

## **INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES, SKOPJE**

### **ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT (updated version Spring 2016)**

The Institute of Social Sciences and Humanities from Skopje is committed to the long terms goals of the EU Modernisation and Internationalisation Agenda for Higher Education, and to the philosophy and the overarching aims of the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education.

We believe that higher education serves to critically reflect upon our social and economic realities and to reinvent their possibilities by way of forging new horizons of scientific, theoretical and academic vision. The transformative relationship to the current social and economic realities should be grounded in scientific rigor, applied research and reliable data. In other words, scientific innovation in the social sciences and humanities and the applied and policy oriented research are integrally linked with the higher education. This is the philosophy and the core policy statement of the Institute of Social Sciences and Humanities, Skopje. We are committed to international excellence which is fostered through fora such as summers schools (in political sciences, philosophy, and other, primarily interdisciplinary areas), numerous academic internships of young researchers from throughout Europe, symposiums, international publications including the journal "Identities," and other forms of collaboration.

Our international partnerships are also endorsing the main value pillars of the Erasmus program, namely staff and student mobility, innovation in teaching and learning, research and innovation combined with advanced capacity-building for the faculty and staff.

We are fully compliant with the European Credit Transfer System in line with the legal requirements of the country and the relevant legal documents of the European Union. The procedural details concerning recognition of degrees and credits are laid out in the "Rulebook of the Scientific Council" of ISSHS (currently available in Macedonian only on our website). The same goes for all academic decision making procedures.

ISSHS is committed to an inclusive society and to the equity of students and faculty in staff regardless of their gender, ethnicity, color, sexual orientation, and physical or other challenges they might be facing.

In all our activities, both national and international, we carry out result based progress monitoring and evaluation according to clear sets of milestones. We conduct constant peer-reviewing of our research and teaching quality and self-evaluation as methods of quality assurance and enabling public accountability.

We remain focused on deepening the existing partnerships and engaging into new ones via the Erasmus+ mobility schemes.

The programs we are offering are regularly calibrated with the needs of the labor market. This focus, however, does not prevent the curriculum and the teaching style to also be innovative, experimental critical and beyond mere skills-based capacity building.

The core staff of the ISSHS, prior to establishment of the Institute, have been working in other private Research Institute for many years as part of the essential team which played a key role in the international networking of the Institute and its acquiring the status of an accredited graduate school. This prior successfully established communication and networking was transferred and extended in further cooperation with partners from SEE region, EU, as well as USA. Regarding the Institutes' international strategy we mainly cooperate with Institutions from SEE region and EU countries. The strategy for choosing partners initially starts with Institutions we have previous successful collaboration, Institutions that were recommended from our partners, or the selection is done from the list of Institutions coming from the appropriate scientific and research area (such as EC Cordis Partner Service). Most important objectives of ISSHS mobility activities are enabling student and staff mobility, in order to improve the quality of academic process, building the strategic partnership and knowledge alliances with international HE Institutions and networking. Target groups of the mobility activities are students and staff from the area of Social Sciences and Humanities. ISSHS has applied for membership in ATGENDER, and is also part of the Regional Network for Gender Studies in SEE. It participates in the Think Tank Network coordinated by OSI -Budapest. Together with ISSHS-Ljubljana and several other partners from the states of Former

Yugoslavia, it has submitted an application to Tempus 2013 for a joint degree doctoral program in Studies of multiculturalism.

Organisation and implementation of international (EU and non-EU) cooperation projects in teaching and training can be recognized in Institution's' The second programmatic commitment:

Relentless international networking through research, teaching and training projects based on consortia or other forms of international cooperation, but also through organizing events which entail research and teaching, as well as research oriented scholarship and teaching (on at least graduate level) such as:

- Summer schools and summer universities;
- International symposia, colloquia and conferences;
- International publications, including a peer-reviewed journal launching occasional calls for papers.

ISSHS team has reach professional background on organizing such events and international cooperation projects. Core team was also part of project funded under the FP 7 program.

ISSHS is already on the list of project partners of EC CORDIS. Acquiring the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education 2014-2020, ISSHS will be enabled to initialize the process of bilateral and multilateral partnerships with other HE Institutions for cooperation projects in teaching, training and academic research.

Priority 1: Increasing attainment levels and strengthening the social dimension of higher education.

One of the aims of ISSHS is the promotion of socially inclusive society, sensitive to social, ethnic, gender and other difference pertaining to social marginality. This goal is also pursued through its research programs which are primarily policy oriented.

Priority 2: Improving the quality and relevance of higher education, including through cooperation between higher education institutions and the labour market.

The MA programs offered by the institute focus on professional skills required for gender policy and cultural policy makers, policy advocates, experts and future employees in the public administration.

Priority 3: Strengthening quality through mobility and cross-border cooperation

ISSHS since its foundation - and drawing on its previous institutional history - has been developing active international networking, high involvement of international visiting scholars and international academic publishing (including through its journal Identities)

Priority 4: Knowledge Alliances

ISSHS core team has actively participated for number of years in the following international academic networks: ATGender, EPWS,RRPP, It is a member of the International network of think-thanks, supported by the Think-thank Supported by OSI Budapest.

Priority 5: Improving governance and funding

Considered that we are non-profit research Institution we are fully supported through international research grants in the filed of human right, social inclusion, Gender equity, LGBTI rights and intercultural relations. The procedures are democratic, decision are made by the Scientific Council, and the decision process is grounded in the philosophy and procedures of participatory democracy.