



Webster
UNIVERSITY

Vienna
Private University

2021
2022

Webster Vienna Private University

Annual Accreditation Report



Vienna
Private University

WEBSTER VIENNA PRIVATE UNIVERSITY

ANNUAL REPORT 2022

for the academic year June 2021 to May 2022

(reporting period: June 1 to May 31)

Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria

Submitted on March 30, 2023

By the University Council of the Bildungsvereins für die Freunde
der Webster University (St. Louis, USA)
and the Executive Board of WEBSTER VIENNA PRIVATE UNIVERSITY

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* Appendices available upon request

1. Development

Webster Vienna Private University (WVPU) is a private university that concentrates on student mentorship and teaching excellence bringing research in the classroom combining it with practical real-life skills. Through robust support services for its students, small classes, and an overall student to faculty ratio of six, the university works diligently to help students achieve individual excellence, preparing them for success and career advancement. 2021-2022 was a busy year. In addition to the re-accreditation process and amid a second year of pandemic restrictions, the university celebrated its 40th anniversary, developed and added a new certificate program, conducted a market study for the development of new programs in the near future, created an emergency fund for Ukrainian and Russian students affected by the war in Ukraine, and developed a plan to reorganize student advising and strengthen WVPU's student services.

The university celebrated 40 years in Vienna

WVPU celebrated its 40th anniversary in the academic year 2021-2022. Founded in 1981 as a foreign extension of Webster University St. Louis Missouri, WVPU has evolved from a teaching institution into a research-led, student-centered university. Initially accredited in 2001, WVPU has since graduated more than 4,500 students and has been re-accredited three consecutive times (2006, 2011, 2016). 40 years later, at the start of the 2021-2022 academic year, WVPU was squarely focused on securing its fourth consecutive institutional re-accreditation. Now an integral part of the Austrian higher education landscape, WVPU is a model of modern university education, an environment of cultural diversity with focus on student centered learning and services, mentorship, and small classes – essential elements of success recognized by students and alumni as value for their money.

The progress in recent years has been substantial. Since 2016, its faculty published more than 220 research publications in leading journals and with academic presses, presented research at 120 academic conferences and won TEUR 500 in external grants. It also received an endowment dedicated to student scholarship from Borealis, which was renewed in 2019. Well known for its rigorous teaching excellence and student mentorship, its roster of research faculty guarantees the indivisibility of teaching and research in the classroom while delivering practical real-life skills.

As WVPU celebrates 40 years of achievement and growth, it continues to bring out the best in its students, helping them to achieve individual excellence and preparing them for success in life and advancement in their careers. True to Webster University's core values WVPU continues to put students at the center of education and instill respect for diversity and understanding of their own and others' values to create global citizens. Because restrictions due to the pandemic prevented the university from hosting a large celebration in person, WVPU produced instead a video of its history and achievements with stories from current students and alumni from around the globe and created an online view book of all the milestones.

COVID-19

WVPU successfully weathered the COVID-19 pandemic, rapidly deploying digital technologies and remote learning early in the pandemic to retain its students and guarantee their uninterrupted education. As the pandemic rolled into its second year, WVPU built upon its reputation as the first university in Austria to switch to fully remote teaching by introducing a hybrid teaching model that combined in class teaching with live remote student participation. As a result, the university was able to welcome back almost all of its returning students and minimize retention losses faced by many other institutions.

Keeping the university running smoothly throughout the pandemic demonstrated the engagement of WVPU faculty and staff and illustrated the importance of mentorship which allowed concurrent synchronous and asynchronous learning to flourish. Meanwhile, regularly meeting with WVPU's Student Government representatives, the Rector and Associate Director were able to solicit continuous feedback on individual courses allowing rapid responses to hiccups in the delivery of its hybrid classes. The combined efforts of all of its stakeholders serves as a working example of how WVPU can and regularly does overcome obstacles and secure the interests of our students. The university as a team proved agile, adaptive, and strong.

Institutional re-accreditation

As part of its ongoing institutional accreditation process, WVPU welcomed an onsite visit by an international team of five reviewers who spent two days in February meeting with the members of the Executive Board, University Council (Dr. Stefan Zapotocky, Chair, and Dr. Ryan Guffey, Director General – Global Campuses), faculty, students (Lara Jenko, Valeriia Shchyholieva, Evelyn Melendez), and alumni (Oliver Hermann-Preschnofsky, Anastasiia Hizenko, David Ilioski, Mykhailo Pliatsun, and Loren Sandoval). WVPU was also joined by Webster University's President Dr. Julian Schuster and Vice President for Academic Affairs and Vice Provost Nancy Hellerud, J.D. in a sign of support and commitment to sustain and foster the continued growth of WVPU in Vienna.

The five reviewers included Prof. Dr. Matthias S. Fifka, Head of the Institute of Economics and Business at Friedrich-Alexander Erlangen-Nürnberg University, Prof. Dr. Sabina Pauen, Professor of Developmental and Biological Psychology at University of Heidelberg, Prof. Dr. Bernhard Stahl Professor of International Politics at the University of Passau, Mag. Dr. Katrin Szondy, Head of Service and University development at the St. Pölten University of Applied Sciences, and Ms. Sonja Christiane Wind, representing student interests, from the University of Vienna.

As part of the visit, the reviewers discussed the full gamut of university's ideals and operations from its profile, objectives, organizational structure, statutes, staffing and infrastructure to its finances, internationalization and cooperation plans, course offerings, quality management system including procedures for enhancing study programs, student support services, and its research and development plans.

The reviewers were very pleased with WVPU's preparation remarking on the application as "high-quality and comprehensive" and welcomed the open discussion with all stakeholders. They were particularly impressed with WVPU's students and alumni noting, "The enthusiasm of the students and alumni for their university was a particularly pleasing detail". The reviewers' final report delivered in June 2022 confirmed that WVPU fulfilled almost all of the necessary assessment criteria for institutional re-accreditation and provided a series of recommendations for further improvement while pointing out a few select areas where further effort will be necessary in order to proceed, inter alia, in developing doctoral programs and empowering the University Senate. A final decision on WVPU's re-accreditation is expected in the latter half of 2022.

Organizational development: strengthening student services

WVPU began the process of reorganizing its student services in the academic year 2021-2022 with a plan to establish a Student Service Office spanning the lifecycle of our student from admissions through graduation and onward towards their careers, whether that be directly in the job market or a more advanced degree. At the center of this new Student Services Office will be a small team of dedicated advisers who will be available to students every day of the academic year and who will assist them in planning their studies based on the relevant study plans and university policies and registering them for courses. The new Student Services Office will also incorporate the multitude of varying services offered

by the university such as the Student Resource Center, which coordinates study abroad opportunities, social activities and the university's LEADS program, and will serve as a nexus point for all other services including Career Services, which is managed by university's HR professionals, and the Student Counseling Service. Students will continue to meet once a semester with their personal faculty mentor to coordinate the overall directions of their studies and maintain a balance between immediate administrative and long-term intellectual and professional needs.

In a closely connected step, the university will enhance efforts by the Office of the Rector to coordinate research and research support, university-wide project management, quality management, networking, fundraising and support for alumni initiatives.

New certificate in Diplomacy and International Organizations

As part of the university's ongoing efforts to develop programs and enhance opportunities for our students, WVPU will be introducing a new 9-course (50 ECTS) Certificate in Diplomacy and International Organizations in the next academic. This new certificate, available to all existing and incoming students, develops expertise in fields relevant for careers in international organizations, diplomacy, global corporations, and internationally active NGOs. It provides students with practical experience, networking opportunities, and face-to-face meetings with experts and practitioners useful in a real-world context. Made up of 9 classes (50 ECTS or circa 1250 hours of student effort), the certificate focuses on the functions, processes, and operations of international organizations and diplomacy including negotiation techniques, communication, and governance while providing insights into prevailing issues and vital regions of international affairs. Vienna is an ideal location for offering this study focus as it is home to dozens of international organizations, regularly hosts high-level diplomatic events and negotiations on various global issues, and numerous globally active enterprises and NGOs have their base here. WVPU and the International Relations Department are ideally placed to harness both on the academic expertise available within the department and beyond as well as on the practice-oriented resources available in the city with courses involving guest lectures from experts and practitioners working with IOs and/or in diplomacy.

Ukraine War Emergency Student Fund

When war broke out in Ukraine in February 2022, WVPU students from Ukraine and Russia faced a sudden and life changing reality. For our Ukrainian students, this meant increased stresses of being cut off from family and loved ones, and for both our Russian Federation and Ukrainian students, direct threats to their studies and ability to pay rent and basic needs. In direct response to these events WVPU established an Emergency Fund raising over TEUR 23 in donations including a TEUR 20 donation from the RPR Private Foundation and many smaller donations from alumni, staff and faculty. After meeting with all students concerned, the university granted financial support to eleven students to cover housing and living costs for the remainder of the academic year. The outpouring of humanitarian support from university staff and faculty was impressive and included the collection and delivery of medicine supplies and Ukrainian students were granted the automatic right to study remotely, if wanted, and to drop courses without fee if necessary.

Planning for the future: WVPU commissions major market research project

Following a decision of the University Council, the Executive Board launched a project in March 2022 to commission a market study in Austria and the surrounding regions to identify the academic programs in highest demand in the market and by students. In alignment with its strategic objective of introducing new programs tailored to local needs, WVPU hired BDO, a renowned consulting firm, to carry out a thorough market analysis. As part of this study BDO conducted an online research and a needs

assessment in the Austrian labor market, analyzed more than 25 academic studies and reports (e.g.: World Economic Forum, WIFO, etc.), as well as trends from job portals and career platforms, such as LinkedIn, karriere.at. In addition, WVPU provided extensive student data. Finally, a series of interviews with notable industry leaders validated the findings of the study. Building on BDO's analysis, WVPU will work with colleagues across the Webster network to develop cutting-edge programs relevant to the university's key markets and guarantee that WVPU can provide its students with the skills and competencies demanded in job markets.

Analysis

In confronting two parallel crises in the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the conflict in Ukraine, the university demonstrated its agility by continuing to operate successfully, learning from the ongoing use of hybrid and remote / video-based models of education on one hand and by acting rapidly and fairly to establish a fund to allow both Ukrainian and Russian students to continue studying. In fact, the university's emergency response to both crises allowed students to continue studying where it would otherwise have been impossible and thus served to maintain WVPU's high rate of retention. Meanwhile, as student services continued to evolve, the crises presented new challenges including the need to introduce and maintain special exemptions for Ukrainian students to study remotely while tightening restrictions on students who appeared to be converting the necessity of remote study due to COVID concerns into perceived entitlement to study remotely at any time. This latter problem points to the increasing need for clearer rules regarding on-site attendance and will be addressed in the 2022-2023 academic year.

The institutional accreditation process, and particularly the interactions with the reviewers, revealed both the successes of the past years as well as a few of the perennial struggles faced by an institution such as WVPU specifically in regard to governance, the roles played by relevant stakeholders, and the need for new programs. Thus, while the university was awaiting the recommendations of the reviewers and the decision of AQ Austria, the university began the process of reviewing and resolving open issues. While accreditation approval is expected, so too are some conditions which will have to be addressed and solved within the next academic year.

2. Governance structure & organization

The following governing bodies were active during the fiscal year 2021–2022:

General Assembly (ex officio membership as officers of Webster University)

- Dr. Elizabeth J. Stroble, Chancellor
- Dr. Julian Z. Schuster, President
- Nancy Hellerud, J.D., Vice President for Academic Affairs and Vice Provost
- Richard Meyer, Chief Financial Officer

Supervisory Board of the Bildungsverein für die Freunde der Webster University (St. Louis, USA) acting as the University Council of Webster Vienna Private University (hereinafter: “University Council”)

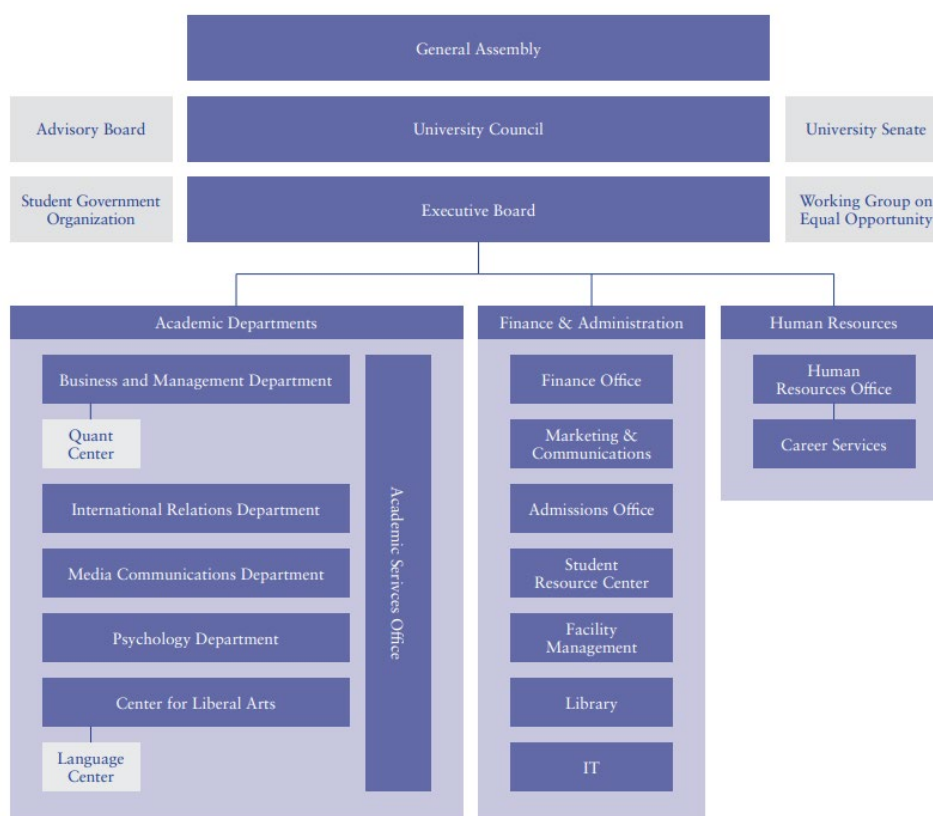
- Ryan Guffey, PhD, Director General for Global Campuses, Webster University
- Dr. William Lynch, Professor Emeritus from Webster University
- Richard Ryffel, Executive Vice President and Managing Director Wealth Management at the First Bank in St. Louis and
- Dr. Stefan Zapotocky, Chairman of the Board of Directors at RPR Private Foundation Vienna (Chairperson)
- Dipl.-Ing. Berghold Bayer, Chairperson (until August 31, 2021)
- Dipl.-Ing. Fritz Ohler, Vice Chairperson (until August 31, 2021)

Executive Board of the Bildungsverein für die Freunde der Webster University (St. Louis, USA) and of Webster Vienna Private University

- Dr. Johannes Pollak, Rector (Chairperson)
- Dr. Samuel R. Schubert, Associate Director (Vice Chairperson/Secretary)
- Mag. Michael Postmann, Head of Finance and Administration (Treasurer)

WVPU is guided by the principle of subsidiarity. It is logically tiered placing the General Assembly (GA) at the top, under which serves the Supervisory Board acting as the University Council (UC), which in turn monitors the management of the university in the form of the Executive Board (EB). This structure put into place in 2016 creates two layers of autonomy in the university’s governance structure. The university is led by an Executive Board (EB), consisting of the Rector (chairperson), the Associate Director, and the Head of Finance and Administration. It engages university stakeholders in the formation and implementation of university policies, processes, and programs. In matters of academics, strategic development, and quality management, the Rector and Associate Director work closely with the University Senate, which represents the interests of faculty, scientific support and administrative staff, and students. Equally important, the Executive Board receives vital inputs from important university stakeholders including its Advisory Board, University Senate, Working Group on Equal Opportunities (WGEO), Works Council, and Student Government Association. The university’s operations are further organized according to function with academics (teaching and research) on one side and administration, including all supporting units and business components on the other.

Figure 1: WVPU Organizational Structure



In the academic year 2021-2022 the University Senate consisted of the following members representing the different constituencies:

- Dr. Jozef Batora, International Relations Department
University Senate Chair & Representative for the Constituency: Employed Faculty
- Ms. Lara Jenko, Student Government Association
University Senate Vice Chair & Representative for the Constituency: Students
- Dr. Anthony Löwstedt, Strategic Communication Department
Representative for the Constituency: Employed Faculty
- Dr. Monika Mokre, International Relations Department
Representative for the Constituency: Adjunct Faculty
- Nermin Podžić, MA, Head of Marketing and Communications (from January 22)
Representative for the Constituency: Employed Staff

Webster Vienna's Advisory Board consisting of prominent leaders in Austria advises the university's directors on how to maximize the competitiveness of the institution. The members play a vital role in ensuring that Webster Vienna Private University graduates are among the best prepared to succeed in the 21st century. Their dedicated engagement helps to enhance the university's visibility and reputation throughout the region and across a diverse set of business, cultural, and educational communities.

During the academic year 2021-2022 the Advisory Board consists of the following members:

- HE Mohammad Sanusi Barkindo, Secretary General, Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) †
- Mag. Michael Edelsbrunner, Country Executive, Citibank Europe plc, Austria Branch
- KR Dipl. Ing. Rudolf Hamp, Vice Chairman of the Supervisory Board, HTI-AG

- Mag. Liane Hirner (CPA), Member of the Managing Board, Vienna Insurance Group
- Ing. Rudolf Kemler, Senior Partner, Roland Berger GmbH
- Prof. (FH) Dr. Christian Kreuzer, Managing Director, EY Advisory Services & Managing Director, Austrian Controller Institute
- Norbert Lessing, General Manager, Hilton Austria
- Mag. Gernot Mittendorfer, MBA, former Member of the Management Board, Erste Group Bank AG
- Prof. Dipl. Ing. Mag. Friedrich Rödler, Chairman of the Supervisory Board, Erste Group Bank AG
- Philippe Roodhooft, Executive Vice President Middle East and Growth Projects, Borealis
- Dr. Walter Schön Chief Executive Officer, Schoen Aerospace Trading & Consulting (Committee Chairman)
- Mag. Monika Stoisser-Goehring, Executive Program Manager, AT&S
- Biljana Weber, Senior Director Business Applications, Microsoft ERP and CRM
- Mag. Dr. iur. Matthias Wechner, Member of the Executive Board - SORAVIA Equity & Chief Executive Officer - ADOMO Holding
- Dipl. Ing. Martin Winkler, Country Manager Austria, ORACLE

3. Degree programs and teaching

3.1 Major developments and analysis

The BDO market study (see Development) found that most of WVPU's existing programs do not fall within the top ten most desired programs neither by student nor market demand. Instead, the study indicated that the university needs to shift its focus to STEM areas, in particular programs in computer science, specifically, software engineering, IT security, and data sciences along with the degrees related to the health professions. This conclusion resulted in an immediate review of existing programs, available assets, cross-network possibilities leading to the decision to develop two undergraduate programs followed by one graduate program in the areas of computer science. Therefore, working together with all stakeholders, the university will begin developing new related programs in the academic year 2022-2023 with the goal of starting new programs as early as fall 2023. Meanwhile, the introduction of the university's new certificate in Diplomacy and International Organizations attracted significant interest among existing students as was expected. However, it also raised interest in the form of inquiries among non-traditional students, raising the question about whether the market for the program is broader than originally expected and, therefore, needs to be followed more closely in the coming academic years to determine whether it should take on a more formal role.

The market study not only inspired the need to create new programs, but it also revealed the urgent need to review programs not performing well. Among these are all of the university's graduate programs which exhibit a fairly low running headcount and volatility in intakes. The university plans to evaluate every program in roster in the coming academic year and alongside introducing new programs, identify where it can revise existing programs to make them more interesting to prospective students. The university will also begin planning teach outs for several programs as part of the process so that in the event that the university senate recommends discontinuation, the institution is ready to move forward.

Implementation of WVPU's Common Core Module

The implementation of the Common Core Module (CCM) has been a significant success for WVPU. Not only did it harmonize the education among students of different disciplines, but it has also raised awareness among students about the intellectual and social value of inquiry, science, and reason and how they relate to social change. Faculty have reported increased awareness of social justice issues, ESG (environmental, social and governance), and the need for similar programming and internship opportunities. Now with one year's worth of formal implementation in the rear-view mirror, the university leadership together with the university senate will evaluate the course makeup and look to fine tune it as appropriate. Over the course of the year, more than 600 registrations in 30 total occurrences of the 12 CCM classes laid the framework guaranteeing that all WVPU students share a common foundation in science and social change. The university predicts that this will translate throughout the curriculum and across disciplines to strengthen students' scientific skill set and engagement with science and social issues.

Programs

WVPU offered in the 2021-2022 period eight undergraduate and five graduate degree programs accredited in Austria and the United States, the former extending validity to all member states of the European Union. One undergraduate program, Media Communications (BA), and one graduate program, Finance (MSc) were in the process of being taught out as the university continues to streamline its roster of program and plans to add new ones in the coming years.

Accredited Degree Programs available at WVPU	
Undergraduate	Graduate
Business Administration (BSc) Management (BA) Management with emphasis in International Business (BA) Management with emphasis in Marketing (BA) International Relations (BA) Media Communications (BA) Psychology (BA) Strategic Communication (BA)	International Relations (MA) Psychology with an emphasis on Counseling Psychology (MA) Finance (MSc) Marketing (MSc) Master of Business Administration (MBA)

Each of the university's programs meets the knowledge, skills, and autonomy/responsibility standards of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)¹ and the respective Austrian National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Levels VI² and VII³ for Cycles 1 and 2, Bachelor and Master degree programs. WVPU guarantees that the criteria for the accreditation of all its degree programs remain intact through a series of continuous measures and systemized processes that involve university management, departmental leadership, and the University Senate.

The university's eight bachelor programs focus on imparting advanced knowledge in the respective discipline through the application of a critical understanding of a diverse set of theories and underlying

¹ The Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area provides descriptors for three cycles agreed by the ministers responsible for higher education at their meeting in Bergen in May 2005 in the framework of the Bologna process. (<https://ec.europa.eu/ploteus/en/content/descriptors-page>).

² See https://www.qualifikationsregister.at/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/NQR_Infoblaetter_Deskriptoren6.pdf.

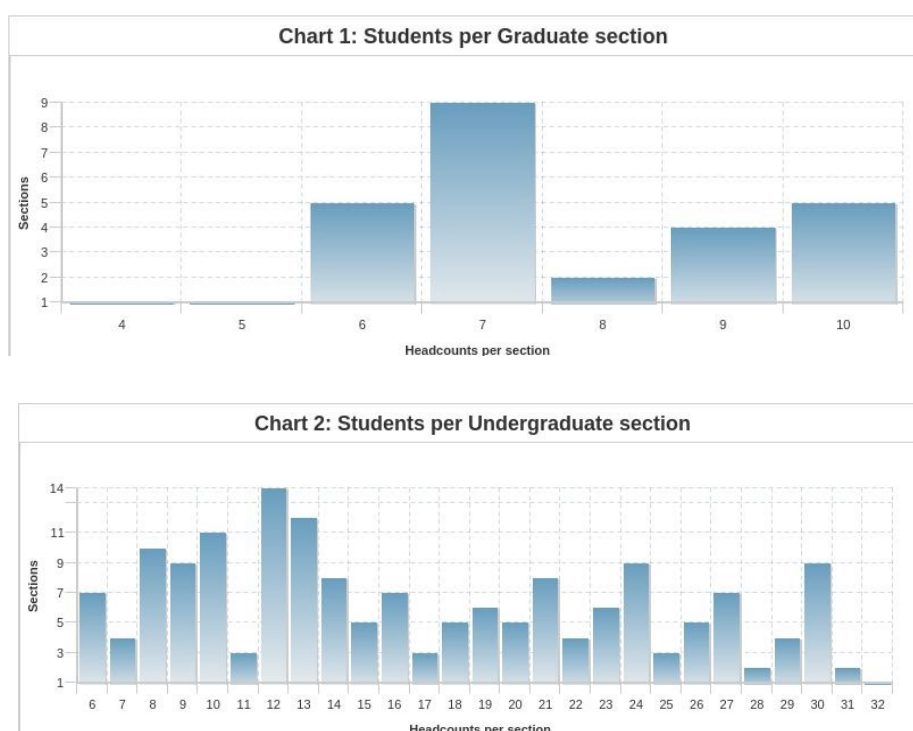
³ See https://www.qualifikationsregister.at/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/NQR_Infoblaetter_Deskriptoren7.pdf.

principles, building advanced skills to demonstrate a mastery of specialized subject matter, the ability to solve complex, unforeseen problems as they arise, as well as to manage complex projects, take responsibility for decision-making in changing contexts.

In addition, all the university's undergraduate programs build upon a Common Core of knowledge and skills with regard to scientific methods training (WVPU's Methods Roadmap), global citizenship (Global Citizenship Program updated with the Common Core Module as of fall 2021), and the relationship between science and social change. These additional requirements ensure that every student who completes an undergraduate degree at WVPU carries with them the university's values, receives rigorous methodological training, and exits with a keen understanding of their role as global citizens.

In terms of classes, the university offered 214 regularly scheduled courses in the academic year 2021-2022. Undergraduate class sizes averaged 16 students while graduate classes averaged 8 (see distributions below), which were within the range of expectations and evidence of WVPU's USP of small classes. Coming one the heels of the previous year's slight decline, the expected performance on par with pre-pandemic years is illustrative of the university's success in mitigating the negative retention losses associated with COVID and the war in Ukraine.

Figure 2: Students per section



Another 18 courses were run as directed studies (similar to independent studies one-on-one with professors) by 16 faculty supervising 56 students excluding the university's English preparatory program and its 15 students. Our employed faculty supervised 96 theses, which falls within expectations for annual thesis coverage. Importantly, the number of directed studies declined significantly from the previous year which is an indication that course and enrollment planning have improved over previous years.

WVPU scientific employees (status-track faculty and lecturers) taught 73% of all courses by ECTS including thesis projects. As the table below illustrates, the overall balance between employed scientific staff and adjunct faculty in WVPU continues to improve on previous years in favor of permanent scientific

staff. However, as the data in the two tables below reflect, the Media department shows a below average rate for the year. This is largely due to the few number of theses and the lack of a graduate program. It also signals the need for a review of the recently introduced Strategic Communication degree.

SHARE OF COURSES TAUGHT BY EMPLOYED SCIENTIFIC STAFF AND ADJUNCT FACULTY IN 2021-2022					
	Overall	BM	IR	MEDC	PSYC
Employed Scientific Staff	73%	68%	88%	53%	83%
Adjunct Faculty	27%	32%	12%	47%	17%

Austrian private university law requires that permanent faculty cover all core subject area. For reporting purposes, 'covered' means that a permanent faculty member teaches at least one occurrence / section of a course, thereby covering the subject matter. As presented below 'offered' refers to the number of distinct courses classified as core subject areas. The actual coverage and offered number of courses classified in this manner is, of course, greater than the figure listed as offered.

CORE SUBJECT AREAS COVERED/OFFERED		
	covered	offered
Business and Management	13	22
International Relations	13	14
Media Communications	4	5
Psychology	8	16

As the above table indicates, while there has been improvement regarding the coverage of core subject areas by the university's permanently employed faculty, there is still room to grow in the areas of Business and Management and Psychology. The university plans to address both departments' issues at two levels in the future, namely at the programmatic level looking at the core subject areas and at the employment level looking to expand the permanent faculty depending on the outcome of program reviews.

Nevertheless, the role of external lecturers is very important at WVPU. Our students also gain access to leading experts in their respective fields both from a scholarly and practical perspective. Outside lecturers from industry, research institutions, and leading universities combine their efforts to produce a vibrant and intellectually challenging experience for our students and play a crucial role in bringing real-life expertise, practical skills, and a network of opportunities to our students. WVPU adjunct faculty include leading entrepreneurs, executives, and researchers with expertise in finance, marketing, and manufacturing as well public service keeping our students up to date with latest industry standards and practices.

In addition to the classroom experience, students are also supported by faculty and university partners in co-curricular and extracurricular activities. One example includes a competition to trade stocks for a prize using a virtual trading platform. Representatives from Morpher, an online stock trading platform based in Vienna, collaborated with courses at Webster Vienna Private University on a stock market trading simulation where students from the "Principles of Finance" course competed against their classmates to earn virtual Euros on the stock market. Webster alumnus, Ivan Struk, who works for Morpher personally presented the platform offered some wisdom about trading on the stock market, including covering key terminology about which they've been learning.

Students also worked with faculty and investment experts to develop a concept for a Business Start-up Service. During the fall semester students of an “Issues in Business” course taught by Andreas Papp teamed up with the university’s career services to put the concept together. As a result, many students developed business ideas and seized the opportunity to turn their vision into reality. Such courses encourage students to develop new ideas and combine them with smart business models and also introduce students to the topic of entrepreneurial thinking and action. WVPU Business Start-up Service will continue to be developed in coming years.

3.2 Students

3.2.1 Major developments and analysis

Retention efforts under COVID

The academic year 2021-2022 was an important recovery year as the university began to return to more onsite courses and away from exclusively online due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While the university did suffer an expected decline in new student arrivals, study abroad students began to return (42 in all), and the pressure of uncertainty that led some students to take a pause in their studies lifted. As a result, 487 individual students (up from 469 in the previous year) officially registered for at least one course in the academic year 2021-2022. Among these students, 449 were Vienna residential students, a figure which is less than 3,5% fewer than the previous year, and of which can largely be attributed to the repercussions of the pandemic and the war in Ukraine. Of the 449 WVPU matriculated students in the academic year 2021-2022, 352 were undergraduate (a decrease of 14 over the previous year) and 97 were graduate (down 4 on the previous year). Meanwhile, 128 new students enrolled in one of WVPU’s 13 accredited programs (an increase of 1) while 124 graduated, 84 of which earned Austrian accredited diplomas valid throughout the European Higher Education Area.

In sum, COVID measures taken at WVPU as well as the funds established to support Ukrainian and Russian students worked in mitigating many of the retention losses associated with the year’s crises. The return of study abroad students was significantly helpful and a relevant indicator of the role WVPU plays in its global network of partnerships.

Retention activities continued to be a major focus of WVPU staff. Engaged staff regularly contacted students to strengthen retention and evaluate the reasons, if any, for which students would leave or reduce their loads. As indicated in last year’s report, the primary reason for our students (most of whom are not EU citizens) to reduce attendance during the previous year was COVID related fatigue. They were happy to return to classes once they could attend on site.

After two consecutive postponements due to the global pandemic, WVPU held a special commencement ceremony for the classes of 2020 and 2021 in the historic Hofburg Imperial Palace on September 4, 2021. With students joining from 32 countries, the university was honored to once again welcome families and confer degrees in person. On May 14, 2022 we were able to hold our regularly scheduled commencement for the class of 2022.

3.2.2 Number of students, first-year students and graduates in the reporting period

WVPU’s thriving culture of scholarly mentorship is imbued with the indivisibility of teaching and research in its classrooms and supported by personalized services for our students. It is an academic culture that brings out the best in our students preparing them for success in life.

WVPU’s student body is both diverse and dynamic. Among the 487 students who enrolled in classes on campus in 2021-2022, 78% were undergraduates and 22% were graduates. More than half of all WVPU

degree seeking students (59%) were enrolled in one of four undergraduate or three graduate programs in the areas of Business and Management. Another 18% were seeking degrees in International Relations, 15% in Psychology, and 5% in Strategic Communication or Media Communications.

Residential students at WVPU in 2021 – 2022 [comparative figures from the previous year in brackets]:

STUDENTS	TOTAL	NEW	GRADUATES
Undergraduate	352 [366]	93 [95]	53 [79]
Graduate	97 [101]	35 [32]	32 [43]
All	449 [467]	128 [127]	85 [122]

Undergraduate Programs/Students	
Degree Program	Head Count
Business Administration (BSc)	92
Management (BA)	17
Management with emphasis in International Business (BA)	63
Management with emphasis in Marketing (BA)	36
International Relations (BA)	65
Media Communications (BA)	8
Strategic Communications (BA)	17
Psychology (BA)	47
Undecided	7
WVPU Undergraduates Enrolled on Campus	352
WVPU Undergraduates Studying Abroad	-3
Webster Study Abroad Undergraduates @ WVPU	42
Total Undergraduates Enrolled at WVPU	391

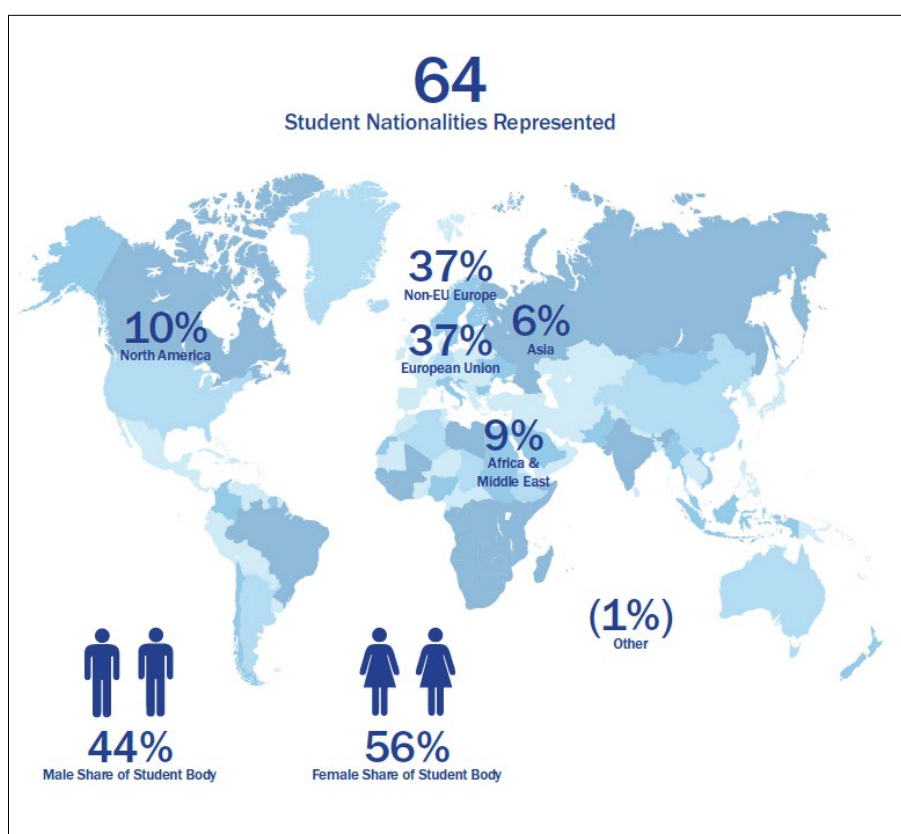
Business Administration (MBA)	32
Finance (MSc)	7
Marketing (MSc)	18
International Relations (MSc)	19
Psychology with an emphasis in Counseling Psychology (MA)	21
WVPU Graduates Enrolled on Campus	97
WVPU Graduates Studying Abroad	-1
Webster Study Abroad Graduates @ WVPU	0
Total Graduates Enrolled at WVPU	96
Total WVPU Students (Seeking Austrian Degrees)	449
Total WVPU Students enrolled on campus	487

In addition to our residential student body, WVPU traditionally is a highly attractive destination for student mobility. In addition to our residential student body, WVPU traditionally is a highly attractive

destination for student mobility. Following a pandemic year that prevented the attendance of any study abroad students, WVPU was able to welcome 42 students from across Webster University's global network and Erasmus. Three undergraduate and one graduate student from the Vienna campus spent a semester abroad.

WVPU offers one of the most diverse student bodies that can be found at any university. The 2021-2022 student body brought together students from 64 countries around the world, speaking 64 mother tongues. Women constituted 56% of our student body.

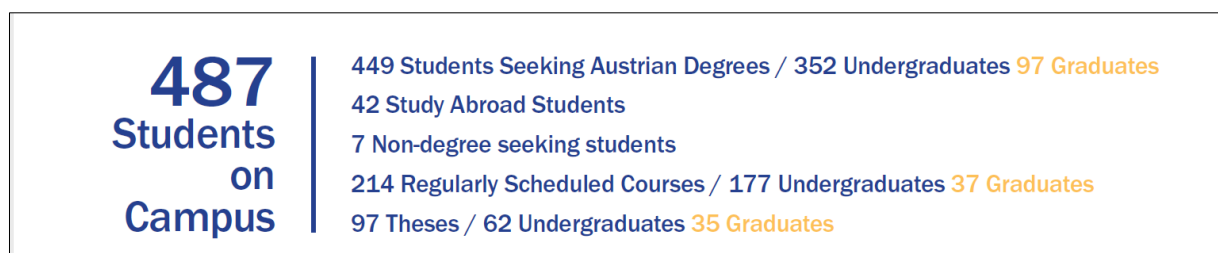
Figure 3: Nationalities and gender distribution among students



3.2.3 Ratio of full-time scientific staff to students

The combined efforts of 95 faculty members (23 permanent faculty members and 72 adjunct lecturers) across 4 departments and 13 accredited degree programs educated 487 students on campus through 226 publicly scheduled courses awarding more than 18,600 ECTS in the 2021-2022 period. In addition, 88 students took 25 independent or directed studies under the direct supervision of 18 faculty (including adjuncts) while 97 students (35 graduate and 62 undergraduate) undertook theses supervised by all 21 permanent faculty members.

Figure 4: WVPU in Numbers



3.2.4 Average study period

During the academic year 2021-2022, undergraduate students successfully completed their studies in 42 months on average (in previous reporting period 47,8). Graduate students finished their programs in 34 months on average (previous year: 36,7 months). The study duration has finally decreased again after two years of reduced or postponed course loads due to COVID-19 restrictions.

3.2.5 Drop-out-rate

Central to the success of the university is its ability to retain its youngest students. WVPU performed well in this area with 79,6% of freshmen who entered in 2021-22 returning for classes in 2022-23.

During the academic year 2021-2022 the number of students who left our university on their own initiative or who were dismissed due to insufficient performance was 13% for undergraduates and 8,2% for graduates.

Dropout rate 2021-2022 [comparative figures from the previous year in brackets]

Dropouts	UG	GRAD	ALL
Stopped	41 [19]	8 [7]	49 [26]
Dismissed	5 [2]	0 [0]	5 [2]
Total Students	352 [366]	97 [101]	449 [467]
Drop-Out-Rate in %	13 [5,7]	8,2 [6,9]	12 [6]

3.2.6 Participation in mobility programs for students

WVPU holds student mobility in high esteem and strives to make as many opportunities for our students to experience other cultures as possible to achieve the goal of developing our students into global citizens. Webster University worldwide boasts an extensive study abroad program which allows students to study abroad through three-week faculty led experiential courses, two-month terms, and four-month semesters or for a full academic year consisting of two consecutive semesters (fall and spring). The Webster University study abroad network consists of Webster University campuses or partner institutions in Asia, North America, Europe and Africa. To encourage students to study abroad, Webster University offers the Webster World Traveler Program (WWTP) in which the institution sponsors the students travel costs up to 1,000 USD to reach their study abroad destination outside of Europe. WVPU is also an Erasmus+ partner institution since 2018, through which our students can study at six partner institutions within the European Higher Education Area. Likewise, the university hosts students from other Webster University campuses or key partners, US-based institutions party to its Webster International Network of Schools (WINS) or through WVPU's Erasmus+ student mobility partnerships.

As the world continued to manage the situation around the global COVID-19 pandemic, mobility worldwide has to some extent resumed, however, not all programs or destinations were re-opened. WVPU along with the St. Louis Office of Study Abroad continue to evaluate the safety of every mobility destination to guarantee the wellbeing of the students participating in a study abroad program.

In 2021-2022, WVPU hosted 42 undergraduate students, including three through the ERASMUS+ program. Of the 42 students, 5 came from other Europe-based institutions, 9 from our Webster campus in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, one from Egypt, and the remaining from the United States. Three WVPU students experienced a semester abroad: two undergraduate students went to Yonsei University in South Korea, while one other undergraduate student took the semester to experience student life at Webster's main campus in St. Louis, Missouri in the United States. For the first time in many years, one

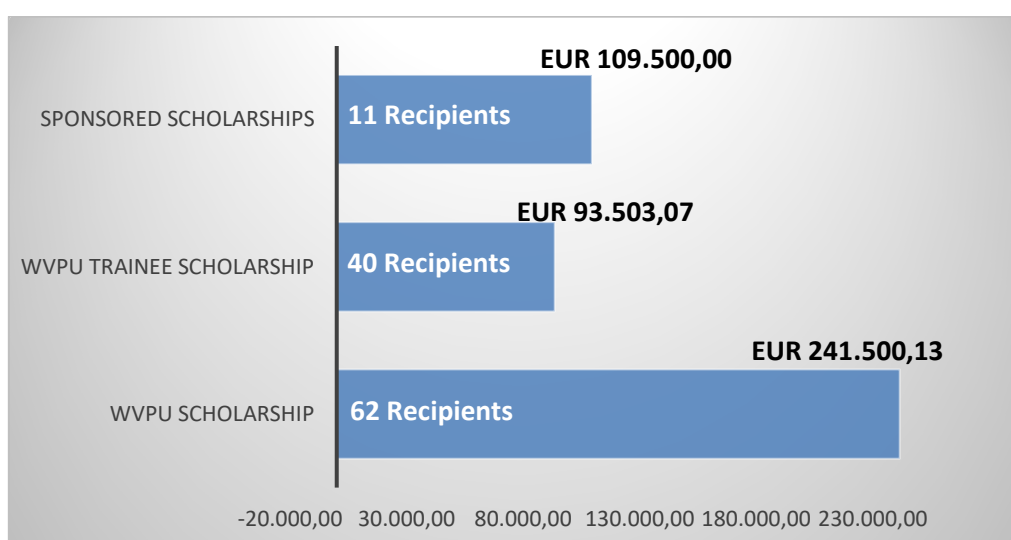
undergraduate student participated in a faculty program on indigenous rights and the rights of nature in Ecuador.

3.2.7 Scholarships granted or arranged by WVPU

WVPU students have several options available to finance their studies, such as scholarships, student loans, sponsorships, U.S. Federal Aid, Veteran Benefits for U.S. Military Veterans and Dependents, and others. WVPU provides comprehensive information about the university's finance processes to its students including information about the individual registration and payment options, educational expense, and tax reimbursement as well as financial aid and scholarship programs.

In 2021-2022, 113 students benefitted from the extensive scholarship program. In total, 25% of WVPU's entire student body were supported financially with scholarships [last year, 113 students, 21% respectively]. The total amount of scholarships awarded to the students including WVPU Training, WVPU Partial and sponsored scholarships was TEUR 444,5.

Figure 5: Scholarship Recipients



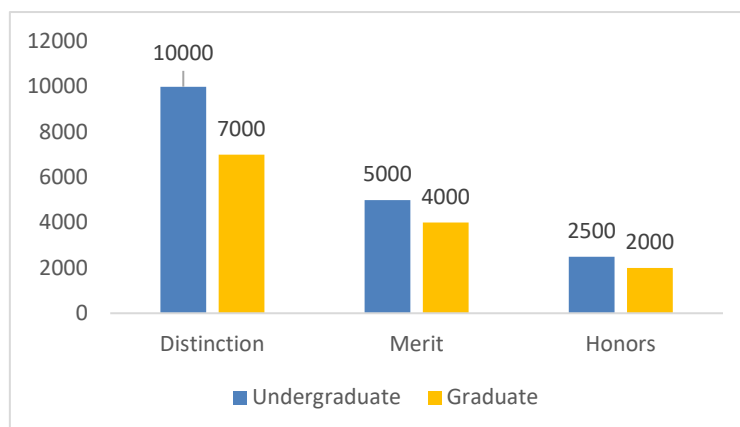
These scholarship opportunities play an important role in the recruitment of new students to WVPU. All scholarships are awarded based on exceptional academic achievement and financial need. Scholarship students must prove continuous academic success to continue in the scholarship program until they complete their studies.

Types of WVPU scholarships

- Webster Vienna Training Scholarships (awarded on a semester basis): aims to give all students the opportunity to gain valuable skills outside the classroom. These training opportunities are available to all students, and recipients are chosen through a transparent process. Students support a faculty member with his / her research or assist staff members in relevant administrative departments, e.g., in the library, computer lab, in an academic department with a workload similar to a 4-8 ECTS course across 14 weeks. The scholarship is offset against the tuition fees depending on level and effort required as well as the workload hours per week: For undergraduates, the discount is between EUR 1.005,00 and EUR 4.020,00 while for graduate students, the discount is between EUR 1.185,00 and EUR 4.740,00 per semester.
- WVPU Partial Scholarships (awarded annually): Students receive a reduction in course fees from 10% to 50%. The requirement is a total GPA of 3.0 to 3.5 depending on the type of scholarship.

A committee of representatives from relevant departments selects the recipients of these scholarships. There are three different levels for the amounts awarded per academic year:

Figure 6: Amount awarded in 2021-2022



- WVPU Excellence Award was awarded for the first time in 2021-22 to highly deserving undergraduate students after their first year at Webster Vienna Private University. The student must have a cumulative GPA of 3.8 to 4.0 to receive this award. 2 students were awarded with this scholarship and will receive the discount of EUR 2.500 per semester for the next three years.
- Scholarships from external sponsors (awarded annually): The prerequisite is an overall GPA of 3.0 to 4.0 depending on the sponsor's specifications. In 2021-22 Borealis and the City of Vienna covered 40% to 100% of the tuition fee for 11 students. A committee of representatives from relevant departments selects the recipients of these scholarships.
- In addition, the university also supports Webster alumni with a Webster Vienna Second Degree Grant for their second degree at the university by waiving 20% of their tuition fee during their degree. The Webster Vienna Legacy Tuition Grant is a program that provides a 10% reduction in tuition for new incoming students whose sibling or parent (core family) currently attends WVPU or graduated from any of the Webster University networks of campuses. A 5% reduction in tuition applies to extended family members (aunts, uncles, nephews, nieces, grandchildren, etc.).

In 2021-22 WVPU credited the Second-Degree Tuition Grant to 32 students (since August 2020 the eligible student receives a graduate tuition fee discount of 20%). 18 students received the legacy grant (5% or 10% of the tuition fee).

On top of the 113 students receiving scholarships, 22 [last year 25] students (4,9% of the total student body) financed their tuition fees with US annual state loans and VA benefits in the total amount of EUR 347.896,93.

3.2.8 Tuition fees

The total amount of tuition fees depends on the number of courses taken per term and semester, the sequence in which the courses are taken and the course availability. One course usually corresponds to 6 ECTS for undergraduates and 7,5 ECTS for graduates but can vary from 2 to 15 ECTS. The textbooks are included in the tuition fees.

Bachelor's degree:

- During the academic year 2021-22, full-time students taking between 12 and 18 ECTS per semester were charged a "flat fee" of EUR 10,550.00 per semester. Any additional credits beyond that equaled EUR 660 per credit.
- Part-time students (up to 22 ECTS per semester) as well as students during the optional summer term paid EUR 1,980 per course in tuition.
- The total tuition fee for a 120-credit bachelor's degree course ranged between EUR 84,400 and EUR 79,860, for full-time and part-time students respectively.

Master's degree

- Most course fees at the master's degree level are for 7,5 ECTS courses including textbooks.
- The tuition fee for one course equaled EUR 2,340 (EUR 780 for 3 ECTS)
- The estimated total program fee for the Master in Finance, Marketing, International Relations and the MBA (excluding prerequisites) equaled EUR 28,080 for 36 ECTS.
- The estimated total program fee for the MA in Psychology equaled EUR 37,440 for 48 ECTS.

3.3 Faculty and staff

3.3.1 Major developments and analysis

WVPU continued to make progress in professionalizing its human resources operations and attracting internationally oriented professionals. The university's diverse, international roster of personnel and externally contracted lecturers and visiting professors (from more than 30 countries) requires that it provides a constructive, supportive work environment to perform and excel. Despite major progress since introducing reforms in 2016, WVPU still fields a small body of permanent faculty who concentrate mainly on research but continue teaching and supervising theses. The permanent faculty (excluding the Rector and Associate Director) are distributed among four academic departments (Business and Management, International Relations, Media Communications, and Psychology) covering the core subject areas of the degree programs, advising students, and supervising theses. Notwithstanding delays in hiring due to the economic impacts of COVID-19, the university's personnel plan for the next years foresees continued growth among the scientific staff and sees such development as a key success factor for the future. The development and promotion of university staff, enhancing the skills and increasing the responsibilities of the scientific and administrative personnel is essential for the efficient and professional functioning of the university.

3.3.2 Scientific staff

During the academic year 2021-2022, WVPU employed 22 [previous year 21] permanent faculty, all with an employment level of at least 50%, 1 of them being on maternity leave and 1 on leave. They are listed in Appendix 1 with their characterizations and classifications. In addition to the faculty, WVPU employed 8 scientific support staff, 1 of them on leave. Scientific staff attended numerous external and internal professional development activities respective to their fields. The academic year saw significant improvement in the area of scientific support staff, who were deeper integrated into departmental and program planning in particular related to activities surrounding the preparation of the re-accreditation application.

3.3.3 External scientific staff

External lecturers play an important role in all universities and WVPU relies on them to bring up-to-date real-life experience into the classroom. Often beneficiaries of annual teaching excellence awards decided by the students, their quality and commitment are some of the most essential resources for the success of the university. During the academic year 2021-2022, WVPU employed 71 [previous year 78] external lecturers also called adjunct faculty members. They are listed in Appendix 1 with their characterizations and classifications. Adjunct faculty are individuals contracted for course instruction on a limited basis for the duration of the course, including all final assessments, and who teach in their specific fields of demonstrated expertise. For the duration of their assignment, adjunct faculty are invited to participate in relevant activities and programs of the respective academic units. Depending on the level of the course assignment, adjunct faculty hold an advanced degree in their field of expertise or equivalent tested experience in real-world situations relevant to the discipline in which they teach. Such credentials may include, but are not limited to pertinent certifications, years of advanced work experience, and publications.

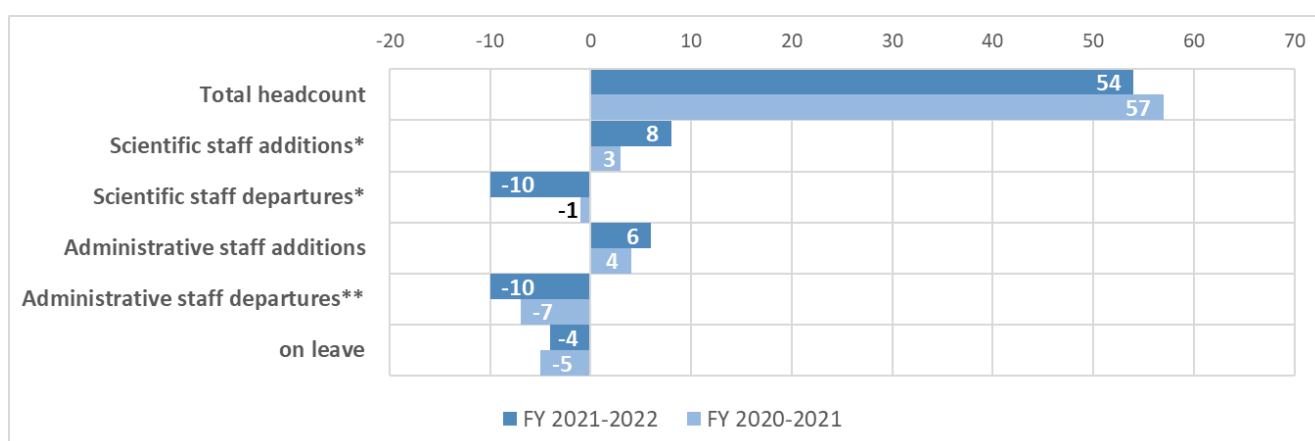
3.3.4 Headcount in 2021-2022

WVPU is squarely focused on providing our students with a world class education supported by a highly professional roster of faculty and staff. At the close of the 2021-2022 period, WVPU employed 54 individuals (FTE 49) plus 2 employees on maternity leave and 2 on leave. This compares to 57 individuals (FTE 48.7) plus five employees on maternity leave at the close of the previous year.

The university hired 14 new employees in the fiscal year from June 1, 2021 to May 31, 2022, adding 3 faculty positions (3 males), 5 scientific support staff (3 temporary positions, 4 female and 1 male) and 6 administrative staff (4 females, 2 males).

In keeping to our commitment to deliver the state-of-the-art in our classrooms, we also contracted 71 qualified experts from across the public and private sectors to teach courses throughout the year. As with any thriving environment, we also had to bid farewell to 20 of our employees who took on opportunities elsewhere, among which included 10 administrative (9 females and 1 male), 8 scientific support staff (thereof 6 temporary contracts) and 2 faculty (1 female and 1 male).

Figure 7: Comparison of employment (fiscal years 2020-2021 and 2021-2022)



Overview of all entries and exits at WVPU during the academic year 2021-2022:

ENTRIES	
Administrative Staff	
Front Desk Officer, promoted to Jr. Student Account Officer as per February 1, 2022	September 1, 2021
Department Coordinator	October 18, 2021
Department Coordinator	February 1, 2022
Admissions Officer	February 1, 2022
Front Desk Officer	March 1, 2022
IT System Engineer	March 1, 2022
Scientific Staff	
English for Academic Purposes Instructor (temporary position)	September 1, 2021
Research Assistant, PSY Dep (temporary position)	September 1, 2021
Teaching Assistant (temporary position)	September 27, 2021
Language Center Coordinator	November 3, 2021
English for Academic Purposes Instructor	March 1, 2022
Faculty	
Assistant Professor of International Relations	August 9, 2021
Full Professor of Cognitive Neuroscience/Head PSY Dep	September 1, 2021
Assistant Professor of Accounting	February 1, 2022

EXITS	
Administrative Staff	
Front Desk Officer	June 30, 2021
Student Recruitment Officer	July 20, 2021
Department Coordinator BM Dep	September 30, 2021
Admissions Officer	December 30, 2021
Department Coordinator M & C Dep, Center of Liberal Arts	January 15, 2022
Finance Officer	January 31, 2022
Department Coordinator IR	February 18, 2022
Event Officer	March 15, 2022
Front Desk Officer	May 31, 2022
Senior HR Officer	May 31, 2022
Scientific Staff	
Research Assistant, PSY Dep (temporary position)	June 30, 2021
Post-Doc Research Assistant (temporary position)	June 30, 2021
Language Center Tutor	July 31, 2021
Language Center Tutor	August 31, 2021
Project Assistant BM Dep (temporary position)	September 30, 2021
Research Assistant, PSY Dep (temporary position)	December 31, 2021

Teaching Assistant, Language Center (temporary position)	December 31, 2021
Post-doc Researcher, PSY Dep (temporary position)	December 31, 2021
Faculty	
Assistant Professor of Strategic Communication	July 30, 2021
Associate Professor of Finance	February 28, 2022

3.3.5 Documentation of appointment procedures of professors in the reporting period

The appointment procedures for the Full Professor of Psychology and the Assistant Professor of International Relations were concluded during the academic year 2020-2021. The respective starting dates were in the academic year 2021-2022.

During the academic year 2021-2022, WVPU concluded the recruitment process the position of Assistant Professor of Accounting.

Appendix 2 contains a copy of the job announcement which was distributed electronically in relevant media. Appendix 2 also contains the list of members of the appointment committee for this position, the names of the short-listed candidates and the CV of the appointed assistant professor.

3.3.6 Measures taken to support young academics and staff development

WVPU continued with measures to support academics and to foster staff development in recent years.

In the academic year 2021-2022, the HR office organized a modular “Time Management/Self-Management” training for staff members, facilitated by an experienced trainer in the field.

For faculty members, we continued to improve detailed guidelines and the online faculty handbook listing all policies and procedures.

WVPU monitors its faculty performance in the classroom through an online student course evaluation. The digital, thorough, and anonymous course evaluation system provides instructors, department heads and management with critical student input to assure the quality of the courses and create a solid basis for future enhancement in the programs. Students complete the evaluations online at the end of each course. The results of the evaluations are available to every faculty member. These reviews are monitored regularly by academic department heads and used both for purposes of assessment as well as course assignments and re-hiring of external faculty. The evaluations are used for the curricular planning process, instructor assignment and assessment, and faculty performance agreements, forming part of the body of knowledge for short term and long-term course and program development. In addition to the regular course evaluation system, WVPU conducts an additional new instructor course evaluation. This evaluation takes place in week 3 of the first course taught and provides lecturers with tangible and specific indicators as well as comments that they can use to change the content and/or form of teaching for the rest of the term or semester.

WVPU recognizes both faculty and adjunct faculty members who demonstrate teaching at its finest. Various teaching awards are presented to the faculty at the WVPU commencement ceremony. Each year, students vote for the Teacher of the Year. In 2022, this distinction was awarded to Dr. Franco Algeri, Associate Professor for International Relations and Department Head of International Relations well as adjunct faculty member Dr. Alan Noble, who teaches finance in the Department of Business and Management. The Senate selects a colleague based on his/her/their course evaluations and regarding creativity and effectiveness in teaching. This year, the Excellence in Teaching award was presented to Dr. Menbere Workie, Associate Professor of Finance.

3.3.7 Measures for gender equality

WVPU believes that diversity and inclusion help cultivate academic excellence and continuously strives to eliminate the under-representation of women wherever present. It ensures equal working conditions and equal access to all means and opportunities in the areas of infrastructure, financial resources, and remuneration. Thus, all its employees undergo mandatory training in sexual harassment, and the university requires that all communication (internal and external) occur with respect to the values of the Webster community and cultural sensitivities of its members by avoiding national, racial, ethnic, or religious slurs, acts or words of gender bias or sexual harassment, intimidation, insults, or innuendo, and ad hominem attacks toward any individual.

WVPU began reporting annually on the status of equal opportunity employment and affirmative action (EOE/AA) in 2017 providing information about e.g., the distribution of gender, nationalities, part-time or full-time employment and initiatives in diversity and inclusion. In March 2017, the University Senate established the Working Group on Equal Opportunities (WGEO) consistent with the procedures outlined in the Constitution. The WGEO subsequently composed and submitted the WVPU Affirmative Action Plan for Managing Diversity and the Advancement of Women (AAP), which was adopted by the Executive Board in May 2019. Since then, the university has expanded its organization of internal workshops, panel discussions, and other relevant activities, increased its participation in external workshops, expanded opportunities for part-time employment and flexible hours, and instituted a system of mandatory training in sexual harassment for all employees.

WVPU encourages faculty of all departments to integrate the topic diversity and gender in research and teaching. WVPU's course offerings underline the importance of gender and related social equity topics throughout its curriculum.

Gender topics and the treatment of gender issues are a central component of WVPU's liberal arts environment. Not only does the university encourage faculty of all departments to integrate topics related to diversity and gender in research and teaching, but it also requires that all undergraduate students take courses that explicitly cover gender and diversity matters as part of the Core Curriculum Module.

Among its 12 courses, 5 are specifically dedicated to or fully integrate related research including:

1. WGST 2610: Women, Gender and Sexuality in Social Justice Organizations, which examines contemporary issues related to gender and sexuality in the foundation and leadership of social justice organizations and specifically, focuses on female activism and on how gender differences are constructed, maintained and challenged in social justice organizations (taught by J. Albrecht).
2. ANSO 1050: Global Social Problems - Justice and Inequality, which shows students how to analyse the way race, class, and gender affect individual life chances and structure social problems and looks closely at gendered violence and discrimination (taught by R. Morusiewicz and D. Karas).
3. ANSO 2300: Social Movements - Economy, Labour and the Future of Work, which has multiple modules dedicated to unpaid and gendered work, and "reproductive" labour (taught by H. Kreinin).
4. GLBC 1200: First-Year Seminar - Transdisciplinary Perspectives in Biopolitics, Carceral Politics as Gender Justice (taught by R. Morusiewicz).

5. ANSO 2890: Health, Illness and Power, which covers the politics of conception, disability integration, queer perspectives on health and disability (taught by B. Szamosi).

Also, courses such as Women in Management (MNGT 3470), Topics in Sex and Gender (PSYC 2475), Media, Diversity and Society (MDST 2800) delve into discipline specific approaches to gender and diversity issues while foundational courses in all the university's degree programs and study plans fully integrate related approaches and topics.

In International Relations, for example, an entire section of theoretical study is reserved for feminism and critical theory. In the Business and Management Department courses such as Business Ethics, Organizational Behavior, Human Resource Management, and Management Theory & Practice incorporate topics exploring modern-day issues such as the gender wage gap; how implicit biases lead to discrimination; gender stereotyping and leadership; the various dimensions of diversity and its importance to organizations; and the incorporation of works by scholars that challenge normative thinking.

The increasing integration of gender and diversity studies in the classroom is directly connected to research by the university's faculty and contracted lecturers. In the academic year 2021-2022 this led to articles, chapters or conference presentation on topics such as social signals related to help, sex and cultural group in a field experiment (Dr. Marc Méhu), the coverage of gender balance in the Hidden Politics of Translation (Anatoly Reshetnikov, PhD), the impact of perpetrator and target gender on third party attributions for workplace mistreatment, gender biases in attributions of blame for workplace mistreatment (Dr. Eva Zedlacher). Faculty also submitted proposals for grants on these topics, such as the impact of perpetrator and target gender on third party attributions for workplace mistreatment (Dr. Eva Zedlacher) and overcoming gender biases in e-commerce bringing together gender and digitalization (Dr. Maria Madlberger).

The heightened focus on gender related research and its integration into the classroom has been well demonstrated through an increased number of subject related theses this year including, for example, research at the Master's level on the „Perceived benefits of loyalty programs for apparel consumers“, which examined the role of gender in loyalty programs; and „The Ethicality of Femininity and Masculinity: Gender-Related Traits as Moderators“, which asked how gender-related traits affect the relationship between an individual's personality and their willingness to make unethical decisions in the workplace.

The positive effects of inclusion of diversity and gender topics also can be seen at the undergraduate level in International Relations with related thesis subjects including „To What Extent Does Tradition Impact Saudi Women's Stability and Growth; in economic and sociological terms“, which asks whether religion is more helpful to Saudi women in terms of attaining their rights more than tradition; and a study that examines the „Impact of Christianization on the Contemporary LGBT+ Community of South Africa“ looking specifically at the violent discrepancy between attitudes towards queer identities in mainstream South African culture, and the country's conversely liberal constitutional values.

Each year WVPU organizes and hosts events with prominent national and international speakers and has often highlighted diversity as a key topic.

The 2020/21 Commencement Speaker, Ms. Laura Leyser, General Director of Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors without Borders) invited students, staff, and faculty to private tours of their special exhibition; this opportunity provided the chance to learn more about the organization and their work around the world.

A representative of the Ban Ki-moon Centre for Global Citizens presented to the LEADS students; they discussed the centre's mission and work towards achieving the sustainable development goals.

The Media Communications department hosted a workshop by the International Cultural Diversity Organization (ICDO) in which they presented a project involving students at a Mayan-language University in Mexico.

Our International Relations department organized a series of talks inviting diplomats and ambassadors to share their expertise on a multitude of topics. Ms. Kelly Anderson, Head of the Foreign Policy and Diplomatic Section at the Embassy of Canada to Austria, discussed the transitional justice for indigenous peoples in Canada. The Permanent Representative of Iceland to the United Nations in Vienna, Kristín A. Árnadóttir, spoke about "Closing the Gender Gap: The law and politics of gender equality". H.E. Amb. Suleiman Dauda Umar of the Embassy of Nigeria to Austria hosted a discussion on Nigeria's Role in maintaining Peace and Security in Africa, while the Ambassador of Colombia, H.E. Amb. Miguel Camilo Ruíz Blanco, spoke about the diplomacy of negotiating and eventually reaching a historic peace agreement with the country's main rebellion, the FARC.

Furthermore, the International Relations department also hosted Prof. Dr. Stephanie Hofmann, joint chair in International Relations between the Department of Political and Social Science and Robert Schuman Centre of Advanced Studies at the European University Institute. Dr. Hofmann spoke about the Governance Spaces and the Imperfect Elasticity of International Institutions.

Representatives of the Student Government Association (SGA) participated in the Youth Speak Forum on the topic of sustainability, organized by AIESEC, the global youth lead organization which strives to achieve peace and fulfilment of humankind's potential.

The Working Group on Equal Opportunities (WGEO) held its third International Women's Day event. Following last year's design, the WGEO organized a week of events aimed to highlight women, diversity, and equality. This week gave Dr. Eva Zedlacher the opportunity to present her interactive training film against workplace bullying/mobbing, produced in collaboration with the Arbeiterkammer Niederösterreich.

On October 11, 2021, the Human Resources office participated in the workshop on Gender Equality organized on behalf of the Ministry (BM für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Forschung, Abteilung PräS/1 Gleichstellung und Diversitätsmanagement).

4. Funding and resources

4.1. Presentation of current financial management

WVPU's financial turnaround since 2016 continued in the academic year 2021-2022. The senior management has built a sustainable operation for years to come. The university's fiscal year, which began on June 1, 2021 and ended on May 31, 2022 was again a financial success as WVPU's financial figures for 2021-2022 show a strong improvement again over the previous year.

Webster Vienna Private University (WVPU) operates as a not-for-profit association under the Austrian Code of Associations. Formally known as the Bildungsverein für die Freunde der Webster University (St. Louis, USA), the Association is the university's legal entity with its registered seat in Vienna.

The association holds a 100% share in the Webster BV Bildung GmbH, a not-for-profit limited liability company with its seat in Vienna which is intended to host the university operations after the change of legal form. The Association also holds a 100% share in a commercial LLC, the WEBSTER Seminarbetriebs- und Handelsgesellschaft m.b.H. which formerly operated the student dormitory.

The declaration of Patronage issued by Webster University, St. Louis, USA, on May 31, 2022 (Appendix 3) ensures that WVPU will be provided with sufficient financial resources to meet its payment obligations if required. This commitment is valid at least until 2022, so there is no legal basis for over-indebtedness under insolvency law.

The balance sheet and income statement for 2021-2022 are attached as Appendix 4.

5. Research

5.1 Major developments and analysis

As part of the preparation for the reaccreditation, the university undertook a thorough examination of its research activities, output, and networks. With a particular focus on establishing the research gravitas necessary to establish doctoral programs, the university found that while research output was in the overall tally quantitatively satisfactory, there was also a broadly uneven distribution of output among individual faculty members and only a limited amount of shared interest in common research themes. This observation lead university leadership to begin working with faculty to establish, where possible, shared themes centered around the largest departments (International Relations and Business and Management). Recognizing that actions to focus research efforts among faculty are not a short-term task, WVPU will aim to work out specific plans to increase coordination among its researchers.

5.2 Research of the institution

The integration of research and teaching at WVPU also was observable in our faculty's scholarly achievements. For the academic year 2021-2022, our faculty submitted 11 grant applications for more than €1.3 million, delivered 14 full papers at renowned academic conferences and chaired panels or presented research at another 18, published 28 scholarly works including 16 peer-reviewed, and one non-peer-reviewed journal articles, 5 scholarly book chapters, 1 book, and 5 conference proceedings alongside 13 reviews, magazine and newspaper articles.

23 Professors & Lecturers	28 Scholarly Publications	32 Conferences Papers or Presentations
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WVPU faculty continued to be recognized for their scholarly work and many served as members of the editorial boards of international scholarly journals such as Financial Studies, European Political Science Review, Czech Journal of International Relations, International Journal on Networked Business, Critical Multilingualism Studies, Sustainability, and Routledge just to name a few.

WVPU faculty regularly published in leading journals including, inter alia, Journal of Financial Stability, International Review of Economics and Finance, International Journal of Financial Analysis, International Affairs, European Foreign Affairs Review, Journal of Natural and Social Philosophy, Communication Theory, International Economics, Panoeconomicus Journal, Eastern European Economics, and Employee Relations.

Some highlights of their achievements during the academic year 2021-2022 include:

- WVPU Rector, Prof. Dr. Johannes Pollak received the prestigious 2021 Science Prize of the Margaretha Lupac Foundation honoring the lifetime achievements of scholars who deal in-depth with the challenges and strengths of democracy and parliamentarianism. The foundation, established by the Austrian Parliament based on an endowment of the late Margaretha Lupac, is dedicated to the promotion and strengthening of democracy, parliamentarianism, and tolerance in the discourse on politics, the arts and social development. As emphasized by its Chairman of the Board of Trustees and President of the National Council, Wolfgang Sobotka, the recipients of the award “focus on the topics which highlight the constant work on and for democracy with a critical and awake view.” The foundation, which held its award ceremony in the Austrian Parliament, recognized Prof. Pollak's three decades of research on democracy and European Integration and his insightful ability to combine political theory with practice.
- Eva Zedlacher, Assistant Professor of Management at the Business and Management Department finished her large-scale project Schau nicht weg (engl. *Do not ignore). This research was funded via the Projektfond Arbeit 4.0. of the Austrian Chamber of Labour, Section Lower Austria). One of the outputs of this project is a training film about (cyber)bullying in a Viennese hotel. Interactive options allow participants to make decisions on behalf of one of the bystanders in the film. The decisions may lead to different course and endings of the film. Additional explanatory videos and text are provided on the website, as well.
- Dr. Nikolaos Antonakakis was awarded the 2021 Best Paper Award for his co-authored publication in the Journal of Risk and Financial Management (JRFM), among all papers published in JRFM in 2020. After a thorough evaluation of the originality and significance of the papers, their number of citations, and their number of downloads, three winning papers, were nominated by the Journal Award Committee. The research study by Nikolaos Antonakakis,

Ioannis Chatziantoniou and David Gabauer that won the 1st prize, is entitled “Refined Measures of Dynamic Connectedness based on Time-Varying Parameter Vector Autoregressions” and develops an econometric framework that is able to capture the transmission mechanism of shocks and their interconnectedness in financial markets in a more flexible manner compared to its predecessors. This framework is being put into practice by investigating the dynamic connectedness of the four most traded foreign exchange rates wherein its superiority is demonstrated.

- Dr. Anatoly Reshetnikov, Assistant Professor of International Relations, was awarded the European International Studies Association 2021 Best Article Prize in European Journal of International Relations for an article that he co-authored with Xymena Kurowska (CEU).
- In a chapter for The Routledge Handbook of Differentiation in the European Union (opens in new tab) (edited by Benjamin Leruth et al., Routledge 2022), Jozef Bátora, full Professor of International Relations and his co-author professor John E. Fossum (ARENA - University of Oslo) elaborate on the concepts of differentiation and segmentation in the EU. It is widely recognized that the EU that emerged from the financial and refugee crises of the last decade has become more differentiated.

Appendix 5 (Faculty Research Activities and Publications for 2021-2022) lists the research output of all our permanent faculty during the academic year 2021-2022.

5.3 Research grants and external research funding

In the academic year 2021-2022, research faculty at WVPU have submitted 13 grant applications for more than TEUR 1,300. In October 2021, the Kulturabteilung Wien (Municipality for Culture of Vienna, short: MA 7) granted Prof. Jozef Bátora (International Relations) EUR 1.000 for organizing the international workshop on “Reconfiguring Globalization. The Liberal International Order and Its Dynamics” from November 16–17, 2021. Likewise, the Arbeitskreis Europäische Intergration e. V. (Work Group European Integration) sponsored the workshop “Subnationale Außenpolitik” (Subnational Foreign Policy) of Assoc.-Prof. Franco Algieri with EUR 5,000, which took place May 19–20, 2022. In fall 2021, Assoc.-Prof. Marc Méhu successfully submitted a Webster Faculty Research Grant for a study on “Emotional Impact of Discrimination in Computer-Mediated Interaction” with a granted amount of USD 6,000 (approx. EUR 5,400). In total, the faculty members of WVUP could attract EUR 11.400 of funding.

In addition, EUR 8,193 were granted by the Erasmus+ program for the promotion of mobility of our academic and administrative staff for teaching and training purposes.

In the area of enhancing the quality of grant proposals, the university introduced a multistep process that seeks approval from the respective academic department heads and the Research Support Services, the Heads of Finance and Administration and Human Resources, the Associate Director, and finally the Rector. This internal approval process is documented and signed by stakeholders at each step through the WVPU Proposal Approval Form. To enhance the quality of proposals and increase the likelihood of successful applications, the university inserted an additional step in this process requiring that faculty proposing grants exceeding €20,000 present their proposals to internal and invited external experts for comment and feedback before receiving approvals from any members of the Executive Board.

6. National and international cooperation

6.1 Introduction

Beyond its collaborations in research, WVPU is committed to maintaining and deepening its cooperation with both national and international partners in higher education, industry, government, and society and promoting student and staff mobility. WVPU cooperates regularly with national and international academic institutions, businesses and organizations, established through its faculty, Advisory Board, and Alumni Association. We also collaborate with national and international partners to provide mobility and internship opportunities, bring in expert practitioners teaching hands-on skills into the classroom, host seminars and conferences, participate in projects, in addition to other enriching activities.

As part of its commitment to knowledge transfer and increasing its scholarly footprint, WVPU pursues and is committed to increasing its partnerships in research.

WVPU fosters internationalization as part of its mission of offering a globally oriented education. Its commitment to internationalization is evident in its history and embedded in its operations and values.

Three objectives guide WVPU's approach to internationalization:

1. promote cross-border mobility and cooperation in education and training
2. overcome socio-economic and international barriers and support an inclusive and innovation-driven approach to global education
3. support the automatic mutual recognition of diplomas and learning periods abroad

The promotion of cross-border mobility and cooperation will be accomplished by supporting international partnerships and networks, student mobility and engagement opportunities, and faculty and staff exchange. WVPU is working to deepen existing collaboration and looks to develop new sustainable partnerships with academic, entrepreneurial institutions, and governmental and non-governmental organizations that are essential to opening new opportunities to WVPU students, faculty and staff and enhancing the university's global outreach, visibility and reputation. Accordingly, the university offers high quality, tailored services and assistance to all incoming and outgoing students and promotes the integration of incoming students into all academic and social activities.

WVPU's second internationalization objective is to overcome socio-economic and international barriers and support an inclusive and innovation-driven approach to global education. A commitment to diversity and inclusion is one of WVPU's core values, it thus continues to seek avenues to widening international participation and inclusivity through outreach programs and projects, its recruitment and admissions policies and practice, and by providing targeted financial assistance to minimize barriers to entry, progression, and mobility.

WVPU's final objective in internationalization is to support the automatic mutual recognition of diplomas and learning periods abroad. Maintaining a high quality of teaching goes hand in hand with modernization and continuous improvement of the quality of academic services. WVPU conforms to the national qualification framework and standards established in the Bologna process and strives to continually improve processes and tools to provide transparency, consistency and to reduce burdens of mutual recognition.

6.2 Formal national and international cooperation

WVPU affiliates or partners with a variety of national and international academic and non-academic institutions. These partnerships take the form of research partnerships, affiliations based on course content, sponsorships (as in WVPU's Partner in Education Program) and through memberships in associations.

WVPU's most important international cooperation network is that of Webster University, comprised of campuses, extended sites, partners, and almost 200.000 alumni worldwide. WVPU cooperates with Webster University in a range of university administration activities, events, faculty exchange, and most importantly, in supporting student mobility.

In addition to its own Webster mobility programs, WVPU expanded mobility opportunities, not only for the students but also for the faculty and staff by joining the Erasmus+ network in 2017. For the second time WVPU has been awarded with the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE). The Charter provides the general quality framework for European and international cooperation activities a higher education institution may carry out within the Erasmus+ Program. With the new charter in place, WVPU's participation in Erasmus+ is secured until 2027. In 2021-2022 one staff member went for training abroad: Mauro-Eduardo Ortiz-Bustamente participated in the course "Porto Communication Higher Education Staff Week" in Porto, Portugal from June 13–17, 2022 funded by Erasmus+. WVPU's Assistant Professor Dr. Anatoly Reshetnikov took part in the Erasmus+ Faculty Mobility program and delivered a guest lecture and a research colloquium presentation at the Johan Skytte Institute of Political Studies, University of Tartu.

As part of its commitment to knowledge transfer and increasing our scholarly footprint, WVPU pursues and is committed to increasing its partnerships in research.

Prof. Jozef Bátora was invited by ARENA, Centre for European Studies, University of Oslo to contribute to a project funded by the EU Horizon 2020 order. The research consortium consisting of colleagues from the University of Oxford, University of Copenhagen, Sciences Po Grenoble, Comenius University, Jagellonian University, Krakow, University of Konstanz, University of Bruegel, ELIAMEP, Athens and LUISS, Rome, is examining the increasingly differentiated European political order due to COVID-19, the war in the Ukraine, financial crisis, inflation etc.

As another example, WVPU is a partner in the SIDICE project in collaboration with the French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS). The project, jointly funded by the French National Research Agency (ANR) and the Austrian Science Fund (FWF), investigates nonverbal indicators of implicit prejudice and discrimination in inter-group relations.

WVPU researchers have collaborated with many more industry, governmental, NGO, and academic institutions, such as the Lower Austria Chamber of Commerce, the international Press Institute, Slovak Academy of Sciences, and the Federal Ministry of Defense, to name a few.

Through its Partner in Education Program, WVPU cooperates with companies, governments, and institutions to fund the studies of highly qualified and/or financially less privileged students. Borealis AG is currently our largest donor to the program. Participating for 30 years, the City of Vienna is WVPU's longest Partner in Education. The Partner in Education Program is one of the cornerstones of our fundraising activities. In 2021-2022 WVPU managed to secure TEUR 1,600 in donations, including the TEUR 23 for the Emergency Fund for Ukrainian and Russian students.

WVPU is a member of Austrian Association of Private Universities (ÖPUK), the umbrella organization which links together the nationally recognized Austrian private universities and represents the interests of the private higher education sector in Austria. WVPU is also a member of the American Chamber of Commerce in Austria (AmCham). Dr. Bradley Wiggins was invited by AmCham to conduct a webinar on “#Stop the Steal: Deconstructing the January 6, 2021 Insurrection at the U.S. Capitol” for AmCham members.

6.3 Informal national and international cooperation

WVPU harnesses its relationships within education, research, and industry to provide a range of opportunities for its students and to promote knowledge transfer. WVPU leverages these relationships for its research conducted by faculty, its career services, to co-host public lectures and to bring both leading practitioners to the classroom and students to the field.

WVPU joined the International Cultural Diversity Organization (ICDO) for a workshop on Human Rights and the Diversity of Indigenous Peoples led by its president Josipa Palac, WVPU alumna, as part of a Media Diversity and Society course taught by WVPU Assistant Professor, Anthony Löwstedt. WVPU students learned about working with the ICDO and presented their own ideas on how to raise awareness for the ICDO’s project on indigenous Mayans.

With support of the university’s Executive Board, two International Relations students, Arzu Ertem and Alexandra Schieferer, New York to attend the Change the World Model United Nations (CWMUN) conference. Where they joined more than students from around the world at the United Nations Headquarters.

During the past academic year students of the Business and Management department participated in the CFA Institute Research Challenge, an annual global competition in equity research hosted by the CFA Institute. The competition gathers the finest universities from all around the world to compete and establish their global academic presence in the fields of business, finance, and equity research. Under the guidance of the department head Dr. Antonakakis, a team of 5 highly motivated students represented WVPU for the first time in this academic competition, which took place over a period of 6 months. WVPU was ranked amongst the top performers in the Austria-region.

Another group of students from the Business and Management department participated in this year’s online Warwick Economics Summit, an entirely student-run international forum where talented university students listen to some of the world’s most revered and inspirational speakers.

Adjustment and new ways to meet and create community have been the trends of the past year. For the students of the LEADS (Learn, Evolve, Apply, Develop, and Serve) program at the Geneva, Leiden and Vienna campuses this signified a virtual retreat. The virtual LEADS retreat aimed to connect students across the campuses and to help improve their leadership skills.

Career services and support for students

In 2021-2022 WVPU hosted various university activities, networking services, and public events to help our students gain an upper hand in the job market connecting them with important players. Some highlights include:

- OMV, the Austrian multinational integrated oil, gas and petrochemical company which hosted a special session on how to apply to OMV successfully. The event included mock interviews for four selected students who received immediate feedback on their performance.

- Alain Matton, Press Attaché and Communication and Public Information Officer at the Delegation of the European Union to the International Organizations in Vienna provided valuable insights to our students about pursuing a career as a diplomat and the opportunities at EU Delegations at an international level.
- WVPU hosted a career lunch with KPMG Austria, followed by personal interviews for interested students. Participating in the event was Armin Kammel, Senior Manager, Financial Services Advisory and an adjunct faculty member of WVPU.
- WVPU hosted an Assessment Center Workshop designed by alumna Rosemary Pontarelli ('11) and Mona Huang, both experienced international human resources professionals. As part of the workshop, 10 WVPU students experienced what an assessment center in the pharmaceutical industry is like and assumed the roles of representatives of a health ministry, board members of a patient organization and CEOs of a pharmaceutical company to gain deeper insight and different perspectives into the hiring process.

During the academic year 2021-2022, career services started WVPU's 'Dare to Grow Together' mentoring program connecting students and alumni. Throughout the year 14 mentorship pairs from across the world met privately to work on objectives that aligned with each students' post-commencement goals, as well as to lend support, advice or simply a listening ear.

Making a difference through public outreach, cooperation, and dissemination

Webster Vienna Private University (WVPU) is committed to furthering knowledge transfer through public outreach and dissemination as an essential part of its teaching and learning activities and considers it a fundamental feature of its social responsibility. This is codified in the university's commitment to "advance the cause of knowledge-based public and corporate decision making through publicly accessible fora and its dissemination", one of its five principles. The university's knowledge transfer activities over the past academic year are summarized according to their special focuses.

Focus: Conflict in Ukraine

WVPU faculty provided key insights about the conflict in Ukraine, with Associate Director Dr. Samuel R. Schubert leading early with an online Op-ed "The Certain Uncertainty of Russian Action in Ukraine" in December indicating that Russia was signaling plans to invade Ukraine and why. Then when the war broke out in February, WVPU faculty continued to analyze the situation generating several online articles, including those on "The Ramifications of the Russian-Ukraine Conflict to the World Economy" by Associate Professors Dr. Menbere Workie Tiruneh and Dr. Nikolaos Antonakakis while Associate professor and Head of the Media Communications department Dr. Bradley Wiggins investigated the real vs. fake live and streamed online content in Ukraine in his online piece, "War in Ukraine – Live via Smartphone Screen".

Shortly after the conflict began, WVPU's International Relations Department organized an open discussion on the war in Ukraine broadcast live on Zoom and open to the public. The discussion among Franco Algeri, head of the International Relations Department and a member of TAG - an informal network of leading researchers focused on transatlantic relations and European security and defense, Josef Batora, an expert diplomacy, international institutions and their change, and Marco Bocchese, an expert in international law.

Focus: The future of Liberal International Order

WVPU's International Relations Department organized a high-level workshop titled "Reconfiguring globalization: The liberal international order and its dynamics," which addressed numerous interlinked

crises faced by the liberal international order. Convened by professors Jozef Bátora and Iver B. Neumann, director of Fridtjof Nansen Institute (Oslo), and joined by senior scholars, PhD-candidates and graduate students from WVPU, Central European University (CEU), and the Diplomatic Academy Vienna, the scholars investigated increasingly strained international order and the consequences of this ongoing change. The colleagues pointed out that contrary to expectations globalization has not led to a stronger liberal international order, but rather delivered a patchwork of conflicting outcomes, something which has been exacerbated tensions between power politics and a liberal international order aimed at limiting the exercise of power. The colleagues discussed in depth matters such as the extent to which liberal democracies can maintain continue to defend their values, how governance through liberal international practices or “governmentality” has been systematically challenging the concept of sovereignty, the concept of neutrality, a new conceptualization of "ordering" in international relations, the growing role of non-state actors and interstitial organizations such as private military companies and how processes of recombination and transposition of practices within such lead to endogenous dynamics of change in core institutions of the liberal international order. The widely reported workshop serves as a vital component WVPU’s leading role in establishing an international relations intellectual hub in Vienna one that benefits students and policy makers as well as researchers.

Focus: Mathematical Economics and Optimization in the Energy Industry

WVPU hosted an Austrian Society for Operations Research workshop on mathematical economics and optimization in the energy industry in September sponsored by d-fine Austria and Energieallianz Austria, which brought together experts industry and academia including participants from WVPU, the Technical University of Vienna, the International, International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis, the Vienna Institute for Advanced Research, University of Erlangen-Nuremberg and MathWorks, the leading developer of mathematical computing software for engineers and scientists with over 5,000,000 users worldwide. Among the topics covered in the workshop were the role of energy storage in a carbon-free energy industry, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and prediction in time series data, and further nascent applications of Dr. Ronald Hochreiter, WVPU Associate Professor in Finance.

Focus: Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

WVPU’s commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion are rooted in its core values. 2021-2022 provided many examples of how the university worked to promote gender equality and advance women. The university celebrated International Women's Day, held a panel discussion (led by WVPU student Mathilde Samson) on female leadership and the stereotyping of female and male leaders, and organized a visit to a special exhibition of the House of Austrian History on female political participation throughout history. In March, Dr. Eva Zedlacher presented her ongoing research on gender biases for perpetrators and targets of workplace mistreatment. Funded through a generous grant provided the year before by the Chamber of Labor of Lower Austria, Dr. Zedlacher and her team developed an interactive and multilinear training film, Schaunichtweg (Do not ignore), that allows viewers to make their own choices as bystanders leading to different outcomes and furthering our understanding of workplace mistreatment and exclusion.

Focus: Diplomacy and international organizations

As part of its ongoing focus on diplomacy and international organizations and its dedication to provide its students with the unique opportunity to discuss international politics and diplomacy issues with practicing experts, WVPU’s International Relations department launched a series of interactive lectures in March 2021 regularly bringing students and faculty face-to-face with high level diplomats. Spearheaded by Assistant Professor Marco Bocchese and known among students as the pizza and

diplomacy sessions, the Global Governance & Diplomacy Public Speaker Series brought ambassadors and distinguished speakers throughout the spring semester including His and Her Excellencies Suleiman Dauda Umar, Ambassador of Nigeria to Austria, Miguel Camilo Ruíz Blanco, Ambassador and Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Colombia to the United Nations and the International Organizations in Vienna, and Kristín A. Árnadóttir, Permanent Representative of Iceland to the United Nations (Vienna) and Kelly Anderson, Counsellor and Head of the Foreign Policy and Diplomacy section of the Embassy of Canada to Austria. The series was so successful that it will return by popular demand in the Fall and continue for years to come as a featured aspect of WVPU's Certificate in Diplomacy and International Organizations, which will begin next year.

Webster Vienna Alumni Association

The connection of the alumni to the university is an essential key element of the alumni relations efforts at the university. To foster a community of alumni connected to their alma mater and each other is the main goal of the Webster Vienna alumni association. WVPU cooperates annually with the WVPU Alumni Association to bring notable Webster-affiliated speakers to campus. With more than 190.000 alumni worldwide including more than 4.500 alumni from the Vienna campus, the network is an important asset for the institution. Regular events, guest lectures, newsletters, outreach on social media, the alumni bonus course program, special alumni grants, and extracurricular activities usually help to keep the ties of the alumni to the university. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, the engagement of alumni over the past two years decreased. To refocus and reinvigorate its alumni services, WVPU and the Webster Vienna Alumni Association decided to organize a focus group with alumni from different graduating classes living in Vienna and abroad. In January 2021, WVPU hosted a workshop with some of its most engaged alumni to brainstorm ideas for meeting and addressing the needs of the 4.500 alumni. During the two-hour workshop and many entertaining moments, the 17 international participants shared ideas on how to invent and reinvent alumni activities. Some of the ideas discussed included expanding opportunities for alumni to support the community (e.g. mentoring, internships and incubators), introducing industry-specific hybrid networking events, "Back to School" talks for alumni on innovative topics, streamlining and reinvigorating alumni communications, providing a searchable database of alumni and launching a dedicated alumni communications platform. To respond to the constructive feedback from the workshop, WVPU has assembled a project team to work closely with Webster Vienna Alumni Association leadership to increase engagement with our community. The results of this workshop will guide our alumni activities and priorities in the coming years.

As a first immediate outcome of the workshop, WVPU decided to create its own alumni online community. During the academic year 2021-2022, negotiations with different providers for such an online community were started.

Research collaborations

All faculty members in the four academic departments Business and Management, International Relations, Media Communications and Psychology cultivate their own personal relationships and cooperate with faculty from other national and international universities and research institutions. A detailed list of their new and ongoing projects, publications, memberships, editorial cooperation and any other types of collaboration is presented in Appendix 6 "National and International Cooperation".

WVPU faculty undertook formal and informal research collaboration with colleagues and institutions around the world. Among the highlights were the following:

Dr. Nikolaos Antonakakis cooperated with colleagues at the Hellenic Mediterranean University and the Software Competence Center Hagenberg GmbH to explore the exchange rate dynamics and the housing market dynamics. Both studies resulted in academic papers published in the “International Journal of Finance & Economics” and “The Annals of Regional Science”.

Dr. Marc Méhu is one of 125 face researchers coordinated by Prof. Lisa de Bruine, Department of Psychology, at the University of Glasgow, UK. This "Many Labs" initiative focuses on research of the human face. The goal of the initiative is to establish large scale collaborations on specific research topics and to define new guidelines for face research.

Dr. Pernille Eskerod and Dr. Eva Zedlacher together with colleagues from University of Novi Sad, Serbia explore the stakeholder engagement in rural tourism. The project is funded by the Austrian Agency for International Cooperation Education and Research and the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development in Serbia.

In a research project funded by the Austrian Research Association (ÖFG) Dr. Jozef Bátora together with colleagues of the Diplomatic Academy examined sources and processes contributing to peaceful change in international orders. This included a number of workshops and lectures in Vienna and beyond.

7. Outlook

WVPU emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic stronger on multiple fronts with expectations for a full return to onsite classes in Fall 2022. Student interest to return to on-site learning is manifest and applications for new students are growing. After hosting the site visit of experts evaluating the university for re-accreditation, the university is optimistic that it will receive praise for its progress in the last period and looks forward to receiving the final decision and any recommendations that may come with it.

In addition to completing the institutional re-accreditation process, a central focus of the 2022-2023 academic year will be the implementation of organizational development, particularly a new system of student advising that separates administrative aspects including registration from academic mentorship and guidance that will remain with faculty. Another will be the submission of at least two new undergraduate programs and the development of plans for a closely connected graduate program. These new programs, part of the university's commitment to constantly refine and develop and based on the takeaways from the market study conducted in 2022, will focus on information technology and computers, marking a shift in profile for the university, one that will require significant effort and planning in the academic year 2022-2023.

The development of new programs in the computing and technology sectors along with the long-term development of doctoral programs will open up new line of recruits for WVPU and allow for expansion of the student head counts in the coming years. Closely connected to growing the quantity of new students, is the continued focus on retention, and in particular retaining students from Ukraine and Russia, who for obvious reasons face numerous challenges in pursuing the university education. So far, WVPU has retained almost all of its students directly affected by the war. Our goal in 2022-2023 is to ensure that this becomes a trend.