

## Editorial

Dear readers,

The end of the year is coming close and Christmas holidays are nearly there! We would like to draw your attention to some events that have happened since the end of summer and also to inform you about some new initiatives happening right now or soon.

Close to our heart is an initiative by the Zentrum für Soziale Innovation/Centre for Social Innovation, which launched a crowdfunding campaign for "Science in Asylum". The initiative aims to support refugee scientists to document their research and to gain a foothold in Austria. It offers them the possibility to attend seminars that provide essential information, training and networking opportunities. Please support the **crowd funding campaign** to help finance the project! More information can be found **here**. You can also help spreading the idea by forwarding the email and sharing the **facebook page**.

Please also note that the call for One Month Visits to Austria is again open. The main purpose of the scholarship is to enable scientific staff of universities to do research at Austrian universities in the context of master or doctoral studies. Targeted countries are Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, FYR of Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia. The deadline for applications is 31<sup>st</sup> January 2016. For more information visit **our website**.

Enjoy reading,

Michaela Handke

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**Information on Impressum**

## Thematic Article

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SOCIAL DIMENSION OF THE BOLOGNA PROCESS IN KOSOVO

The concept of the Social Dimension of higher education was first developed within the Bologna Process in the Prague Communiqué of 2001 and, broadly speaking, refers to the goal of removing inequalities in access to higher education in the European Area of Higher Education (EHEA): The student body entering, participating and completing higher education should reflect the diversity of the populations. This comes with a need for appropriate conditions for students so that they can complete their studies without obstacles related to their social and economic background. The social dimension includes measures to be taken by governments to help students, especially from socially disadvantaged groups, in financial and economic aspects and to provide them with guidance and counselling services with a view to widening access.

Given the importance of Bologna standards and the fact that the Social Dimension has so far received limited attention in Kosovo - despite its strong relevance to the country – efforts within HigherKOS are currently underway to collect relevant data for Kosovo.

Based on a collection of key resources, a brief desk research was conducted – pointing to the main issues which were taken up in the formulation of Guidelines for Focus Group Interviews. Participants from the focus group discussions concluded that Kosovo needs a national strategy and action plan with concrete measures to implement the Social Dimension of the Bologna Process. A coherent and clear strategy and action plan would provide clearer guidance and division of responsibilities between key agents in the system. Such a strategy/action plan could be an important contribution to improve opportunities for underrepresented groups, improve social cohesion and serve to prevent potential social discontent.

Higher education appears to be the most efficient vehicle for change in society and increased opportunities for Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities, economically and socially disadvantaged categories and persons (in particular girls and women) from rural population belonging to minority communities. Despite over ten years of implementation of the Bologna Process in Kosovo, there seems to be severe lack of information on the Bologna Social Dimension among all key agents in the Kosovo higher education system.

Therefore, awareness building measures appear to be necessary across all levels - agencies and institutions, teaching staff and students alike - to synergise and follow up also in light of a potential national strategic plan in the field of the Social Dimension. Another common recommendation coming from the focus group discussions was the need to move beyond seeing improved access as the only channel for addressing the Social Dimension of the Bologna Process in Kosovo. Measures to improve overall quality of provision and academic support appear just as important to provide equal opportunities for underrepresented groups.

Pristina, July 2015

by Xhavit Rexhaj

With contributions from Arianit Krasniqi, Louise Sperl and Veronika Nitsche (WUS Austria)

Additionally, written feedback has been kindly provided by: Muhamet Arifi (Balkan Sunflowers), Lulavere Behluli-Kadriu, Enesa Kadic (MEST) and Mimoza Paçukuv(KWN)

You can download the full report [here](#).

## Recent News & Events

22.12.2015

### PATTERNS Lectures final event and Community Meeting, November 2015, Budapest



The Final Event of PATTERNS Lectures 2014/2015 was organised as a Community Meeting in cooperation with the International Conference *Visualising the Nation – Post-Socialist ImagiNations*, conceptualised by the art historian Edit András and realised through the collaboration of the following institutes: Institute of Art History, Research Centre for the Humanities, Hungarian Academy of Science, Budapest; Municipal Gallery – Kiscell Museum, Budapest History Museum and ERSTE Foundation from 26 - 29 November 2015 at the Eötvös Loránd University – Faculty of Humanities in Budapest.

[read more](#)

25.11.2015

### SALE - Project meeting in Tolmezzo



**Tolmezzo.** The third SALE project meeting was hosted by cramars in Tolmezzo/Italy from 25-26 November 2015. During the meeting a special emphasis was put on IO4 which is the development of the training material for the social media training course. [read more](#)

18.11.2015

### SIPUS - Consortium Meeting in Belgrade



**Belgrade.** During the Consortium meeting, which was hosted by the Singidunum University from 18 to 20 November, an overview on all implemented project activities as well as an outlook on the future activities were given. [read more](#)

03.11.2015

### Teachers - Agents of Change: final event in Prague



**Prague.** The project "Teachers: Agents of change. A strategic approach to anchoring development education in Czech and in Polish formal education systems. A strategic approach to anchoring development education in Czech and in Polish formal education systems" is coming to an end. We have met for a final conference in Prague on 21/22 October 2015 to discuss current practices in various European countries and to investigate into future collaborations for a more globally thinking Europe.

[read more](#)

