

Office of Students Support and Career Counseling

The Student Support and Career Counseling Office (OSSCC) is a unit that assists and follows students, both during their studies and after their completion, creating a database with data on career, success and difficulties of students during the adaptation to the market, their achievements, lobbying for the protection of the rights of the profession, through the association AUA (Union of Architects, Urbanists and Urban Planners), maintaining the connection with POLIS through the ALUMNI Association, encouraging the spirit of cooperation as a community, support and philanthropy. The purpose of ZMSKK as a structure in itself is oriented towards maintaining continuous contact as well as providing multi-directional information. The information includes information on studies, various programs, career guidance or vocational guidance as well as individual or group counseling.

Office of Student Support and Career Counseling is a unit which **assists** students and **follows their educational process, during and after its completion, creating a database** with available data on their careers, successes, difficulties during their adaptation to the market, their achievements, *lobbying* for the protection of their professional rights.

Establishment of Office of Student Support and Career Counseling (2008), it "Support students by bringing **awareness** to the career planning process so they can make **informed decisions** about **employment** as well as post graduate professional qualification options"

The main activities and duties of the Office of Student Support and Career Counseling are:

1. Informing students and providing full transparency

The process of **informing** students and **providing full transparency** on academic, teaching, and research issues as well as their rights and duties. The **students' orientation** during the educational process, the selection of the specific educational fields, and the academic and training opportunities offered by the university; (**further education, trainings, internships, academic plans etc.**)

2. Individual or group Career Counseling.

Awareness and knowledge offered to students on the labor market in general and on current employment opportunities;

3. **Collaboration with Student's Council** (Elections for Students Representatives and Council's Directorate, Calendar of Events etc.

4. Connection with Alumni

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The main activities and tasks of the Office of Student Support and Career Counseling towards current students:

- Informing students and ensuring full transparency on academic, educational and scientific issues and aspects, as well as their rights and duties;
- Orientation of students in schooling and during schooling for choosing specific training fields and training opportunities offered by the university;
- Orientation and acquaintance of students with the labor market in general and the special opportunities of the moment for employment by mediating this process;
- To maintain individual contact with students even after graduation and their employment, continuously receiving their feedback;
- To carry out updated studies of the labor market and the identification of its requirements and make them available to students.
- Regulates and ensures the involvement of students in decision-making, in the processes and main activities related to teaching and other research and development activities as well as the services offered to them.

This office works closely with the leaders of the Student Association and the Alumni Association. The main activities and duties of the Office of Student Support and Career Counseling towards Alumni are:

- The maintenance of personal contact with students after their graduation and employment in order to continue receiving their feedback
- The undertaking of up-to-date studies on the labor market and the identification of its requirements in order to make this information available to students.
- The task of getting the alumni involved in decision-making processes in key activities related to teaching and other activities such as research, development, and the services offered.
- Reinforcing relationship Alumni – Students (Tutorials, open lectures, pecha-kucha)
- Possible Employment of Alumni at POLIS or integration in different projects

The Student Support and Career Counseling Office of POLIS University is expanding and already is part of two projects:

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1. The "GRADUA" project, together with other Albanian and foreign partners to enable access to the professional network of the online platform and contributing to the employment of students.

Project reference:

Erasmus + CBHE Program:

Graduates Advancement and Development of University capacities in Albania/
GRADUA: 585961- EPP-1-2017-1-AL-EPPKA2-CBHE-SP (2017-2021)

What is GRADUA?

Gradua is an online platform, funded by the European Commission through the Erasmus + initiative, which aims to support Albanian universities and students by creating an interactive data system and a model that matches the demand with the offer of graduate employment. The platform aims to bring together demand and supply in the employment market, offering graduates the opportunity to:

- Free use of the platform by creating a Professional Curriculum Vitae (which students can enrich over time and have it visible for hiring companies and institutions)
- Easy access to information on job opportunities / professional practices, courses or trainings from different companies and businesses
- Direct application for jobs for members of the network
- Easy creation of Curriculum Vitae which can be easily downloaded and used in different mediums.

POLIS University is a partner in this project, engaging in a process where graduate students have the opportunity to face numerous opportunities, not only in the professional university network but also more widely in the national market.

Students, especially those in their final year of studies, are encouraged to register here to take advantage of the employment opportunities the network offers.

The User Manual for Registering on the Platform can be found here

2. The "IDEA" project, directed by POLIS University, which aims to address one of the main challenges that Europe and the Balkan region in particular, will face until the end of the 2020s and support the European policy agenda for equality and social inclusion in HEIs.

Project reference:

Inclusive Tertiary Education in West Balkans/ IDEA; 618859-EPP-1-2020-1-AL-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP (2021-2024)

The purpose of OSSCC as a structure in itself is oriented towards maintaining continuous contact as well as providing multi-directional information. The information that this office aims for starts with updating the Alumni contacts, which serve for more direct communication with them. This process, starting from June 2019, has been partially facilitated by the implementation of the Gradua platform (<https://gradua.rash.al/>); project supported by the EU where U_POLIS is a part and consists in the integration of students towards the end of their studies in a comprehensive space with businesses, to be closer to the labor market. On this platform, Alumni update their personal page with their academic background, professional experiences and further studies. This information has a double benefit as it helps former students to have more access to employment opportunities, but at the same time it also helps OSSCC absorb part of the information that this unit aims to accumulate and elaborate during the academic year to follow the professional progress of graduates over the years. Further, OSSCC summarizes information for further studies, various programs, career guidance or professional guidance as well as individual or group counseling. Furthermore, this unit works closely with the leaders of the POLIS Student Association, through whom the creation of a close and very cooperative relationship has been achieved for the improvement of the quality and services offered by the university to students.

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