



Transfer of Good practices & Reinforcement of Internationalization Strategies in

The TIGRIS Project has been awarded for EU co-funding within the framework of the Erasmus+ programme “Capacity Building in the Field of Higher Education”. Capacity building projects in the field of higher education support the modernization, accessibility, and internationalization of higher education in Partner Countries, in this case Kurdistan. The TIGRIS Project, which will run for 3 years from 2017 – 2020, is coordinated by the Georg-August-Universität Göttingen, Germany. The project consortium is composed of 4 European partners and 10 Kurdish partners, including the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MHESR), as well as 2 associate partners.

Welcome

Dear Partners of the Erasmus+ TIGRIS Project, Dear Readers, welcome to the Erasmus+ programme (TIGRIS) Newsletter. This is the thirs issue of a series Newsletters that are issued by KISSR and supported by UGOE.

Webinar on Financial and Administrative Management

On 23rd August 2018, Ms. Laura C. Hoffmann from Göttingen University together with the Kurdish partners’ project managers held a webinar on financial and administrative management of the TIGRIS Project.

The webinar recapitulated the general financial and administrative requirements set by the EACEA as well as related management processes and procedures established in the TIGRIS Project. The webinar also offered a welcome opportunity to deliberate on practical issues involving the financial administration of the project.

As a result, the participants gained deeper insight into project-management-related topics and consolidated their knowledge of the financial and administrative requirements and regulations of Erasmus+ CBHE projects.

TIGRIS Work Package 1 Concluding Workshop

From 24th – 26th September 2018, the partners of the Erasmus+ TIGRIS Project gathered at University of Sulaimani for the Concluding Workshop of Work Package 1.



The workshop was dedicated to the review and discussions of the results of the work package 1, but also included planning sessions for the implementation of WP2 as well as additional trainings for the strategic and operational development of internationalization in Higher Education.

The workshop started with opening remarks by the president of University of Sulaimani Dr. Ridha Hussein, followed by welcome addresses of the

Director of International Academic Relations & Media Dr. Karzan Khidhir, the project's Coordinator Dr. Uwe Muuss from Georg-August-Universität Göttingen and the Head of the regional Co-coordinator Dr. Polla Khanaqa from the Kurdistan Institution for Strategic Studies and Scientific Research.



After the welcome addresses, Mr. Jakob Hedderich from Göttingen University kicked off the first working session of the day by recapitulating together with the partners the overall structure and timeline of the TIGRIS project providing a clear view on the project's overall implementation, thereby also delivering a short target-performance comparison.

Afterwards, each Kurdish partner university as well as the Work Package Leader KU Leuven presented their results produced in Work Package 1, which was followed by a critical assessment and discussion on the results achieved so far. The partners then deliberated on decisive actions to be implemented to further enhance and finalise the analysis of existing conditions for and level of internationalisation of Higher Education in Kurdistan Region of Iraq. As a result of the deliberations, the partners established an action plan on the finalisation of Work Package 1.

The working agenda of the first workshop day concluded with a training session on Risk Analysis by the External Quality Expert of the TIGRIS Project Dr. Carlos Machado, which gave an comprehensive introduction into essential tasks of risk management like risk identification and assessment.

The first half of the second workshop day was dedicated to a meeting of the TIGRIS Steering Committee (TSC), which included a report by the

head of the TIGRIS Quality Leading Team Dr. Uwe Brandenburg from Global Impact Institute on the performance of the TIGRIS Consortium in the project's first year as well as a planning session for the implementation of Work Package 2. As an outcome, the TSC adopted the action plan established the day before and established a preliminary plan for implementing Work Package 2.

After the TSC meeting, Dr. Uwe Muuss from Göttingen University conducted the first of two comprehensive training sessions focusing on the strategic development of HEI structures for internationalisation: Confronted with four different scenarios of HEIs engaging in internationalisation, each with individual development goals, the participants were challenged to devise a comprehensive development strategy by identifying stakeholders, developing appropriate institutional structures and devising action as well as financial plans to achieve to development goals set. The strategies developed were then analysed and discussed by the participants, highlighting strong points and weaknesses of the strategic approaches developed.

The third day of the workshop was dedicated to the second comprehensive training session conducted by Ms. Violeta Osouchová from Masaryk University. Titled "See your IRO in action", the training focused on developing and managing the operational aspects of internationalisation: By going through the steps of developing a professional International Relations Office and engaging in practical exercises, the participants received the tools and knowledge necessary to set up or refine their institution's own IRO.

After the workshop, the group traveled on to Erbil to hold the Annual Dissemination Conference of the TIGRIS Project at Salahaddin University.

TIGRIS Annual Dissemination Conference 2018

On 27th of September 2018, the Annual Dissemination Conference of the TIGRIS Project took place at the Cultural Center of Salahaddin University – Erbil.



Titled “Internationalization of Higher Education in Kurdistan Region of Iraq – Towards future convergence with European Higher Education”, the Conference gathered representatives of the TIGRIS Project, political stakeholders, HEI managers as well as members of the Council of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, to present the achievements of the TIGRIS Project and to engage in discussion on reform of Higher Education in Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

The conference began with opening remarks by the host of the event and President of Salahaddin University Dr. Ahmed Anwar Amin Dezaye welcoming the participants and stressing the importance of the TIGRIS Project for the development of Higher Education in Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

The president’s remarks were followed by the keynote of Dr. Khattab Ahmed Mustafa, Managing Director for Administration and Financial Affairs of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research in Kurdistan, who on behalf of the Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research Dr. Yusuf Goran presented the Ministry’s future vision on Higher Education in Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

After the keynote and as guests of honor, Mr. Michal Svoboda, Consul General of the Czech Republic, Mr. Willem Cosijn, Consul General of the Netherlands, and Ms. Helena Merks, Deputy Consul General of Germany, each delivered a welcome address reassuring their support for the reform efforts undertaken in the TIGRIS Project. In his follow-up speech, Dr. Uwe Muuss, Coordinator of the TIGRIS Project, expressed his sincere gratitude for the support shown and gave a deeper insight into the genesis of the TIGRIS Project and its inherent goals.

After a short break, the conference continued with the presentation of Mr. Bryar Hassan, Director of the International Relations Office at the Kurdistan Institution for Strategic Studies and Scientific Research, reviewing the activities and outcomes of the project’s first year and presenting what is to come in the year ahead.

He was followed by Dr. Mohammed Azeed Saeed, Director of Grants & Academic Projects at Salahaddin University – Erbil, who gave an insight into the institutional changes undertaken at Salahaddin University, namely the opening of an “Office of Grants and Academic Projects” as well as an “Erasmus plus Coordination Office”, in order to support the institution’s internationalisation efforts.

In his follow-up talk, Dr. Karzan Ghafur Khidhir, Director of International Academic Relations & Media from University of Sulaimani, presented about the experience made in undertaking international joint PhD education thereby providing valuable insight into future areas of reform in order to strengthen the ability of Kurdish HEIs to engage in international doctoral education.

Taking up the topic of future HE reforms, Dr. Carlos Machado, Higher Education Reform Expert and External Quality Expert of the TIGRIS Project, delivered a talk on recognition of studies and pointed out future steps for bringing Kurdish Higher Education closer to the European Area of Higher Education.

Finally, Mr. Saman Mohammed Othman, Head of the English Department of Raparin University, presented on the introduction of ECTS-based study programmes, one of the key aspects in reforming and internationalising HE in Kurdistan Region of Iraq, thereby sharing valuable insight and tips with his colleagues present.

The conference concluded with a round table discussion, highlighting and addressing key points of topics presented on and raising awareness to future fields of action.

Workshop on the Bologna Process & the Implementation of ECTS in Kurdish HEIs

From 11th – 13th September 2018, the partners of the TIGRIS Project gathered at the University of

Raparin for the Workshop on the Bologna Process & the Implementation of ECTS in Kurdish HEIs.

During the three-day workshop, a total of 29 representatives from the Kurdish partner universities and the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research received an introduction to the Bologna principles and system as well as in-depth training on use and implementation of ECTS.



In its course, the workshop also tackled the fundamentals of the learning-outcome-based model of teaching and learning and competence-based curriculum thereby paving the way for a future paradigm shift in teaching and learning in higher education in Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

Due to the workshop's dedicated hands-on approach, the participants also engaged in practical exercises providing them with the opportunity to get first-hand experience in solving potential challenges of ECTS implementation at Higher Education Institutions.

The third workshop day provided the colleagues from University of Raparin & Charmo University with the opportunity to present their universities' individual framework to implement ECTS at their institution thereby allowing the international experts present to assess and evaluate the work done so far. Based on this evaluation, a report was drafted including a comprehensive list of recommendations to further support the reform efforts in Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

In addition, the participants received extensive training material on the Bologna System, the implementation of ECTS as well as curriculum design

and assessment methods for a learning-outcome-based model of education.

Comparison of Rules and Regulations

One of the activities of the TIGRIS project in work package one is the identification of standards for the accreditation of joint and double degrees in Kurdistan. To do so, we need a framework for comparison between existing regulation and procedures in Kurdish institutions for development of double diplomas and those in place within EU partners.

After discussing the rules and regulations of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research-KRG, legislation of admitting master and doctoral programs in Kurdistan Region, and standard of EU programs, bologna process as an example, a framework for comparison between existing regulation and procedures in Kurdish institutions is presented for development of double diplomas and those in place within EU partners.

Outreaches and Results

During this period, these are the most important outreaches and results of the TIGRIS project:

- Info days and seminar presentations for academic staffs, students of each local partner of the TIRGRI project.
- Arranging and managing joint degree study (master and PhD) between KISSR and local universities in Kurdistan region of Iraq.
- Publishing newspaper articles and broadcasting TV interviews regarding the project significance.
- A comparative study to compare the Kurdish and European higher education systems.

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Useful links and References:

<http://www.tigris-erasmusplus.eu/>

<http://www.kissr.edu.krd/en/TIGRISProject.php>