

# Student life during and post Covid19

PLA within the SIDERAL project

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## Covid timeline: March-June 2020 - „emergency response“:

- Distance Learning (within ~ 1 week): students were satisfied (see Hajek study, April 2020/February 2021)
  - flexibility in quality assurance requirements
    - introduction of online assessments – regulations for online exams have been put up by all higher education institutions
    - lessons that could not be held online (e.g. laboratory sessions etc.): possibilities to postpone/alternative achievement records (e.g. written assignments)
- increase of exams between summer term 2020 and winter term 2020 → unclear sure what this implies (?) UAS did not have any losses in terms of active students

## Covid timeline: March-June 2020 - „emergency response“:

### financial improvements and support services for students

- students have been granted a „neutral semester“ → they can receive **student support** for one additional semester, and are not excluded from child support, tax benefits, insurance...
- students within a **physical mobility within Erasmus+** didn't have to pay back their mobility grants in case of non-achievement (ECTS) and there greater flexibility concerning the refund of additional costs (e.g. cancelled flights)
- Expansion of psychological student counseling

## Small Covid student surveys (April 2020/February 2021)

- Hardware: very good; internet: not so good
- 2/3 say it worked (very) well, independent from prior experience
- 2/3 strong changes, 1/3 hardly any changes
- Cooperation between students was seen positively/**worsened in 2021**
- Feedback and communication with teachers good for less than 50%
- Great insecurity concerning exams among students
- Strong influence on employment, financial situation/**similar in 2021**
- **Motivation and mental well-being decreased between 2020 and 2021**

## Covid responses during study year 2020/21

- **Legal framework** to enable online teaching and exams and regulations for lessons that cannot be held online (e.g. laboratory sessions etc.)
- **BMBWF supported HEIs** for enabling **Covid testing**
- **secondary analysis** of available surveys/data from HEIs on the topic of “Distance Learning Lessons Learned” from the pandemic for teaching & learning was commissioned → results by the end of June 2021
- **Mid-term evaluation of National Strategy on the SD** of HE includes questions on impacts of Covid-19 crisis on vulnerable groups → results by December 2021

## Opportunities to improve study conditions

- **Distance T&L:** has to be developed to become accessible for all; evaluation of existing formats → best formats will improve future teaching & learning
- **Develop institutional and individual resilience** in HE and prepare for future difficulties (drop in retention rates, less exam activity, students' mental health problems, effects on vulnerable and disadvantaged students, etc.) → to be seen in national surveys:
  - Student Social Survey 2023
  - survey among upp.-sec. students in graduation year 2022

## Barriers to improving study conditions

- Covid-19 **increased inequalities** in HE (due to a lack of hardware; internet connectivity and learning spaces; employment; student skills for self-organisation and learning → challenges for the whole education system
  - See study (Christiane Spiel, University of Vienna) for strong effects on mental well-being of students at all educational levels
- Specific challenges for on-boarding of **first-term students**
- **Diversity of student body** might change (e.g. economic effects on students,...)

## Support on EHEA level

- **Principles and Guidelines** on the Social Dimension
- **International BFUG** has started its new working cycle → national commitment and adaptation is necessary (Rome Communiqué)
- International **project cooperations**: 3-IN-AT, PLAR-4-SIMP



# Thank you for your attention!

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