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Status – quo Analysis Reports

Activity 1 of the



Project:

**Equal Access through Service Learning
for Persons with Disabilities**

Skopje, 2012

Note: The texts herein, in general, are included as originally submitted by the authors, i.e. they were not subject to contextual changes.

**Report for the accessibility
of the South East European University in Tetovo**

prepared by

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University profile

In spring 2000, OSCE High Commissioner for National Minorities initiated discussions for establishment of a new university in the Republic of Macedonia, which was supported by international donors.

Following the adoption of the Law on Higher Education by the Parliament of the Republic of Macedonia, that allowed the founding of universities that are not related to the state and supported higher education in Albanian language. In late 2000, OSCE High Commissioner for National Minorities started the planning of the University. Construction work started in March 2001, and South East European University (SEEU) was opened six months later. In November 2002, the number of students was 2250, and in October 2003, the number of students was 3700.

SEEU is now in its eleven year of operation with more than 7000 students and 3000 graduates. From opening its campus in Tetovo in October 2001, it has succeeded in establishing itself as a quality-led, financially sustainable university. It is now regarded as a model for multi-ethnic, multi-lingual higher education in South East Europe.

Moreover, it has succeeded in combining the best of European and US experience, and has continued to benefit from academic collaborations sponsored by the EU Commission and USAID, among other donors. It benefits from scholarship support provided by The Netherlands and The Open Society Institute. Its history, which you can read in 'About the University' is a fascinating account of how SEEU has reached this position of strength against a background of political and economic uncertainties in the region. Now SEEU reaches out to other institutions in promoting research collaboration, exchange of students and staff and its community.

The University is equipped with many facilities that serve students in achieving their goals within the disciplines they have chosen.

Wanting all graduates to benefit fully from their solid academic backgrounds, the University provides support and practical advice concerning their careers. To support this, the university has signed cooperation agreements with private and public enterprises that can incorporate students in continuous practical work where they can maximally use the knowledge and skills acquired at SEEU.



SEEU operates its academic activities from two teaching establishments, the main campus in Tetovo and its newly established campus in the capital city, Skopje.



The main campus of SEEU is built upon the principle – all in one, which enables interactive comprehensiveness between students in all study disciplines. The campus is a model university facility in that it stretches across a large green area and contains purpose-built accommodations. These include: four large lecture halls with the capacity to fit 200 to 500 students, approximately 30 classrooms with a capacity for 30 to 60 students, staff offices, two state-of-the-art computer centers with more than 650 computers, a library and residential accommodations. In addition, there are several recreational facilities where students can add social activities to their academic experience at SEEU. Recently, the main campus was expanded and added a new Business Education Building and 8 new computer laboratories with 150 computers from the type “Sun thin client” and 50 computers in support of teaching, learning and research.

The equipment for teaching is modern, practical and enables optimal services for application and interactive learning.



The SEEU campus in Skopje is not nearly as large as the main campus in Tetovo, but it provides the same essential features that make SEEU such a uniquely modern European university and an excellent and enjoyable place to earn a degree. The campus is located in the heart of the capital city opposite the Italian Embassy.

The SEEU Campus is unique in the region in that certain concepts in the sphere of protection for the environment and ecological system are being taken into consideration. A large part of the Campus (25.000m²) is a green area. About 60 % of the materials that were used during the construction of buildings were with eco-characteristics.

The University uses high quality filtered drinking water from its own resources. At SEEU, we are all dedicated to recycling waste materials. Due to that, we are separating waste and then transporting it to respective factories for processing.

SEEU is constantly investing in the technology for electric power savings.

SEEU also believes in investing in renewable resources. As environmental pollution decreases, this will have positive influence on the development of the economy in the country.

Within the University are the following faculties:

- 1. Faculty of Contemporary Sciences and Technologies**
- 2. Faculty of Law**
- 3. Business and Economics**
- 4. Faculty of Languages, Cultures and Communications**
- 5. Public Administration and Political Sciences**

Dormitories

A unique feature of SEEU is the on campus housing, with 7 dormitories with a capacity for 450 students. Dormitories are divided into two main blocks, the female and male dormitories. For all requests and problems, which students may have, contact the person responsible for dormitories. The safety of students is of major importance; therefore, the entire Campus University Security works to safeguard the buildings. Based on the schedule determined by the internal rules of the University, every entrance and exit from the campus is monitored. Safety of students is at a maximum level.



Conditions

Dormitories buildings are modern, and rooms are equipped with the necessary inventory. The constructive part of the rooms is the kitchen, which is equipped with necessary electrical utilities.

All dormitories have access to the University network (Internet) and are designed to meet the standards of modern dormitories which offers inhabitants the possibility of a proper place for studying. All interested parties for accommodations in the Campus dormitories, should apply in the short term due to the great demand. Students who come from far cities have priority.

Why should you choose SEEU?



Because SEEU offers:

- .. the latest on modern technology;
- .. lecturers from EU countries and U.S.;
- .. modern teaching and contemporary methods;
- .. multilingual university environment;
- .. university library with over 40,000 books;
- .. scholarship for every distinguished student;
- .. work and study- at SEEU;
- .. swift employment with the support of career centre;
- .. research centre;
- .. **support for disabled students;**
- .. 24 hours security on campus;
- .. modern student housing;

.. student life ...

What type of support the university offer for student with disabilities?

The South East European University offers a range of services in supporting and guiding of students from admission, financial support, registration, during studies and after graduation. All services for the students are meant to translate the University's mission and policies in concrete programs, and effectively and consistently support students.

As a key point of interaction between institutional expectations and needs of students, student support services at the University, Student services contribute to the overall experience of students as an integral part of the educational process.

Administrative services are managed centrally mainly through Student Services Department which consists of Admissions Office, Registry office, Financial Aid Office, Bursary office, Career Center and Administration of Academic planning.

Student with disabilities are supported from above mentioned professional administration offices by implementing the additional action plan for student with special needs.

SEEU aims to support all enrolled students in reaching their academic potential and welcomes applications from people with disabilities. We offer the following arrangements:

- Positive statement in the Brochure and the opportunity to receive information in alternative ways and languages on request
- Good site access (ramps, accessible toilets, dormitories and classrooms on ground floors as applicable, lifts)
- Named link person in Student Services ready to discuss access and liaise with Faculties and other Departments
- Arranged, pre-enrolment site visits
- Up to maximum scholarship available to support costs

Almost in all scholarship grant programs, priority has been given to students with disabilities and has demonstrated financial need. The main grant scholarship program is supported from RNE-OSI (The Royal Netherlands Embassy and Open Society Institute – Budapest. SEEU in cooperation with all scholarship donors has granted about 130.000 euro to students with disabilities. The amount of scholarship has covered full study fees, depending on study program, and fee and additional living stipend. The average annual scholarship is about 2.200 euro.

- Possibility of provision of a support person (work and study student)
- First Semester Review of access and experience on campus
- Internal and external procedure in case of issues or problems

Main aims of SEEU toward students with special needs:

To strengthen the university's approach and ethos for people with disabilities

To strengthen awareness amongst teaching and administrative staff about disability issues

How many students with disabilities studied at this university and what type of disability they have?

According to the Student Services official evidence, students who declared their disability only, at SEEU studied about 25 students in all faculties.

35% of the students studies at SEEU had physical disability, 15% partial visual impairment and 50% other considered disabilities.

The University is fully accessible for students with disabilities and all of its services completely accessible.



Students with disabilities are treated like all other students, and the need related with their disability they unselfishly receive.

Relationship between professor-student is very on a high level without any prejudice to the differences not only on the basis of disability, but also on all other grounds.

From the center for career services also by evidence that related to their employment, students have identified 6 employees.



The important thing is that all services are available to all students and no one put in a more favorable or less favorable position at the university there is no discrimination.

In the frame of the project Promotion of higher education in South East Europe, Association of students with disability-Skopje did research in Republic of Macedonia on the accessibility of all public universities and many interesting part was that the State University of Tetovo, which even then are placed in a new huge and beautiful building was completely inaccessible for students with disabilities.



This is just an illustration of the situation of the Tetovo State University (which show two photos) and other conditions for these students and there is no need to comment.

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