

S.U.C.RE.

Supporting University Community pathways for REfugees-migrants

(Erasmus+ Two-year KA2 Strategic Partnership)

Dear supporter of our project “Supporting University Community Pathways for REfugee-Migrants”,

The S.U.C.RE project is already approaching its final phase and the scheduled results and outputs are becoming visible and this 3rd Newsletter will give you some valuable insights, we believe. The problems that refugees are facing continue and interventions like this project – and many others - are still relevant and much needed. Working together with academics and practitioners on refugee problems in Greece, Germany and The Netherlands has been an enriching experience that has widened our perspectives and professional networks.

In Amsterdam we continue to offer our one year preparatory course to non-Dutch language users that prepares them for entry into Dutch higher education. Among the participants are many with a refugee background. In 2017, 37 out of 48 students have entered Dutch higher educations – what otherwise would not have been possible. Our Academic Freedom / SAR program is strongly supported by VU staff: not only by hosting 6 scholars at the moment but also by financial contributions. Also, our Department of Clinical Psychology leads the H2020 project: Strengthening Mental Health Care Systems for Syrian Refugees (<https://strengths-project.eu/en/contact/>)

Finally, I would like to draw your attention to the 3rd Multiplier Event that will take place in Amsterdam on 5 July 2018. The program is published on the S.U.C.RE. website. The main theme is Higher Education for Refugee Students and Scholars: Access and Opportunities. Results of S.U.C.RE. will be presented and a number of interesting contributions from experts, scholars and (former refugee) students are foreseen. We cannot promise you beautiful weather, but do guarantee a beautiful city and long, long daylight hours to enjoy the historical center of Amsterdam. You are most welcome; mail to sucre2018@vu.nl.

Warm Greetings,
Frans Snijders,

Director International Office
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam



Upcoming Events

July 2018

- ▶ Partner’s Meeting, 4th of July 2018
VU Amsterdam, The Netherlands
- ▶ 3rd Multiplier Event, 5th of July 2018
VU Amsterdam, The Netherlands

October 2018

- ▶ Final Meeting, October 2018
AUTH, Thessaloniki, Greece (date tbc)
- ▶ 4th Multiplier Event, October 2018
AUTH, Thessaloniki, Greece (date tbc)

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News on the Intellectual Outputs of the Project

Intellectual Output 1:

Higher Education Qualification and Application Procedures for Refugee Applicants

Description: <http://sucra.auth.gr/en/outputs>

Intellectual Output 2:

Institutional Support for Refugee Students in Higher Education

Description: <http://sucra.auth.gr/en/outputs>

Activities realized so far:

To address the objectives of IO1 & IO2, VU Amsterdam and the UoC have already researched on drop-out rates and existing programs at European universities. In this context, clarification was needed in differentiating IO2 from IO1 regarding the Desk Study that was made about existing programs on accessing HEIs.

First, the Desk Study was expanded by research on programs that fit the requirements of IO2. Second, a comparison was made regarding the hurdles in accessing HEI's and the challenges in navigating the European university structure. Then, the differences and similarities between international students and refugee students were analyzed.

VU Amsterdam together with the University of Cologne designed online surveys for students and university staff involved in refugee support structures at HEIs. The surveys were shared with over 15 universities in Europe and their students from late March on. Up to now, 193 responses (students) and 32 responses (staff) have been received. The UoC also organized in-depth interviews with refugee students from the Cologne region to complement the surveys and discuss some of the questions in more detail. In the near future, the UoC will organize a structured workshop for staff in the area of student support services based on the outcome of the students' surveys.

A financial support roundtable will be held under the direction of the UoC to explore potential scholarships and sponsors that may be interested in partnering with institutions to support refugee students. Finally, the UoC will design a handbook of recommendation on *What and how can university structure and student support systems be improved upon* while including the data of the workshops, surveys and roundtable discussion. If you would like to participate in the online surveys, please see the following links: <https://form.jotform.com/80632416871962> (students), <https://form.jotform.com/80671713771964> (staff).

Intellectual Output 3:

Institutional Support for Refugee Scholars in Higher Education

Description: <http://sucra.auth.gr/en/outputs>

Activities realized so far:

The project activities have been carried out according to plan. Questionnaire 1 (concerning host institutions, link: <https://form.jotformeu.com/71382951532356>) has been analyzed and the draft results have been shared with over 50 respondents. They were also asked to provide us with exemplary best practices.

Questionnaire 2 (concerning scholars at risk and refugee scholars, link: <https://form.jotformeu.com/72851093232352>) was circulated late 2017. Over 50 responses were received. Initial analysis of the responses show a strong consistency with the results of Questionnaire 1. Pressing issues that are mentioned by scholars are, amongst others, language, (short) duration of their stay at host institutions, adaptation to (new) scientific environment, concerns for accompanying family and family left behind. About 20 scholars have been interviewed.

Questionnaire 3 (link: <https://form.jotformeu.com/80103978876367>) is directed at academic hosts and was circulated in March 2017. Till now, 40+ responses have come in and analysis has started.

Feel free to participate in these questionnaires if you are a respective recipient.

Dissemination Activities

Alexandros Triantafyllidis from AUTH presented the S.U.C.RE. Project at the 7th Erasmus Staff Training Week held at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki organized by the Department of European Educational Programmes of AUTH (9th October 2017).

Mariana Arjona-Soberon from UoC & Marinus Kool from VU Amsterdam presented S.U.C.RE. to representatives from UNHCR, IOM, ICRC, NGOs and several European universities during a Round Table Discussion on Developing HE Opportunities for Refugees, organized by the European Resettlement Network ERN+ in Hague (26th October 2017).

Johannes Müller from UoC presented S.U.C.RE. to stakeholders and researchers at the GPPi Conference "Academic Freedom and Political Repression in the University Sector" (6th - 7th November 2017).

Mariana Arjona-Soberon from UoC presented S.U.C.R.E. to a large number of stakeholders from various international educational institutions at the OEB Berlin: Digitalization in Higher Education Conference (7th - 8th December 2017).

Alexandros Triantafyllidis from AUTH presented S.U.C.RE. at a meeting with Vice Mayor of Thessaloniki Mr. Petros Lekakis and with Mrs Virginia Politi (Head of Municipality of Thessaloniki Social Support Department) and informed them about how outputs from IO4 and IO5 are useful for practitioners working with the refugee general population in the Municipality of Thessaloniki (12th December 2017).



Intellectual Output 4:

Psychosocial Support through Communities' Engagement & Mobilization

Description: <http://sucra.auth.gr/en/outputs>

Activities realized so far:

The IO4 team continued the desk research on: a) personal and social resources of adaptation and support (coping strategies, social support and networks, intergroup attitudes, social representations, social policy measures, acculturation strategies) and b) examples of good practices.

The initial findings from the analysis of the focus groups with the NGOs' professionals working in the field, Refugee Education Coordinators (REC) from the Greek Ministry of Education, young refugees, etc. were presented in the 16th International Conference Migration and Language Education that took place in Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. The presentation focused on the problems that professionals working in the field themselves identify as the most important: a) inadequacy infrastructures to meet the needs of the refugees, b) the variability of the refugee movement and fluidity of the refugee needs that hinder provision of organized support, c) the differentiation of needs for integration according to refugee origins (ethnic / national, rural / urban), and d) the difficulty in cooperation and coordination among groups or institutions working in the field.

Further analysis led to the writing of the first draft of the *digital / online educational module and monitoring / recommendations guidelines for trainers regarding the psychosocial support of refugees* which includes a) objectives, b) main topics and their duration, c) methods of training for each topic covered and d) descriptions of the activities and resources to be used in each topic. The team also started preparing the *digital/online educational module and monitoring/recommendations guidelines of lessons on refugee integration and social cohesion*.

The first version of the above mentioned *digital guidelines* were presented in two workshops organized in the context of the Multiplier Event on the *Practices for the Support and Integration of Refugees*. The IO4 team is now working on finalizing the digital and the hard copy version of the educational modules and on the guidelines for trainers taking into account the feedback provided.

The team is, also, preparing for the 2018 International Association for the Study of Forced Migration (IASFM) that will take place in Thessaloniki, 24-27 July 2018.

Intellectual Output 5:

Supporting refugees on Health and Law issues

Description: <http://sucra.auth.gr/en/outputs>

Activities realized so far:

In September 2017, the IO5 team submitted the final training material, which focuses on the first three activities, concerning legal, health issues, and social protection for refugees. The educational material was presented in the 16th International Conference on Migration and Language Education, which took place at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and was tested in the context of the S.U.C.R.E.: Multiplier Event on the *Practices for the Support and Integration of Refugees* with two training workshops on health and on legal support.

On May 12, 2018, the IO5 team presented a paper on Support of Refugees concerning Legal Issues in the Context of the S.U.C.R.E. project at the Conference: *Fundamental Rights Protection in the EU* (10-12 May 2018, Thessaloniki, Greece). Furthermore, the IO5 team is in contact with the Cologne Legal Clinic for Support of Refugees, in order to make a study visit and exchange material, and is currently editing the training material, in order to submit a final and annotated version, which will include the results of the training workshops by the end of May 2018. The IO5 team is, also, currently preparing the final Report on monitoring / recommendations guidelines for trainers regarding legal and health support for refugees.

Johannes Müller & Heike Berner from UoC took part in the Regional SAR Meeting: Rhein-Rhur-Sieg and presented S.U.C.R.E. to stakeholders from various educational institutions including Universities of Cologne, Aachen, Bochum, Bonn, Duisburg-Essen, Düsseldorf and Siegen (30th January 2018).

Susanne Preuschoff, Mariana Arjona Soberón & Lena Reuter informed the Vice-rector of UoC and stakeholders from Educational institutes about S.U.C.R.E. during a UoC Vice-Rector Meeting (26th February 2018).

Marinus Kool from VU Amsterdam presented S.U.C.R.E. at the Meeting with the H2020 STRENGTHS project Coordinator. The Meeting aimed at exchanging relevant ideas and creating links between S.U.C.R.E. and STRENGTHS projects (27th February 2018).

Susanne Preuschoff from UoC informed the Indian General Consul about the S.U.C.R.E. project and additional refugee-related activities from the UoC (3rd March 2018).

Ariadni Stogiannidou, Vice Rector of AUTH for Academic & Student Affairs, and Alexandros Triantafyllidis had a meeting with the new General Secretary of the Greek Ministry of Education, Dr. Giorgos Aggelopoulos. The discussion focused on outputs of IO1 and IO2 and the possible contribution of S.U.C.R.E. to the establishment of academic entrance criteria and refugee student integration processes in the Greek Higher Education (12th March 2018).

Lena Reuter & Mariana Arjona Soberón from UoC presented S.U.C.R.E. at the UoC Regional International Networking Meeting (20th March 2018).

2nd Multiplier Event Aristotle University of Thessaloniki 15th - 18th March 2018

The second Multiplier Event entitled *Practices for the Support and Integration of Refugees* took place at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. Apart from the representatives of the consortium, 100 stakeholders working in 40 different Organizations for refugee support and more than 50 graduates and students participated in this 4-day event.

The multiplier event included talks, open activities and discussions held by people working in the field. Moreover, we found the opportunity to organize four training workshops on:

- Psychosocial support through communities' engagement & mobilization
- The effect of physical activity and sports on social integration
- Supporting refugees on health issues
- Supporting refugees on law issues

The Multiplier event was highly successful. Apart from their overall positive evaluation of the event, the participants provided important feedback on the educational material both through group discussion during the workshops and by filling in evaluation questionnaires. Most of them pointed out the need for more training workshops in the future.



SAR Global Congress Berlin, 23 – 26 April 2018

The congress was attended by about 400 people: scholars, academic hosts, coordinators, students and representatives from embassies, NGO's and funding agencies. The conference theme was: *The University and the Future of Democracy*. It focused on the role that universities need to play to support academic freedom and reflected on democratic values that are under pressure globally. We heard a number of inspiring key-notes and many moving stories from scholars.

The S.U.C.RE project was presented by Alexandros Triantafyllidis (Aristotle University Thessaloniki) during the session on European projects dealing with refugee issues. Work on Output 3 (Supporting Refugee Scholars) was presented by Heike Berner, Johannes Mueller (University of Cologne) and Marinus Kool (VU Amsterdam). Summaries of the project in general and of Output 3, specifically, were also displayed on two posters throughout the conference.

OTHER NEWS

Project PRESS (Provision of Refugee Education and Support Scheme) TOOLKIT

The project P.R.E.S.S is an initiative of the Hellenic Open University in order to respond to the educational and integration needs of refugees currently residing in Greece. The majority of the educational actions were informed by ethnographic interdisciplinary fieldwork research regarding the linguistic, communication and education needs and expectations of refugees (adults, adolescents and children) conducted by various field researchers and collaborators. Most of the actions focus on language education, integration into formal education (primary, secondary and tertiary), information for individuals with a refugee background and awareness raising for the local community.

For more information:

<http://press-project.eap.gr/toolkit/>

MOOC "Dangerous Questions: Why Academic Freedom Matters"

The MOOC "Dangerous Questions: Why Academic Freedom Matters" is an interactive online course launched by the Academic Refugee Project (University of Oslo) on the Futurelearn platform, starting **June 4**, 2018.

University students and staff is the main target group, but the course is free of **charge and open to all**.

For more information:

www.futurelearn.com/courses/academic-freedomcourse

The University of Ljubljana will be hosting the launch event entitled "Dangerous Questions: Why Academic Freedom Matters", on **June 13**, 2018.

For more information and registration:

<http://www.uio.no/english/about/global/globally-engaged/academic-refuge/events/dangerous-questions:-why-academic-freedom-matters.html>

