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**International Cooperation of Izmail State University for Humanities in
2015-2016**

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Abstract: The article presents the state and perspectives of international cooperation of Izmail State University for Humanities with academic partners abroad. Special attention is given to the participation of the University in European research networks for educational and curricula quality promotion, as well as to improvement of academic staff professional qualification in view of social and regional needs for sustainable economic and social development.

Keywords: international cooperation; academic staff and student mobility; European research networks; strengthen academic reputation

International cooperation with universities abroad is one of the priorities of the Izmail State University for Humanities. The main objective of international cooperation at the University is the integration into the global educational environment through its participation in long-term international programs and cooperation with foreign educational institutions, the extension of academic staff, researchers' and students' mobility, student and information exchange.

The main directions of international cooperation of the University are participation in programs of bilateral and multilateral international exchange of students, graduate students, academic and research staff; organization of international conferences, symposia, congresses and other scientific events participation in international educational and research programs joint publishing; higher and postgraduate education for foreign students in Ukraine etc. Izmail State University for Humanities actively supports new and already established contacts with foreign academic partners. International cooperation is deepening by holding scientific conferences and seminars, workshops and other scientific events, organized at the University e.g. the International scientific conference, devoted to the 75th anniversary of Izmail State University for Humanities, called "The Danube Scientific Reading: European Dimension and Regional Context", held in October 2015.

The University has the most productive cooperation with the universities of the Danube Region: Konstantin Preslavsky University of Shumen (Bulgaria), "St. Cyril and St. Methodius" University of Veliko Turnovo (Bulgaria), the "Dunarea de Jos" University of Galați (Romania), the "Danubius" University of Galați (Romania). In addition, it cooperates successfully with Moldova State University (Republic of Moldova), "Ion Creangă" State Pedagogical University (Republic of Moldova), "Bogdan Petriceicu Hasdeu" University of Cahul (Republic of Moldova) Taraz State University, named after M.Kh. Dulaty (Kazakhstan).

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The main areas of cooperation are training of academic staff and students, exchange of experts and students to make educational and cultural programs, exchange of scientific experience, scientific literature, joint seminars, international conferences and workshops etc. Recently the University contacted some universities in the EU (Germany and Austria) in order to participate in European research networks for educational and curricula quality promotion, as well as to improve academic staff professional qualification in view of social and regional needs for sustainable economic and social development.

Izmail State University for Humanities cooperates with international organizations such as the Goethe-Institute, the DAAD and the US Peace Corps, which helps to enhance opportunities for teaching staff and students to study foreign languages, as a pledge of participation in international programs and of European educational space affiliation.

The departments of the University have also established direct links with foreign academic partners, confirming their active role in the implementation of the State Education Development Programme in Ukraine.

The Department of General and Social Pedagogy and Primary Education under the guidance of Professor N. Kichuk joined the project “Eastern Partnership in the Field of Pedagogical Innovations in Inclusive Education” (INOVEST). The INOVEST project was developed according to the regional priorities of the TEMPUS Programme of the EU. The aim of the Project was to contribute to the development and implementation of Pedagogical Innovations in Inclusive Education policies in Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine and a better coordination of lifelong learning professional formation in education. In April 2015 the Department of General and Social Pedagogy and Primary Education held a number of project activities: workshops, trainings. More than 50 teachers, undergraduates and university students received certificates enabling work towards the implementation of inclusive education in Ukraine. In July, 2015, the representatives of the University took part in the final conference of the INOVEST project, held in Chisinau, Republic of Moldova. During the International Conference “Eastern Partnership in pedagogical innovation in inclusive education” many issues were discussed about the lessons learned in modern teaching methods, the effects of the project INOVEST, presentation of main steps, developed metrics and best practices examples to ensure the effectiveness of inclusive education in Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova.

In July 2016 a new joint German-Ukrainian project with the support and funding of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Germany and the Union of Bessarabian Germans will be launched. The Project is titled “Origin and Homeland Historical memory – the Future of Europe” and provides the exchange of students from South-Western Ukraine and Germany to develop and strengthen the partnerships between educational institutions and non-governmental organizations in Odessa region (Ukraine) and Germany.

Within the Joint Operational Programme Romania-Ukraine-Republic of Moldova Izmail State University for Humanities supports the youth NGO “New Generation of Europe” (Ukraine) and the Agency for Sustainable Development and European Integration “Euro-region Lower Danube” (Ukraine) in the realization of the projects “Virtual Platform For Cross-Border Youth Exchange”, “Cross Life-Skills Net”, “Involving Citizens in Defining Priorities, Development and Implementation of Local Strategies (SolveNet)”, “Innovative Analysis Tools of Environment in the Northwestern Black Sea Basin (Black Sea e-Eye)”, “Green Youth Movement in the Cross Border Area”.

Students and teachers of the University also took an active part in the international project “Side-by-side” – a trilateral network to promote and develop tourism in the border region “Galați-Cahul-Reni”.

This joint project of the Joint Operational Programme Romania-Ukraine-Republic of Moldovas awarded and funded by the EU. The main goal of this project is the development of cross-border tourism and strengthening cooperation between local representatives of the industry.

In April, 2016 a new research project was developed to participate in the Ukrainian-Moldovan joint projects for implementation in the 2017-2018 within the the Joint Operational Programme Romania-Ukraine-Republic of Moldova.

In November, 2015 the Fifth Regional Session of the European Youth Parliament was held at Izmail State University for Humanities. Under the guidance of foreign moderators the students from the University and other Ukrainian education institutions were acquainted with the work of the European Parliament and its committees and participated in discussing important issues. The project was carried out under the guidance of experienced moderators from Poland, Norway, Austria, Greece, Hungary and other EU countries.

To strengthen the position of the University as an educational, scientific and cultural centre in the Ukrainian Lower Danube region and to keep an open multicultural dialogue the administration of Izmail State University for Humanities has taken the necessary steps to open the Bulgarian cultural center in order to facilitate studying the Bulgarian language and literature, improve knowledge on topic issues of history, art and culture of Bulgaria, exchange of academic, artistic and informational reference books and periodicals, organization of scientific conferences and seminars, presentations, competitions, parties, student workshops to significant dates in the history of Bulgaria, as well as workshops on traditional Bulgarian crafts and trades.

The Polish Cultural Centre is planned to be open at the University in 2016 with the Polish Consulate General in Odessa (Ukraine) backing. In the nearest future, the administration of the University plans to open the Polish language courses, to support scientific publications on the history of Polish Diaspora in Southern Ukraine, and organize an annual festival of Polish culture at Izmail State University for Humanities etc.

In 2016 the American Councils for International Education in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine and the Parliamentary Committee on Education launch the US State Department project SUP30016CA001 “Strengthening Academic Integrity in Ukrainian Higher Education”. 10 pilot Ukrainian Universities, including Izmail State University for Humanities, were chosen to participate in the project, that will work in four directions: to inform students, faculties and university administrations about “academic integrity” and its components; to create educational programs, motivational workshops that will have a direct impact on student study at 10 pilot universities; to create a system that will prevent any manifestation of plagiarism and cheating including penalties.

Since January 2016 the Izmail State University for Humanities is an academic partner of Danubius Academic Consortium for Integral Innovation (DAC), a euro regional ecosystem of Integral Innovation, located in the Danube region, aligned with the goals of EU Strategy for Danube Area (EUSDR) aiming toward a high Competitiveness based on Creativity and Diversity in this Euro-Region (*Danubius academic consortium*). Today the DAC unites 12 European universities from Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Germany, Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine. Izmail State University for Humanities is invited to develop and implement the “DAC People” Program and its constituents (“Innovation is Hope” and “Sky is the Limit” Programs), based on the interaction of local arts associations and institutions for gifted children in Ukrainian Lower Danube Region with the academic environment (*Shavlovska, 2016*).

In addition the University together with other higher educational institutions of Ukraine submitted several applications to participate in a number of international co-operation and mobility program in the field of education, including the projects “Change agents to assure quality of reforms in Higher Education (HARISMA)”; E-government Studies as driver for achieving Transparency and Preventing Corruption in Public Service.

Thus, Izmail State University for Humanities is an active Ukrainian university engaged in collaborative projects and partnerships all over United Europe. Through international engagement the University enhances the accumulation of the comprehensive knowledge for high quality education and seeks to strengthen the University’s academic reputation.

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