



MINISTRY OF
SCIENCE AND
EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

Federal Ministry
Republic of Austria
Education, Science
and Research



Swedish Council for
Higher Education



Co-funded by the
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CONFERENCE CONCEPT NOTE

Erasmus+ project '**SIDERAL – Social and International Dimension of Education and Recognition of Acquired Learning**' kick-off conference

Date and Venue of the conference

2nd July 2019, University of Zadar, Ulica Mihovila Pavlinovića, 23 000 Zadar, Croatia

Organizer

The Ministry of Science and Education of Croatia

About the project

The Erasmus+ project '**SIDERAL – Social and International Dimension of Education and Recognition of Acquired Learning**' aims at improving the national and European policy on social dimension in higher education.

The Project supports the implementation of the (Croatian) National Plan for Strengthening the Social Dimension with the support of peers from Austria and Sweden and in a close cooperation with the European Students' Union. In particular, the Project contributes to further developments of recognition of prior learning in higher education through encouraging flexible learning paths within a broader policy framework of social dimension. Moreover, the project supports the work of the BFUG Advisory Group on Social Dimension by facilitating the Advisory Group meetings and related peer learning activities as well as by developing of proposed instruments and policies to fulfil the objectives of the Paris Communiqué.

Aims and Objectives of the Conference

The kick-off conference is envisaged to launch debates on European policies on social dimension with two parallel breakout sessions on social dimension of higher education and on recognition of prior learning. The conference will create a platform for exchange of experiences and best practices among project partner countries and raise awareness of policy developments on social dimension at the European level.

The conference will bring together national and international experts on educational policies, representatives of higher education institutions, students, NGO's and other stakeholders.

Background

The Croatian **Strategy of Education, Science and Technology** was adopted in 2014, and has eight main objectives, one of which is Objective 6: Improve the student financial support



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system with a special emphasis on the social dimension of higher education. The Strategy is available in English on the following link:

https://mzo.hr/sites/default/files/dokumenti/Strategija_OZT/sozt-2018/strategy_for_education_science_and_technology.pdf

In 2015, the Croatian National Group for the Advancement of Social Dimension in Higher Education was established, and it developed the **National plan for the Advancement of Social Dimension of Higher Education of the Republic of Croatia 2019-2021**, which was adopted in January 2019. by the Croatian Government. Therefore, Croatia was recognized as one of the three countries in Europe which has a dedicated self-standing strategy or national plan for inclusion in higher education, along with Ireland and Austria. Also, a member of the Croatian National Group for the Advancement of Social Dimension in Higher Education is the co-chair of the BFUG Advisory Group on Social Dimension.

The BFUG Advisory Group on Social Dimension was established in 2018 and is co-chaired by ESU and Croatia. Their overarching aim is to develop instruments and policies to fulfil the objective in the Paris Communiqué and to support national plans and strategies aimed at strengthening social dimension, as well as to improve access and completion by under-represented and vulnerable groups. The group is developing the 'Principles and Guidelines for Social Dimension (PAG)' for further improvement of social dimension in the European Area of Higher Education (EHEA) until the forthcoming Ministerial Meeting of the Bologna Process Member States - <http://www.ehea.info/page-Advisory-Group-1>.

DRAFT AGENDA

Kick-off conference of the Erasmus+ project SIDERAL – Social and International Dimension of Education and Recognition of Acquired Learning

2nd July 2019, Zadar, Croatia

1st July 2019 – Welcome dinner at Restaurant Harbor, Obala Kneza Branimira 6/a, Zadar

2nd July 2019 – University of Zadar, Ulica Mihovila Pavlinovića, 23 000 Zadar

8:30-9:00 – Registration and Coffee

9:00-9:30 – Opening Speeches



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- Blaženka Divjak, Minister of Science and Education (tbc)
- Dijana Vican, Rector of the University of Zadar

9:30-11:30 – *European Policies on Inclusion and the Social Dimension in Higher Education – Challenges and Opportunities* – Keynote Presentations and Discussion

- Anna-Lena Claeys-Kulik, European University Association (EUA): "Strategies towards equity, diversity and inclusion at higher education institutions in Europe: outcomes of the INVITED project"
- Katrina Koppel, European Students' Union (ESU): "Social Dimension of Education through Student Perspective"
- Martin Unger, Institute for Advanced Studies Vienna, Austria: "Why is there so little progress on the social dimension in the Bologna Process – some hypotheses"

11:30-12:00 – Coffee Break

12:00-14:00 – Parallel Breakout Sessions

- 1) *Social Dimension in Higher Education* – chairing: Ninoslav Šćukanec Schmidt, Institute for the Development of Education and BFUG Advisory Group on Social Dimension, Croatia
 - Maria Keplinger, Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research (BMBWF)
 - Aleksandar Šušnjar, University of Rijeka, Croatia
 - Nedjeljka Balić-Nižić, University of Zadar, Croatia
- 2) *Recognition of Prior Learning as a Tool for Enhancing Inclusion* – chairing: Đurđica Dragojević, Ministry of Science and Education, Croatia
 - Barbara Birke, Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation, Austria (AQ)
 - Anders Ahlstrand, The Swedish Council for Higher Education (UHR)
 - Diana Šimić, Faculty of Organization and Informatics Varaždin, Croatia

14:00-15:00 – Lunch

15:00-16:00 – Reporting from breakout sessions, wrap-up, conclusions