



INTERNATIONAL VISION UNIVERSITY

Gostivar - Republic of North Macedonia

Prof. Dr. sc Fadil HOCA

Rector of the International Vision University

Dear friends,

While the world lives the new reality created by everyday developments, the importance of evidence-based science and a quality education system is becoming increasingly evident. Faced with the challenges of the pandemic, universities around the world are looking for a way to maintain an uninterrupted educational process, but also to retain the morale and the positive spirit at a high level, and companies are increasingly investing in scientific research to overcome the crisis faster and more easily. It is more than clear to world governments that they will have to reallocate a significant amount of their resources specifically in education and science as the only salvation from new potential dangers, and from all that could follow in a constantly changing world.

In such serious conditions, the Republic of North Macedonia has shown that it can cope with the global challenges of education on all grounds, and it rapidly reoriented towards the use of the digital benefits and modern technology, enabling pupils and students to fully complete the school year, something that we are particularly proud of. In addition to the students from the country, a large number of people from the region study here as well, but also people from different parts of the world, and for all of them, it was a considerable challenge to successfully realize this academic year in conditions of a global pandemic.

Therefore, I sincerely believe that we came out of this crisis stronger and wiser, and we will continue to give the world the best of ourselves, as we have done so far. Today, as Vision, we strive to continue to Europeanize the educational process according to the possibilities, while nurturing tradition, cultural heritage, human values and ethical norms, offering our students knowledge and skills for the future in the changing world. We are guided by the principles and the spiritual heritage of the great Mustafa Kemal Atatürk who was himself born and raised in this areas of science and reason.

Being a crossroad in the Balkans and a successor of the former Via Egnatia means to anticipate the spirit of the time that comes under the burden of history and turbulent events. This implies being a cultural, a civilizational and an educational bridge between the East and the West and merging best practices from different traditions. For this particular reason, in the Republic of North Macedonia we are working on creating

curious, creative and open minds, because as Albert Einstein said: a mind is like a parachute, it is useful only when it is open.

The education system in the country is organized in nine-year primary education, four-year secondary education and three cycles of higher education: undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral studies. Some of the higher educational institutions offer their programs in English as well, and at the International Vision University the teaching is also conducted in Turkish language of instruction, which makes the education characteristic and more accessible for students and professors from abroad. For all three cycles of higher education, the Republic of North Macedonia has accepted the European Credit Transfer System and the principles of the Lisbon Convention and the Bologna Declaration, which makes the study programs competitive and compatible with world trends, and attractive for students from the country and abroad. Various programs for academic mobility are active in the country, primarily under the auspices of the National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility, which makes our country open for studying, research and training at all cycles of higher education, and also strongly internationalized.

Numerous scientific conferences and symposia are organized in the country on an annual basis, and it is considered one of the favorite destinations for academic events of different character. The competent body for all educational institutions, regardless of whether they are public or private, is the Ministry of Education and Science, the State Education Inspectorate, and since recently also the newly-established Agency for Quality in Higher Education.

Overall, the Macedonian education system possesses competitiveness and quality, as well as serious developmental predispositions. More faith, continuous work and visionary perspective are required and we hope that this will happen soon, and in the meantime we have enough reasons to invite students from the region, but also from around the world, to study in the Republic of North Macedonia which is already a member of NATO and a candidate for EU membership, and at the same time to address the companies and the private sector to increase their presence in our country. As an academic community, we have both personal and professional responsibility to respond to contemporary challenges in a new and innovative way, for the greatest good and the highest goal of the whole society, but for that purpose we need the support of the system and the individuals within it.

Therefore we joyfully expect you in the Republic of North Macedonia in the new academic year, hoping that we will start it in good health.

Respectfully,

Prof. Dr. sc Fadil HOCA