for promoting academic excellence and global networking. The strategy is based on the vision "**TU Wien – where we dare to reason**" and is committed to **European values** such as **freedom, democracy, and the rule of law**.

Its central goals are **to promote research, innovation, and teaching** through **international cooperation, the mobility** of students, researchers, and staff, and the **strengthening of TU Wien as a global science hub**. The strategy responds to **geopolitical changes** with a **focus on European cooperation** and **strategic equidistance from third countries**. Particular attention is paid to **research security** and **protection from foreign influence**.

Europe is a priority: TU Wien is heavily involved in the European University **EULiST**. In addition, **strategic partnerships** are being established and deepened in regions such as the UK, the Western Balkans, India, Japan, East Asia, North America, and the Global South.

The **International Relations & Global Affairs department** acts as **the central interface** for **implementing the strategy** in the areas of **mobility, strategy, and community**. Supportive measures such as the **International Welcome & Engagement Center (IWECE)**, **travel grants, the TUtheWorld Network, and the Global Faculty Fellowship** strengthen the international appeal and networking of TU Wien.

Networks such as **CESAER, ASEA-Uninet, Africa Uninet, and Eurasia-Pacific Uninet** are being used specifically **to pool research capacities and promote intercultural exchange**. The strategy also attaches great importance to **multilingualism, diversity, and inclusion**.

Indicators are used to **measure success**. Dedicated staff will be hired to further develop these indicators.

Overall, **TU Wien's goal with this strategy** is to anchor **internationalization as a cultural and structural component** of the university and to **strengthen its role as a leading technical university in the international context** in the long term.

1. Introduction

Internationalization is a central component of science, research, and teaching. For the **TU Wien**, it represents **a strategic cornerstone** that forms the basis for the university's future development and success. In an increasingly **interconnected world**, **internationalization** is not just an option, but a **necessity** in order to **meet** the **challenges** of the 21st century and **promote academic excellence**.

The internationalization **strategy** defines the **framework conditions** and **guidelines** for the **operational activities** of the **International Relations & Global Affairs department** in particular but allows **sufficient flexibility** to respond to **changing global conditions**. It builds on the **existing internationalization strategy**¹, which was adopted in 2013 and marked a **significant milestone** for internationalization at TU Wien. Due to the global conditions that have changed in the meantime, a revision is necessary.

1.1. TU Wien – where we dare to reason.

A key cornerstone of all considerations in this strategy is the **TU Wien strategy** adopted in spring 2025². Naturally, the internationalization strategy also follows the vision set out there:

TU Wien – where we dare to reason. The creative urban tech University. Unlimited.

Especially in **times of increasing skepticism toward science** and "alternative facts," it is of central importance for universities to promote **cooperation** with other **institutions** that are equally committed to **the ideals of enlightenment and reason**.

In its strategy, **TU Wien** is committed to **the European values of human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law, and the protection of human rights**. These values also form the basis for its internationalization efforts and, in particular, the establishment of strategic partnerships.

The vision of **TU Wien** as **a creative urban tech university** gives rise to the aspiration and goal of establishing **TU Wien as an international science hub** and creating a **TU community** that works **globally in a networked manner on solutions for the future**.

¹ TU Wien International. Strategic Concept, 2013+.

² fuTUre fit. The Strategy of TU Wien, March 2025.

1.2. Significance of internationalization for research, innovation, and teaching

The **internationalization** of TU Wien aims to promote **cooperation in solving global challenges** (e.g., SDGs). At a time when the world is facing complex problems such as **climate change, pandemics, and social inequalities**, **cooperation** across national borders is **essential**. Through international cooperation, researchers at TU Wien can gain access to a broader range of resources, knowledge, and technologies necessary for the development of innovative solutions.

Another important aspect of internationalization is **enhancing the academic reputation** of TU Wien and its **international visibility**. By participating in **global research projects**, **engaging in exchanges with other leading international institutions**, and specifically **promoting mobility**, TU Wien can strengthen its position as one of the world's leading technical universities. This not only contributes to the university's attractiveness to international students and researchers but also helps to attract funding and investment.

Developing skills for the **global labor market** is another key objective of the internationalization strategy. In a globalized economy, intercultural skills and international experience are of crucial importance. TU Wien therefore strives to offer its **students, researchers, and employees the opportunity** to gain **international experience** and develop their skills in a global context. This includes student and researcher exchanges, participation in international conferences and research projects, and targeted staff exchanges to strengthen cooperation with selected strategic partners at this level as well.

International networking and diverse cooperation with outstanding partners abroad increase the attractiveness of TU Wien as an employer for highly qualified employees.

Networking with other universities, industry, and society is another essential component of the internationalization strategy. By **establishing and maintaining networks**, TU Wien can leverage synergies, benefit from the strengths of its partners, and enhance its reputation. This not only enables the exchange of knowledge and best practices, but also the development of joint projects and initiatives that have a positive impact on society.

1.3. Mobility

The **mobility of researchers, students, and staff** is at **the heart** of TU Wien's internationalization strategy and acts as a key driver for scientific progress, teaching,

cultural exchange, and global networking. The targeted exchange of talent creates a vibrant network that not only accelerates knowledge transfer but also promotes innovative research approaches that would be unlikely to emerge in isolated contexts.

International visiting professorships, scholarship programs such as Erasmus+ , and the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship enable researchers to work at leading research institutions worldwide, while at the same time bringing external experts to TU Wien to contribute their expertise. This **bidirectional flow of know-how** strengthens the reputation of TU Wien, increases its visibility in international rankings, and opens up new opportunities for cooperation with industry partners who are increasingly operating on a global scale.

For **students**, mobility means more than just a semester abroad: they have the opportunity **to acquire intercultural skills, learn about different teaching methods, and expand their professional network** across national borders. Such experiences not only increase employability, but also promote a deeper **understanding of global challenges** – from sustainable mobility to digital transformation processes. In addition, mobility-intensive programs help to increase **diversity** on campus, which in turn promotes **creative problem solving** and creates an **inclusive learning environment**. To enable this mobility, it is also necessary for individual **curricula to facilitate and specifically promote it**.

TU Wien supports these **mobility goals** through structural measures such as **active participation in the Erasmus+ program**, dedicated **funding**, administrative simplifications, and tailored **support services**. Close cooperation with partner universities, particularly in Asia, North America, and Europe, ensures continuous exchange, enabling long-term strategic alliances. Overall, the consistent promotion of researcher, student, and employee mobility not only strengthens academic excellence, but also positions TU Wien as a dynamic player in the international scientific ecosystem.

1.4. Geopolitical changes and European cooperation

Current **geopolitical changes** have further increased the importance of **European cooperation and the European Higher Education Area**. At a time when national interests and protectionist tendencies are on the rise, it is all the more important to strengthen cooperation within Europe. The **European Higher Education Area provides**

a platform for the exchange of knowledge and ideas and promotes the mobility of students and researchers. This contributes to strengthening European identity and promoting innovation and excellence.

The reports by **Draghi**³, **Letta**⁴, and **Heitor**⁵ have provided important insights that are of great significance for the internationalization strategy of TU Wien. The Letta report highlights the need to deepen the European single market and strengthen the competitiveness of the EU. The Draghi report emphasizes the importance of a new industrial strategy for Europe that focuses on innovation and sustainability. The Heitor report underscores the role of universities as drivers of economic and social development and the need to promote international cooperation.

1.5. Strategic equidistance in international cooperation

International **cooperation** is of crucial importance to TU Wien. However, **cooperation** with **institutions in countries outside the European Union** must be embedded in a **strategy of equidistance**, which enables collaboration with universities from a wide variety of countries without **giving rise to bias, external influence, or excessive dependencies**. TU Wien therefore strives to enter into targeted collaborations with universities from clearly defined, strategically important regions and to contribute resources to these collaborations in a targeted manner. These regions include both established scientific nations and emerging markets that offer high potential for future development. TU Wien is therefore leveraging its **central location as a creative urban tech university in the heart of Vienna, home to the United Nations**, to establish itself as an international hub for research, innovation, and teaching and to promote scientific connections between East and West as well as North and South.

³ The future of European competitiveness. EU, 2024. ISBN 978-92-68-22715-2 doi:10.2872/9356120

⁴ Much more than a market. Speed, security, solidarity. April 2024

⁵ Align, act, accelerate. Research, Technology and Innovation to boost European Competitiveness. 2024. ISBN 978-92-68-20719-2
doi:10.2777/9106236

1.6. Research security and protection against foreign interference

In the wake of increasing **geopolitical tensions and the growing importance of science and technology as strategic resources**, the topic of **research security**—i.e., the protection of research from unwanted knowledge transfer, espionage, and influence—is increasingly becoming the focus of European and national higher education strategies. TU Wien is committed to **preserving academic freedom and openness**, but at the same time recognizes the **need to protect research and innovation** from **targeted influence** by state or non-state actors.

With its "Guidance on Foreign Interference in Research and Innovation"⁶, the **European Commission** has created a clear **framework** to support universities and research institutions in identifying and managing risks in an international context. This includes **recommendations on due diligence** in international partnerships, **raising awareness among researchers**, and **establishing institutional safeguards**.

TU Wien will actively integrate these European guidelines into its processes and implement appropriate measures. The aim is to strike a **balance** between **international openness and strategic resilience**. TU Wien sees itself as a responsible player in the European higher education area and will actively fulfill its role in protecting European knowledge sovereignty – in line with the values of transparency, the rule of law, and scientific excellence.

1.7. Internationalization for people

The TU Wien's internationalization strategy focuses on various actors, stakeholders, and institutions that contribute significantly to the success of the strategy:

- **Researchers and teaching staff:** They are at the heart of TU Wien's scientific excellence. Through international cooperation, researchers can expand their networks, gain access to new research resources, and participate in global

⁶ European Commission: Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, *Tackling R&I foreign interference – Staff working document*, Publications Office of the European Union, 2022, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2777/513746>

projects. This not only promotes their individual career development, but also contributes to strengthening the research landscape at TU Wien.

- **Students:** Internationalization offers students the opportunity to gain valuable intercultural experience and develop their skills for the global job market. Exchange programs, international internships, and participation in international conferences and competitions are just some of the measures that help students expand their skills and improve their career prospects.
- **Administrative staff:** The internationalization strategy also offers numerous opportunities for employees in the service areas of TU Wien. Through exchanges with international colleagues, they can learn about new perspectives and best practices that enrich their work and contribute to the further development of the university. Continuing education programs and international networks support the professional development of employees and promote an open and innovative work culture.
- **Supervisory and governing bodies:** Committees such as the University Council, Senate, Faculty Councils, and Curriculum Commissions play a crucial role in the strategic orientation and implementation of the internationalization strategy. Through their support and commitment, they can ensure that internationalization is anchored as an integral part of the university's strategy and that the necessary resources and options, such as mobility windows in the curricula, are provided.
- **Entrepreneurs:** Collaboration with industry, especially with start-ups, is an important part of the internationalization strategy. Partnerships with international companies enable innovative ideas and technologies to be developed and put into practice. This not only promotes economic development, but also offers students and researchers valuable insights into practice and opportunities for professional development.
- **Politics & Administration:** Support from political and administrative actors is crucial to the success of the internationalization strategy. By creating favorable conditions and providing funding, they can actively support the internationalization of TU Wien and contribute to strengthening the university's international competitiveness.
- **Society:** The internationalization of TU Wien also has a positive impact on society. By developing and implementing innovative solutions to global challenges, the university can make an important contribution to sustainable development and

social progress. Collaboration with international partners enables the adoption of best practices and new approaches that improve people's lives.

Overall, TU Wien's internationalization strategy aims to establish **internationalization as a strategic and cultural cornerstone** of the university. By promoting collaboration, enhancing its academic reputation, developing skills for the global labor market, and networking with other universities, industry, and society, **TU Wien will further strengthen its position as a leading technical university** and make a positive contribution to solving global challenges.

1.8. International Relations and Global Affairs as a gateway

Successful **implementation** of the internationalization strategy requires not only clear goals and visions, but also **targeted organizational measures**. The **International Relations and Global Affairs department** plays a central role in this, acting as a **gateway for researchers, students, employees, and other organizational units**. This department provides its **expertise** and support through targeted measures in the **core functions of mobility, strategy, and community**.

In the area **of mobility**, the department will actively work to **promote exchange programs and international cooperation**. This includes **supporting students and researchers in planning and carrying out stays abroad**, whether for study, research, or internship purposes.

In the area **of strategy**, the department develops **long-term strategies for internationalization** and continuously adapts them to new challenges and opportunities. This includes **analyzing global trends and identifying potential for international cooperation**. A clear strategic orientation ensures that internationalization efforts are targeted and effective.

In the area **of community**, the department will actively work to **establish an international TU Wien community**. To this end, **incoming students and employees** will be looked after and **given targeted support upon their arrival at TU Wien**. The aim is to integrate them **into TU Wien quickly and with less bureaucracy**. In addition, **targeted networking and the establishment of a TUtheWorld network** are also the focus of activities.



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The International Relations and Global Affairs department defines itself as a **customer-oriented service unit**. It is ready to use its **expertise** and **network** to **provide unbureaucratic support to** the various **stakeholders at the university**, thereby empowering managers in particular to successfully implement the internationalization strategy. Through its **central role as a gateway**, the **department** makes **a decisive contribution to TU Wien achieving its international goals and further strengthening its position in the global academic landscape**.

2. Priority Europe

The **European Higher Education Area (EHEA)** plays a **central role in promoting education, research, and innovation in Europe**. The creation of the EHEA established a framework that facilitates the mobility of students and researchers and promotes cooperation between universities in different countries.

The EHEA was established as part of the Bologna Process to **harmonize higher education systems in Europe and improve the quality of higher education**. A key objective is **to promote the mobility of students and researchers**, which is financially supported by the **Erasmus+** program. This contributes to the creation of a common European education area that promotes the exchange of knowledge and ideas and strengthens Europe's competitiveness on a global level.

A particular focus is on the **European University**, a network of universities that aims **to strengthen European identity and academic excellence**. Beyond this, TU Wien also strives to enter into strategic partnerships with selected technical universities in Europe.

2.1. Findings of the reports by Draghi, Letta, and Heitor

The reports by Mario Draghi, Enrico Letta, and Manuel Heitor provide key impetus for the strategic development of the European Higher Education and Research Area. They address the challenges facing Europe in global competition and formulate concrete recommendations for strengthening research, innovation, and international cooperation. TU Wien is taking these ideas as the basis for its strategic positioning in the European context.

The report by Mario Draghi, commissioned by the European Commission, analyzes Europe's structural weaknesses in comparison to the US and China and calls for a profound reorientation of Europe's competitive strategy.

The focus is on three key areas of action:

- **Closing the innovation gap:** Europe must invest heavily in key technologies, especially AI, quantum technologies, and sustainable industrial processes. The gap between Europe and the US and China is critical.

- **Combining decarbonization and industrial strength:** The green transformation must not come at the expense of industrial competitiveness. A coordinated industrial policy is needed that combines sustainability and productivity.
- **Strengthening strategic autonomy:** Europe must reduce its dependencies in critical areas (e.g., energy, semiconductors, healthcare) and increase its resilience to geopolitical shocks.

Enrico Letta's report on the future of the European single market emphasizes the need to further develop the single market as a political and strategic space. He proposes the introduction of a **"fifth freedom": the free circulation of knowledge, research, and innovation.**

- **Research as a strategic asset:** Universities and research institutions should be considered an integral part of the internal market. Access to research infrastructures, data, and talent must be facilitated.
- **European knowledge commons:** Letta calls for the establishment of a "European Knowledge Commons" to promote the exchange of knowledge and break down barriers to cooperation.
- **Strengthening technological sovereignty:** The internal market should be used in a targeted manner to set European standards and reduce technological dependencies.

For TU Wien, this means actively fulfilling its role as a European research university, contributing to the shaping of the internal market, and using strategic alliances such as EULIST and CESAER to promote European values and excellence.

Manuel Heitor's report on the evaluation of Horizon Europe sets out an ambitious vision for the future of European research policy. He calls for:

- **Doubling the EU research budget** to at least €220 billion in the next framework program (2028–2034).
- **Radically simplifying funding procedures** to lower barriers to access and increase the participation of SMEs and start-ups.
- **New governance structures**, including two new EU councils for industrial competitiveness and societal challenges.

For TU Wien, this results in a clear call to action: the university must position itself as an attractive research location, retain international talent, and actively contribute to shaping the European Research Area.

2.2. European University: EULiST

The **European University is a network of universities** founded as part of the European University Alliances initiative. These alliances aim to deepen cooperation between universities and promote innovative education and research projects. TU Wien is a partner in the **EULiST Alliance**⁷.

Teaching plays a **central role within the EULiST alliance**, as it forms the basis for the transfer of knowledge and skills. The EULiST alliance, consisting of ten different European universities, works together to **promote innovative and collaborative teaching methods**. The aim is to improve the quality of education and offer students an international perspective. Through cooperation and the exchange of **best practices**, the member universities can continuously develop their teaching programs and adapt them to the changing requirements of the global educational landscape.

The alliance emphasizes the importance of **active learning and the use of digital technologies** to provide students with a comprehensive and flexible learning experience. This also includes promoting interdisciplinary projects and integrating research into teaching or developing a **digital campus**. International exchange programs and joint educational initiatives create a dynamic network that opens up new opportunities for students and strengthens their intercultural skills.

Another important aspect is the **promotion of equal opportunities and inclusion** in teaching. The EULiST Alliance is committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of their origin or social background, have access to high-quality education. This is achieved through targeted support measures and the creation of an inclusive learning environment. Overall, through its innovative approaches to teaching, the EULiST Alliance contributes to shaping the educational landscape in Europe in a sustainable manner and promoting the mobility and exchange of students and scientists.

In addition to its core activities in the field of teaching, **the alliance** will increasingly focus on **further development** in the future in order to strengthen cooperation, particularly in

⁷ www.eulist.university (Retrieved: September 11, 2025)

the area of joint research projects, in addition to the measures already agreed upon. **TU Wien** is committed to playing a **central role in strengthening the alliance**.

2.2.1. Focus on further European partnerships

In addition to the focus on EULiST, another key objective of this internationalization strategy is to **initiate** and **strengthen existing strategic partnerships** at the European level. In the initial phase, activities will focus on the existing partnerships with TU Berlin and Imperial College London. The programs developed here will subsequently serve as a basis for establishing further partnerships.

3. Strategic regions

In addition to the clear focus on cooperation within the EU, which results from the fundamental strategic orientation of TU Wien, the following regions are of strategic importance for TU Wien.

3.1. UK

Economic performance: The United Kingdom is the sixth largest economy in the world, with a GDP of approximately \$3.64 trillion.⁸ Despite the challenges posed by Brexit, the country remains a major player in the global economy, particularly in the financial sector and service industries.

Universities in the TOP 100 THE Ranking: The UK is home to some of the world's most prestigious universities, including the University of Oxford, the University of Cambridge, and Imperial College London. These institutions are renowned for their excellent research and teaching.

Key research areas: The UK is a leader in fields such as life sciences, climate research, artificial intelligence, and renewable energy. These research areas are crucial for technological and economic development and offer numerous opportunities for international collaboration.

3.2. Western Balkans

Economic performance: The Western Balkans region, consisting of countries such as Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia, has made significant economic progress in recent years. The region's economic growth has been driven by structural reforms, increased foreign direct investment, and improvements in the business environment. Despite challenges, the strategic geographical location of the Western Balkan countries, which act as a bridge between Western Europe and the Middle East, offers great economic potential.

⁸ IMF. (April 22, 2025). Gross domestic product (GDP) in the major industrialized and emerging economies (G20) in current prices in 2024 (in trillions of US dollars) [Graph]. In *Statista*. Retrieved August 30, 2025, from <https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/248005/umfrage/bruttoinlandsprodukt-bip-in-wichtigen-industrie-und-schwellenlaendern/>

Universities in the TOP 100 THE Ranking: Although the Western Balkans region does not currently have any universities in the top 100 of the Times Higher Education (THE) rankings, it is home to several prestigious institutions that are making progress in academic excellence and research.

Key research areas: The Western Balkans region is focusing on several key areas of research to drive innovation and economic growth. These include:

- **Engineering and technology:** The region is investing in the development of its engineering and technology sectors, with a focus on information and communication technology (ICT), which is crucial for modernizing industry and improving competitiveness.
- **Medical and health sciences:** There is a growing focus on research in the fields of medicine and health sciences to improve health systems and address public health issues.
- **Natural sciences:** Research in the natural sciences, including environmental sciences and sustainable development, is critical to addressing environmental challenges and promoting sustainable growth.

3.3. India

Economic performance: India is the world's fifth-largest economy, with a gross domestic product (GDP) of approximately \$3.91 trillion.⁹ The country has impressive economic growth and a dynamic industry, dominated by information technology, pharmaceuticals, and automobile manufacturing. India is also a major player in global trade, offering great potential for investment and economic cooperation.

Universities in the TOP 100 THE Ranking: India is home to several renowned universities, including the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) and the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), which regularly feature in the top 100 of the Times Higher Education (THE) rankings. These institutions are leaders in research and teaching and attract talent from all over the world.

⁹ IMF. (April 22, 2025). Gross domestic product (GDP) in major industrialized and emerging economies (G20) in current prices in 2024 (in trillions of US dollars) [Graph]. In *Statista*. Retrieved August 30, 2025, from <https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/248005/umfrage/bruttoinlandsprodukt-bip-in-wichtigen-industrie-und-schwellenlaendern/>

Key research areas: India invests heavily in research and development (R&D), particularly in the fields of information technology, biotechnology, chemistry, and engineering. These areas of focus make India an attractive partner for international research collaborations and innovation.

3.4. Japan

Economic performance: Japan is the world's third-largest economy with a gross domestic product (GDP) of approximately \$4.03 trillion.¹⁰ The country is known for its strong export orientation and technological leadership in areas such as automotive manufacturing, robotics, and electronics. Despite challenges such as an aging population, Japan remains competitive thanks to its innovative strength and technological expertise.

Universities in the TOP 100 THE Ranking: Japan is home to several renowned universities, including the University of Tokyo, Kyoto University, and Osaka University, all of which regularly feature in the top 100 of the Times Higher Education (THE) rankings. These institutions are leaders in research and teaching and attract talent from around the world.

Key research areas: Japan invests heavily in research and development (R&D), particularly in the fields of robotics, artificial intelligence (AI), environmental and energy technologies, and biotechnology. These areas of focus make Japan an attractive partner for international research collaborations and innovation.

3.5. East Asia (China, South Korea, Taiwan)

Economic performance: The Southeast Asia region is one of the most dynamic and fastest-growing economic regions in the world. China is the second-largest economy with a GDP of USD 18.75 trillion,¹¹ followed by South Korea and Taiwan, which are also

¹⁰ IMF. (April 22, 2025). Gross domestic product (GDP) in major industrialized and emerging economies (G20) in current prices in 2024 (in trillions of US dollars) [Graph]. In *Statista*. Retrieved August 30, 2025, from <https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/248005/umfrage/bruttoinlandsprodukt-bip-in-wichtigen-industrie-und-schwellenlaendern/>

¹¹ IMF. (April 22, 2025). Gross domestic product (GDP) in major industrialized and emerging economies (G20) in current prices in 2024 (in trillions of US dollars) [Graph]. In *Statista*. Retrieved August 30, 2025, from <https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/248005/umfrage/bruttoinlandsprodukt-bip-in-wichtigen-industrie-und-schwellenlaendern/>

significant economic players. These countries are known for their strong industrial base and technological innovations.

Universities in the TOP 100 THE Ranking: This region is home to some of the world's leading universities, such as Tsinghua University and Peking University in China, Seoul National University and Korea University in South Korea, and National Taiwan University. These institutions are renowned for their excellent research and academic programs.

Key research areas: The region is a leader in areas such as information and communication technology (ICT), semiconductor technology, biotechnology, and renewable energy. These research areas are crucial for technological and economic development and offer numerous opportunities for international cooperation.

3.6. North America (United States, Canada)

Economic performance: The USA and Canada are among the largest and most stable economies in the world. The USA has a GDP of USD 29.18 trillion and is a leader in many industries, including technology, finance, and healthcare. Canada complements this with a strong economy and a GDP of approximately USD 2.2 trillion.¹²

Universities in the TOP 100 THE Ranking: North America is home to some of the world's best universities, including Harvard, MIT, Stanford, and the University of Toronto. These institutions are leaders in research and innovation and attract students and researchers from around the world.

Key research areas: The region is a leader in numerous research areas, including artificial intelligence, health research, climate science, and renewable energy. These areas of focus make North America a key player in global research and development. Due to the prevailing uncertainty in the US university system, the focus here is on people-to-people connections.

¹² IMF. (April 22, 2025). Gross domestic product (GDP) in major industrialized and emerging economies (G20) in current prices in 2024 (in trillions of US dollars) [Graph]. In *Statista*. Retrieved August 30, 2025, from <https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/248005/umfrage/bruttoinlandsprodukt-bip-in-wichtigen-industrie-und-schwellenlaendern/>

3.7. Global South¹³

Another important aspect of the internationalization strategy is **cooperation** with **universities from the Global South**. These collaborations are of great importance in overcoming global challenges and promoting a more equitable and inclusive scientific landscape. TU Wien is committed to developing partnerships on an equal footing and promoting the exchange of knowledge and resources. This includes both joint research projects and the exchange of students and teachers. A key tool for achieving this goal is the **increased use of Uni-Net networks** (see Chapter 4).

¹³ "Global South" is a technical term for a politically, economically, or socially disadvantaged country, which is understood primarily in contrast to the countries of the Global North (which are privileged in terms of prosperity, political freedom, etc.). See also: <https://www.bmz.de/de/service/lexikon/globaler-sueden-norden-147314> (accessed October 19, 2025)

4. Networks for international cooperation

International research collaborations and networks play a crucial role in the internationalization of universities and research institutions. They promote the exchange of knowledge and ideas, enable access to global resources and expertise, and contribute to solving complex global challenges. By collaborating with international partners, research institutions can increase their visibility and influence on a global level, develop innovative solutions, and improve the quality of their research.

TU Wien is therefore expanding its involvement in the following networks in which it already participates.

CESAER Network: The CESAER Network (Conference of European Schools for Advanced Engineering Education and Research) is an association of leading technical universities and research institutions in Europe. It promotes knowledge exchange, joint research projects, the mobility of students and researchers, and the international visibility of its member institutions. Through cooperation in the CESAER network, institutions can improve their curricula and research approaches and develop innovative solutions to technical challenges. For this reason, TU Wien will increase its involvement in CESAER and also make resources available for this purpose.

Eurasia-Pacific Uninet: Eurasia-Pacific Uninet connects universities and research institutions in Europe and the Eurasia-Pacific region. It promotes intercultural exchange, joint education and research programs, capacity building, and networking. The network enables joint research projects in areas such as environmental sciences, medicine, engineering, and social sciences, and strengthens global research capacity and cooperation.

Africa Uninet: Africa Uninet connects European and African universities and research institutions. It promotes joint research projects in areas such as health, agriculture, the environment, and education, capacity building in African research institutions, student and researcher mobility, and networking. Through cooperation in Africa Uninet, institutions can contribute to solving global challenges and strengthen international cooperation and understanding.

ASEA Uninet: ASEA Uninet is a multilateral network connecting universities in Europe and Southeast Asia. Its goal is to promote sustainable scientific cooperation in research,

teaching, and university management. TU Wien has been an active member for many years and uses the network in particular to strengthen its relationships with partner institutions in countries such as Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia, and Malaysia. The focus is on joint research projects in the fields of engineering, environmental technologies, digitalization, and health, as well as student and researcher exchanges.

Ascina & AUKSA: These two networks are linked by their goal of connecting Austrian researchers in North America and the UK, respectively. As both regions are of strategic importance to TU Wien and there are alumni and former visiting professors in these regions, TU Wien will strengthen its exchange with these networks and also become actively involved.

5. Measures and programs

The following measures, among others, are planned to support the implementation of the strategy.

5.1. International Welcome & Engagement Center (IWECC)

The **International Welcome & Engagement Center** will be the central point of contact for international students, researchers, and guests at the university. It will offer comprehensive **support upon arrival and integration** into the new environment. This includes assistance with finding accommodation, administrative tasks such as registering with local authorities, providing information on health insurance and bank accounts, and organizing orientation days and cultural events. A well-organized Welcome Center plays a key role in making international guests feel welcome and well cared for, which promotes their integration and satisfaction.

To complement this, **contact points in the form of integration managers** are also being set up to act as between TU Faculties and the central HR office. This in turn strengthens the international appeal and reputation of the university and promotes an international mindset at TU Wien.

In the first phase, the following activities will be the focus of the International Welcome & Engagement Center.

5.1.1. Degree-seeking students

International students seeking a degree are an important part of the internationalization strategy. They bring cultural diversity and different perspectives to everyday academic life. In order to attract these students, it is important to offer attractive study programs that are internationally recognized. To support this, comprehensive services will be provided by the IWECC, such as language courses, academic advising, and buddy or mentoring programs.

5.1.2. Researchers (Fixed and Guests)

International researchers, both permanent and visiting, play a central role in the internationalization strategy. They bring valuable expertise and new research

perspectives. In order to attract these researchers, attractive working conditions, access to modern research facilities, and support with administrative tasks should be offered.

5.1.3.Events for the international community at TUW

Events for the international community at the university are crucial for promoting intercultural exchange and a sense of community. These include cultural festivals, scientific conferences, networking events, and social activities. Such events offer international students and researchers the opportunity to network, exchange experiences, and integrate into the university community. They contribute to creating an inclusive and diverse campus life and strengthen the international appeal of the university.

5.1.4.Multilingualism

Multilingualism is a central building block for the development of an inclusive and vibrant international community at TU Wien. It not only facilitates the integration of international students, researchers, and staff, but also strengthens the intercultural competence of all university members. TU Wien therefore specifically promotes the development of language skills – both by expanding foreign language offerings in teaching, administration, and communication, and by supporting international guests in learning German. Language courses, tandem programs, and multilingual information materials help to break down barriers, strengthen social cohesion, and increase the international visibility of the university.

5.2. (Travel) Grants for Strategic Cooperations

Travel grants for strategic collaborations are an important tool for promoting international partnerships. These grants enable students, researchers, and staff to visit strategically relevant partner universities or bring researchers and students from these universities to TU Wien. They support the exchange of knowledge and experience and strengthen cooperation with international partners. Such programs contribute to strengthening global networking and increasing the international visibility of the university.

5.3. TUtheWorld Network

The TUtheWorld Network is becoming a platform for promoting international cooperation and exchange. It offers opportunities for visiting professorships, joint research projects, and networking activities, and enables TU Wien to maintain continuous exchange with researchers and teachers who have worked here for a certain period of time and then moved on to other institutions.

5.4. Global Fellowship Program

Visiting professorships offer international scientists the opportunity to teach and conduct research at the university. The aim of this program is to retain visiting researchers at TU Wien for the longer term, as it goes beyond a one-off visit. Visiting professorships contribute to increasing the quality of research and the international visibility of the university. TU Wien's goal is to maintain exchange via this network beyond the visiting professors' stay at TU Wien.

5.5. Networking Activities and Events

Networking activities and events are crucial for promoting international cooperation and strengthening scientific exchange. These include conferences, workshops, seminars, Erasmus Staff Weeks, and social events. These activities provide a platform for exchanging ideas, developing new projects, and strengthening the international community. They contribute to the creation of a dynamic and networked academic environment.

5.6. Research Security

- **Risk assessment of international collaborations:** Establishment of a standardized procedure for assessing potential risks in new partnerships, especially with actors from geopolitically sensitive regions.
- **Awareness programs for researchers:** Development and implementation of training courses on topics such as cybersecurity, export control, dual-use technologies, and scientific integrity.

- **Institutional governance structures:** Establishment of an interdisciplinary committee to assess security-related aspects of research collaborations and advise university management.
- **Cooperation with national and European bodies:** Close coordination with the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research (BMBWF), the National Contact Point for Research Security, and relevant EU bodies.

6. Indicators

Indicators for measuring the **successful implementation of a strategy** are crucial to ensure that the **set goals** are **achieved** and the desired results are obtained. They provide an **objective basis** for monitoring progress, documenting successes, and identifying areas that require improvement. Without clear indicators, it would be difficult to evaluate the success of TU Wien's internationalization strategy and make informed decisions about future measures.

A key advantage of indicators is that they promote **transparency and accountability**. **Regular review and reporting** on progress, for example in an **annual report**, allows all stakeholders, including university management, researchers, students, and external partners, to be informed about the status of implementation. This builds trust and ensures that all stakeholders are on the same page and working together to achieve the strategic goals.

In addition, indicators enable **early identification of challenges and obstacles**. If certain goals are not being met or progress is slower than expected, targeted measures can be taken to make corrections and adjust the strategy. This increases the university's flexibility and responsiveness and ensures that the internationalization strategy is continuously optimized.

Indicators also help **to quantify the value and impact of internationalization measures**. This is particularly important in order to secure the support and funding of internal and external stakeholders. By presenting concrete results and successes, TU Wien can highlight the importance of internationalization for scientific excellence, global competitiveness, and social progress. Since the data available is not sufficiently good for each of the indicators, the (further) development of the indicators is an essential part of



the strategy until the end of the LV period (2025-2027). To this end, a position will be created in the International Relations and Global Affairs department to systematically address this issue.

The appendix lists possible indicators that can be used to measure the successful implementation of TU Wien's internationalization strategy. This list serves as a starting point for the next steps. It is not exhaustive and will be finalized as part of the activities mentioned above so that the internationality of TU Wien can ultimately be measured.

7. Appendix:

7.1. Potential indicators¹⁴

1. Number of active international academic collaborations:

- Measurement of the number of new and existing partnerships with universities and research institutions worldwide, especially in strategically important regions, our networks, and the Global South.

2. Mobility of students and teachers:

- Number of students and teachers participating in exchange programs, international internships, conferences, and research projects.

3. International research projects and publications:

- Number and quality of international research projects in which TU Wien is involved, as well as the number of articles published in renowned, peer-reviewed international journals.

4. International students and staff:

- Proportion of international students and staff in the total number of students and staff at TU Wien.

5. Enhancement of academic reputation:

- TU Wien's position in international university rankings and the number of international awards and recognitions received.

6. Networking and cooperation with industry:

- Number and quality of collaborations with international companies, TU Wien start-ups with international teams, and the number of joint projects and initiatives.

7. Intercultural competence development:

¹⁴ The selection of indicators is based on web research and preliminary work by Mag.a Rosmarie Nigg.

- Number of training programs and workshops offered to promote intercultural skills for students and staff, as well as participation rates.

8. Impact on society:

- Number and impact of projects and initiatives that contribute to solving global challenges and bring about positive social change through international cooperation.