



SGH – the Warsaw School of Economics: the internationalized institution

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INTRODUCTION

The SGH - Internationalized institution case study is about the effort to develop the international relationships of the HEI as an integral part of the development strategy, integrating this dimension toward different aspects of the HEI's activities. Internationalization could be considered both as a strategy for attracting staff, students and researchers, but also as a way to establish and reinforce international partnerships with other HEIs, companies or institutions.

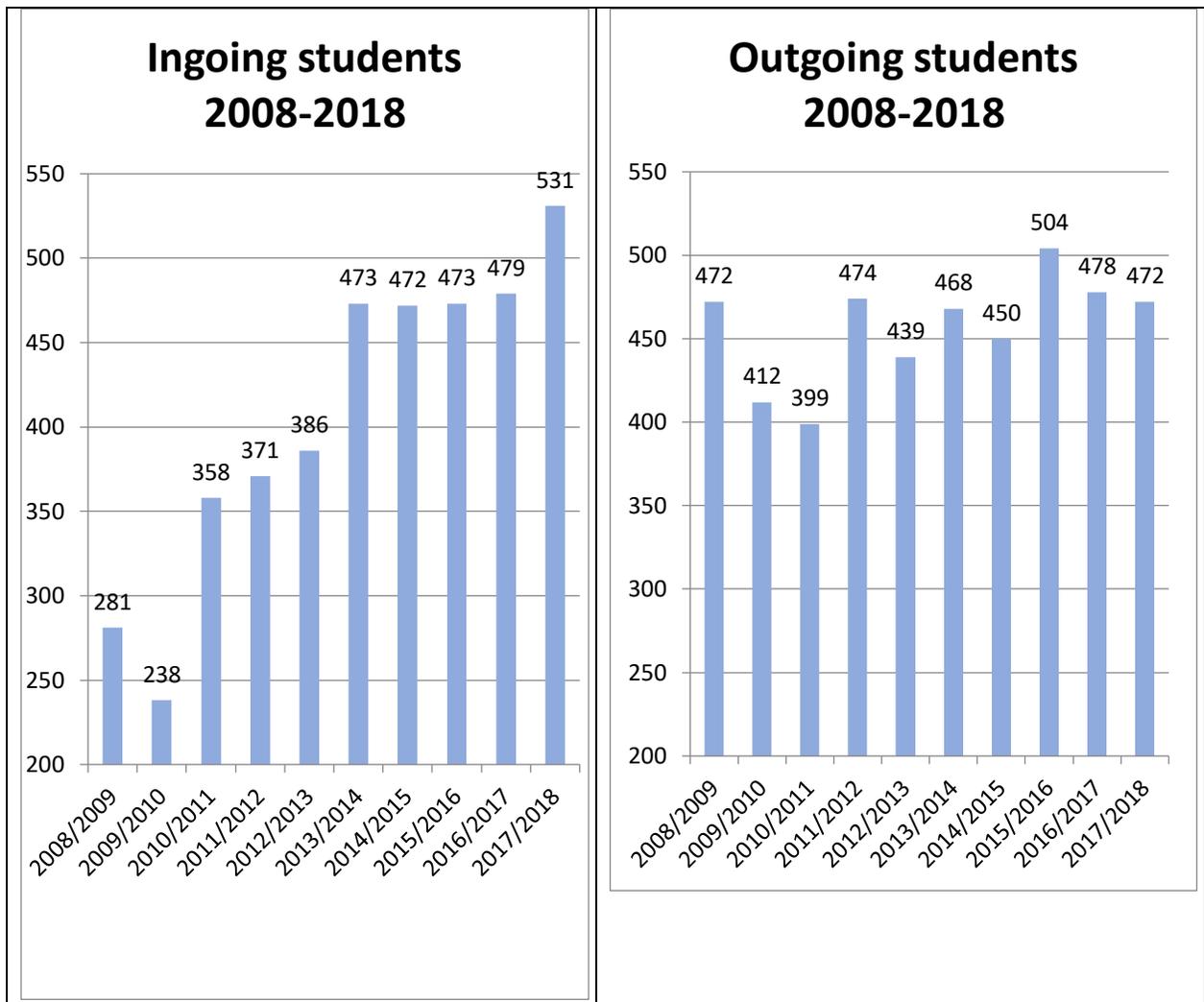
SGH Warsaw School of Economics was founded in 1906 and it is the oldest economic higher education institution in Poland. SGH is ranked among the best European business schools by the Financial Times rankings, and the polish magazine *Perspektywy* ranked SGH as the best business school in Poland. It is considered as one of the leading institutions in business and economic education in Poland and in Central Eastern Europe. Also, the Ministry of Science and Higher Education awarded SGH with the grade of excellence.

The present educational success of SGH and its alumni results from an individualized study programme enabled by an innovative structure, in which the fellows are gathered in five research units called *collegia*: Collegium of Socio-Economics, Collegium of Business Administration, Collegium of World Economy, Collegium of Economic Analysis and Collegium of Management and Finance. The flexible study system applied in SGH allows students the involvement in entrepreneurial and business projects throughout studies and creates good opportunities for international mobility. Project-based education is a well-established practice at SGH. Moreover, student organizations play an important role within the local academic community: they foster a high participation of students in organized activities, research and social life, enhancing students' ability to cooperate in teams and in more complex organisations.

SGH offers numerous international programmes conducted in cooperation with foreign partners and focused mostly on developing entrepreneurial skills. One of the notable examples is SGH membership in CEMS (Global Alliance in Management Education), the world leading association of business schools that together with corporate partners and NGOs offers top-ranked, joint degree programme in international management. CEMS has students from more than 60 countries, with 300 partners universities across the world and 530 courses in foreign languages together with studies in English as well. It has over than 14000 students from bachelor to PhDs and over 4900 post-graduate students.

Looking at the numbers of SGH ingoing and outgoing students it is possible to see how during the last years SGH has confirmed the interest of its students to go abroad, while at the same time SGH reinforced its attractiveness increasing the number of ingoing students constantly (see Figure 1).

Figure 1 Number of ingoing and outgoing students in the years from 2008 to 2018



The relevance and priority of internationalization of SGH is also illustrated by the 13 163 000 EUR spent in the years from 2005 to 2018 on mobility programmes such as: Erasmus+, POWER, stipends and training funds. For the academic year 2018/19 the total amount spent will be of 1 345 000 EUR.

Internationalization is an integral part of the HEI's entrepreneurial agenda

Internationalization is the primary development strategy for SGH and the University's policy focuses around establishing conditions for adding an international dimension to all aspects of its operations.

As a key element in securing quality in research and teaching, internationalization is among the priorities in SGH development strategy and long-term policy. To reach this goal SGH is engaged in:

- build international reputation for quality in learning, research and knowledge transfers;
- develop strong and effective partnership in selected regions and countries to support student and staff mobility;
- promote and develop students credit international mobility for studies and trainings; do the same for staff;
- develop joint curricula and double/multiple joint degrees as well as other forms of lifelong learning;
- develop transnational research and cooperation projects including business, regional authorities and other relevant organizations.

Following these statements, the SGH is actively involved in the following activities:

- double degree programmes with foreign partners from Germany, Portugal, France, Italy, Switzerland and the Czech Republic;
- courses in degree programmes offered by visiting professors mostly executive ones;
- exchange programmes with around 300 universities in 60 countries;
- optional semester/year of studies abroad and international internships for SGH students.

SGH Corporate Partners Club, which gathers Polish companies and multinationals, cooperates with the School on different levels, including opening international employment opportunities during recruiting campaigns two times a year and improving educational opportunities, such as MSc in Finance with ACCA accreditation (in cooperation with EY Poland), subjects opened in cooperation with Procter & Gamble, McKinsey & Company, L'Oreal Polska and Deloitte, numerous lectures and workshops.

SGH realizes its entrepreneurial agenda through participation in many organizations, such as Partnership in International Management (PIM - a consortium of top business schools from around the world that exchanges select graduate students for one academic term) and CEMS network (strategic alliance of leading business schools and multinational companies) which fosters faculty cooperation for joint teaching, research and doctoral education.



SGH offers the CEMS MIM (M.Sc. in International Management), a prestigious supranational business degree that can be acknowledged as the best passport for an international career. This one-year joint degree programme is open exclusively to the Master's students of the CEMS schools who meet very strict selection criteria, and receive the CEMS degree in conjunction with their home degree.

Student involvement in multitude of activities is a great example of realization of entrepreneurial agenda through internationalization. Recently, during "Sector 3.0 Festival", the largest CEE event on the use of new technologies in organizations, SGH and Seoul National University students organized an International University Video Bridge "Tech for good" to promote benefits of using technologies such as blockchain for public good.

The HEI explicitly supports the international mobility of its staff and students

SGH currently exchanges students with around 300 schools worldwide sending for optional study abroad around 600 SGH's students per year under Erasmus+, Erasmus Mundus, bilateral agreements, double degree programmes, PIM, CEMS network and others. Apart from EU universities, SGH provides the opportunity to study in Russia, South-East Asia (Korea, China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Japan, India, the Philippines, and Malaysia), the USA, Canada, Mexico, Latin America (Brazil, Argentina, Peru, Chile, Venezuela and Uruguay) as well as Australia and New Zealand.

International students wishing to obtain a degree can apply for one of tuition-based study programmes offered in English:

- 3-years bachelor programmes in: Global Business, Finance and Governance, International Economics, management and Qualitative Methods in Economics and Information Systems.
- 2-years master programmes in: Advanced Analytics – Big data, International Business, Finance and Accounting (with the opportunity of the ACCA qualification), Global Business, Finance and Governance, International Tourism, Hotel Industry and leisure Services;
- 4-years PHD programme in Economics and Management.

Apart from the programmes offered in English, students can choose from 9 Bachelor and 15 Master programmes in Polish. Over 400 courses are taught in English both on BA and MA levels as part of these programmes.

Foreign degree students at SGH (2012-2017)

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
No. of students	437	545	673	808	1035

International (incoming) non-degree bachelor and graduate students at SGH (at least 1 semester)

Year	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016
No. of students	371	385	456	454	459

Selected international programmes:

- CEMS – Master in International Management;
- PIM Exchange network;
- Erasmus+;
- Joint degree programme: EU Master in Law and economics;
- 11 master Double degree programmes;
- Canadian Executive Master of Business Administration (CEMBA);
- Summer school and “Doing business in Poland” programmes.

What distinguishes SGH from other Polish universities is high number of exchange participants from non-European countries as part of the PIM (Partnership in International Management) network –SGH is the only Polish member university – and also thanks to bilateral agreements with leading institutions in all continents. Student exchange is not formalised as much as in the case of CEMS and there is no joint diploma. SGH is still the only Polish university in both networks.

The HEI seeks and attracts international and entrepreneurial staff

SGH has a long tradition of inviting international staff to be part of the education process, as it is also visible from Figure 2 in the years from 2005 to 2016 SGH attracted hundreds of international staff, with a strong connection with USA and Canada as well as Germany and other EU countries.

Figure 2 Number of international staff at SGH between 2005 and 2016 per country



SGH has organized three Erasmus+ International Staff Training Weeks for members of partner universities from all over the world and currently is in the process of organizing the fourth Staff Week. SGH has hosted over 40 participants from 28 partner universities from 5 continents during past International Staff Weeks. During the activities of the Staff Week members of partner universities learn about SGH facilities, SGH management of the different mobility programmes and about SGH teaching and research methods. Variety of meetings and discussions enables exchanging knowledge, sharing best practices and gaining innovative approach on international cooperation strategies.

“Visiting professors” project started in 2017, SGH invites Professors from foreign universities to conduct lectures during academic year. Each professor is required to teach 60 hours per academic year, also with the possibility to split the visiting in two parts one per semester. During the academic year 2017/2018 four Visiting Professors from Seoul National University and University of Zurich conducted their lectures at SGH. While for the upcoming year, 2018/19 there are a number of Visiting Professor under consideration.

International perspectives are reflected in the HEI’s approach to teaching

The international perspectives have a strong emphasis in the SGH approach to teaching, the development strategies priorities of SGH and the long-term policy include the development of courses with special focus on European and international business and law, as well as international comparative studies (e.g. EMLE – multiple degree on MA level, two executive programmes).

The international perspective undertaken by the SGH is confirmed by the Certificate for Quality in Programme Internationalization awarded by ECA (European Consortium for Accreditation) in

2014 for the BA in International Economics. The strengths of the School internalization concerning teaching listed in the evaluation report were as follows:

- programme contents oriented towards internationalization;
- international quality of the programme design and implementation (textbooks, trainings abroad etc.);
- teaching standards matching the best international benchmarks;
- some case materials expand on the cross-cultural perspective through the involvement of analysis based on own research of the CEE transformation processes;
- each faculty member reports once a year on his/her contribution to the internationalization of the university;



The quality of international programmes offered by the SGH is also confirmed by the following international accreditations:

- ACCA (Association of Chartered Certified Accountants) accreditation for Finance and accounting programmes;
- CIMA (Chartered Institute of Management Accountants) for:
 - SGH&CIMA Certificate in Business Accounting (BA);
 - SGH&CIMA Diploma in Management Accounting (MA);
 - SGH&CIMA Advanced Diploma in Management Accounting (MA);
- CEEMAN (Central and East European Management Development Association) – international quality accreditation for institution confirming quality of management of education;
- AMBA (Association of Masters in Business Administration) confirming the highest quality of educational services among the MBA programmes;

- PKA (Polish Accreditation Committee) - permanent “excellent” grade on “internationalization” awarded by the PKA during its accreditations;
- ECA – mentioned above.

There are over 65 student organizations at the SGH, many of them are focusing on learning about international – cultural, social, political and economic – aspects of studying, exemplary names include: “Student research organisation of the Relationship with the East”, “Cooperation Franco – Polonaise”, “Foreign Affairs Club”, “Polish-Ukrainian Relations”.

The international dimension is reflected in the HEI’s approach to research

SGH is a beneficiary of international research grants of the Framework Programmes, Erasmus+ Programme, EU tenders and others. Between 2014 and 2018 SGH participated in approximately 60 international research and educational projects financed by the European Union Programs. Other relevant financing institutions are: CERGE-EI, International Visegrad Fund, Interreg Central Europe Programme, ERSTE Foundation, United Nations Office at Geneva, Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research and the others.

The SGH conducts numerous joint projects carried out with foreign partners including participation in EU Framework Programmes, starting with the FP5 to Horizon 2020, EC tenders, COST, Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence, Jean Monnet Chair. Also SGH conducts joint projects with international research centres, among them East Asian Center and the newly created Taiwan-European Union Studies Centre. The results of these efforts are then spread through joint publications with foreign researches and with the publishing of academic works and research papers in internationally acclaimed academic journals.

SGH is developing the international research dimension also by attracting foreign PhD students (see table 1) and by engaging doctoral students in international research and conferences.

Table 1 Foreign doctoral degree students at SGH (2012-2016)

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
No. of students	23	41	50	29	29

Also, the student council of SGH organizes two international projects in cooperation with CEMS network. These are the Chinese-European Partnership for Development (workshops, meetings and conferences organized with Hong Kong University of Science and Technology) and the Emerging Markets Business Summit.

Lessons Learned

- Developing teaching offer in foreign languages and obligatory courses in two foreign languages for every student have been an essential prerequisite to developing the international character of SGH;
- Both ingoing and outgoing mobility is important for internationalization;

- Internationalization has proven to be an effective driver for teaching excellency (didactic methods and know-how transfer) and enhanced motivation for student involvement. It contributes significantly to quality of education;
- The university needs to create more opportunities for staff mobility, it has been observed to trigger new international projects and partnerships;
- Internationalization at the scale present in SGH required professionalization of workers and an administrative unit supporting international cooperation;
- Internationalisation is a key factor in the process of improving its brand image (goodwill) and international reputation.

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