



INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES, SKOPJE

ERASMUS POLICY STATEMENT

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 another 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 had previous successful collaboration with, institutions that have been recommended by 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 strategic partnership and knowledge alliances with European HE institutions and networking, but also building of international partnerships. Target groups of the mobility activities consist a) primarily of students and staff from the area of social sciences and humanities (SSH), but also b) secondarily, students from the STEM sciences interested in integrating the SSH component in their education and professional specialization. Additionally, we are interested in staff exchanges that foster close and interdisciplinary integrative collaboration between the “hard sciences” and the social sciences and humanities. Translatability of academic knowledge into policy proposals adds to the curriculum content of the Institute as well as refines its goal in further establishing of intra-European and international cooperation and networking. ISSHS is member of the European Consortium of Humanities Institutes and Centres (ECHIC), International Consortium of Critical Theory Programs led by the Critical Theory Program of the University of Berkeley – California, under the directorship of Profs. Judith Butler and Penelope Deutscher, its director has been the co-director of the Regional Network for Gender Studies in SEE since its inception in 2004, and has participated in the policy research program functioning as a networking platform called “Europeanization Beyond the Process,” as well as part of the tri-partite consortium of expanding bilateral scientific collaboration with Greece following the resolution of the name dispute between the two countries, to name only a few examples of networking.

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 rich professional background in organizing such events and international cooperation projects. Core team was also part of project funded under the FP 7 program, when the integral team worked in a different scientific framework.



Through the participation in a number of international networks as well as online informal academic platforms with whom ISSHS shares similar scientific, academic and civic values, the Institute shall continue to pursue its further internationalization. Such links have already been established with HEI in the United States and Canada. We have engaged recently in the establishing of a new department called “International Research Unit” overseen by an international advisory board that has developed a strategy of internationalization.

As a non-profit scientific institute accredited for graduate level education, operating under the motto summarized as “triple A” standing for “academia analysis activism,” ISSHS will continue to fully fund students from marginalized social groups seeking to bridge the rift between academia and policy making through data and analysis driven activism. The same treatment applies in encouraging students to engage in the mobility programs enabled by Erasmus+ whereby those socially and otherwise disadvantaged are provided with additional support.

One of the Institute’s strategic goals is transposing some of the ongoing academic cooperation with multiple universities in Europe into joint degree program initiatives by way of including into the process academic institutions from across the Atlantic, as well as institutions, platforms, initiatives such as summer universities and forums from across the world.

Visibility has always been part of our approach in the realization of the E+ activities: every visiting teacher or students receives an opportunity to publicly present their work through open lectures, seminars or workshops held by students; events such as workshops, ISP, and multiplier events that are part of KA2 203 are always announced through press releases, and via Institute’s social media pages and handles. We intend to do so in the future as well, enhancing the strategy by including a more vibrant online presence in the form of webinars, international e-symposia, Q&A online sessions with renowned professors our faculty is networked with, and similar.

Further internationalization is indispensable due to rapid political-economic and social shifts on global scale brought about by technological advancement that is no longer bound to a handful of scientific centers but is rather dispersed. That is an opportunity Europe must embrace, and ISSHS as part of its Higher Education Area too, in order to maintain its leading role on global scale. The way to do so is to engage in internationalization through teaching, research and informal academic activities, persistently pursued online and as much as possible offline, by way of making use of the possibilities provide by E+ but not only. Climate crisis, the recently experienced global pandemic are some of the global challenges that remind us that internationally oriented education and science are needed more pressingly than ever.

Internationalization through formal and informal academic activities, promotion of civic engagement and responsible citizenship, as well as through increased online visibility by way of acting as a vibrant online teaching/learning and research platform networked with institutions and organizations worldwide renders internationalization an embedded aspect of all our activities.