



0.T2.1. Strategy for the development of a Joint Master

A Strategy vision for establishing a joint Master to improve Social Innovation in the Adriatic-Ionic Area.

1.1. Strategic vision.

Creating a Joint International Master for the Adriatic-Ionic Area in the field of Social Innovation.

The present document represents a strategy for a 1-year second-level Master in Social Innovation jointly accredited by the University of Bologna, the University of Belgrade –Faculty of Philosophy and the University of Tirana, and delivered in partnership with the Hellenic Open University, the University of Zagreb, the University IUAV Venice and the Science and Research Institute of Koper.

The Joint Master intends to prepare policymakers and social practitioners in the Adriatic-Ionic Area in the field of social innovation, departing from the theoretical framework to then provide practical skills and tools to develop and implement social innovative policies and projects, with particular attention to the fields of migration, aging, social economy, urban and rural regeneration, education. The proposal is jointly prepared by the University of Bologna, Hellenic Open University, University of Belgrade, University IUAV Venice, University of Tirana, University of Zagreb, ZRS –Science and Research Institute Koper, project partners of TESI.



1.2. Strategic mission.

Targeting the mission: forming social entrepreneurs and public administrators to strengthen networks of practitioners working in social innovation to develop the different regions.

The Joint Master intends to form “Social Innovators” able to design, implement and promote innovative social solutions and tools to respond to contemporary social issues within Public Administrations and social organisations in the Adriatic-Ionic Area. Moreover, the Joint Master intends to strengthen networks of practitioners working in this field to develop the region.

The Joint Master in Social Innovation is conceived and structured to involve the following target groups from all countries part of the Adriatic-Ionian macro-region:

- Junior or mid-senior officers working in an NGO, public body or private sector who intend to improve their understanding of social issues and acquire new tools and skills to address them;

- Post-graduate students with little professional experience in the social and public sector who intend to build a career in the field of social innovation.

The program is structured so that students with full-time employment can participate, with lectures held during the weekends and flexibility in the arrangements for the internship and project work.



1.3. Strategic teaching offer.

Studying, learning by doing, practicing.

The Joint Master's includes ten teaching modules held at the University of Bologna and a mobility period within another partner university where students participate in additional laboratories and study visits to local innovative social businesses and engage in an internship/project work within a business partner.

The Joint Master intends to provide theoretical and practical knowledge and hands-on experience. With this aim, each teaching module includes workshops and laboratories held both by academic staff and social innovation practitioners, aimed at introducing students to real-life case studies and providing technical skills to design innovative social solutions. The teaching modules are organized and held by the whole partnership of the project TESI, through schemes of professors' mobilities.

Beyond providing theoretical and technical knowledge on social innovation's debates and methodologies, the Joint Master focuses on five macro-topics: migration, aging, social economy, urban and rural regeneration, and education. These topics are covered within the Joint Master with a theoretical introduction of the social problem, the presentation of case studies, and the organization of laboratories on tools and solutions for specific social problems. Within this structure, lecturers include a series of transversal themes: digital solutions, gender, ethnicity and class, ethics and values, political cultures and structures.



In order to involve social innovation practitioners in teaching and to offer students internship opportunities in socially innovative business organizations or research centers, the Joint Master benefits from a network of business partners created in the framework of the project TESI.

2. A Mission statement about the Accreditation of the Master:

**What we are currently doing in relation to the said goal,
to whom is addressed and how**

2.1. Accreditation Strategy and Diploma Recognition

The TESI project consortium has developed a second-level Master's programme in Social Innovation that will be jointly organized and delivered by all seven partner institutions. Three universities - Alma Mater Studiorum-University of Bologna (Italy), University of Tirana (Albania), and University of Belgrade-Faculty of Philosophy (Serbia) - will accredit the program, as stated in the first section of this document. The accreditation strategy was based on two criteria:

- 1) national regulations of second-master programs;
- 2) the possibility of recognizing the title for students from the ADRION region.

Because most partners come from EU member states, the joint program must be accredited by at least one EU partner. Alma Mater Studiorum-University



of Bologna (UNIBO) will host in-person lectures and administer the program, so it is necessary to accredit the program in Italy by Alma Mater Studiorum-University of Bologna.

To ensure easier qualification recognition in non-EU partner countries, the consortium has decided to accredit the program in Serbia (University of Belgrade-Faculty of Philosophy) and Albania (University of Tirana). This joint program will be organized and delivered by the whole consortium and coordinated and administrated by Alma Mater Studiorum - University of Bologna.

As the programme is based on the ECTS system and is in line with the European Qualification Framework, it is unlikely that there will be any obstacles in recognizing the qualification obtained.

However, most employers, including NGOs, international organizations, and private companies, accept international qualifications as relevant and do not require formal recognition of qualifications. In other ADRION countries where the program will not be accredited, students can apply for qualification recognition through the National Academic Recognition Information Centres (NARIC) office in their country.

This may be necessary if a potential employer, for instance, a public body or agency, requires it. All partners within the consortium who initially do not accredit the program are permitted to pursue accreditation in the future if there is a need for administrative or academic purposes.



2.2. The state of play of the Accreditation plan.

Preliminary preparations for the accreditation process have already started during the implementation period of the TESI project. The national teams reviewed the accreditation requirements and procedures with the relevant university and national bodies. The three project partners are responsible for coordinating accreditation in their respective countries have already informed the relevant bodies about the intention to accredit the jointmaster program in Social Innovations.

Once the TESI project activities end, the consortium will continue with activities related to the accreditation process. Each coordinator of accreditation (Alma Mater Studiorum - University of Bologna, University of Tirana, and University of Belgrade - Faculty of Philosophy) will prepare a list of templates and documents required for the accreditation process in their respective country, and all consortium members will work together to transform the JM program and concept described in the project outputs into relevant forms. Whenever national regulations allow, the same documentation will be used, and where necessary, adjustments will be prepared.

This is the timeline for the accreditation process for each institution/country:

Alma Mater Studiorum - University of Bologna (Italy):

- 1) Internal procedures will start during the first week of April 2024, with the submission of the JM proposal for approval to the University's bodies.
- 2) Approval of the proposal is expected by June 2024.



University of Tirana (Albania):

1) Internal procedures will start in March 2024, with the submission of the JM proposal for approval to the University's bodies.

2) External accreditation and quality assurance process will start in May 2024.

Both the internal process of accreditation and external quality assurance procedure will be finished by October 2024.

University of Belgrade (Serbia):

1) Internal procedures will start in October 2023, with the submission of the JM proposal for approval to the University's bodies.

2) External accreditation and quality assurance process will start in March 2024.

Both the internal process of accreditation and external quality assurance procedure will be finished by July 2024.

The consortium aims to complete accreditation procedures by the beginning of 2025, followed by a call for student enrolment in Summer 2025, with the program officially starting in October of the same year. For the start of the program, its accreditation in Italy with Alma Mater Studiorum at the University of Bologna will be sufficient.



2.3. State of play related to student admission requirements, procedures and fees.

The target profile of students of the joint master's in Social Innovation are persons with experience in dealing with different social issues, either as young professionals in the public or corporate sector, international organizations, or activists of non-governmental organizations. Future students are expected to have an academic background, preferably in social-science, and/or first-hand experience with some of the most prominent social issues in contemporary societies in the ADRION region. The Joint Master will offer 25 positions to future students, and the Programme will be open to all candidates from the countries that are part of the Adriatic-Ionian macro-region.

a) A Strategy for the enrolment requirements.

The programme is reserved for candidates who, by the time of enrolment, are in possession of the following qualifications and access requirements:

- university degree earned during studies lasting either 4 or 5 years (3 + 2) with a previously earned degree of a minimum of 240 ECTS.
- excellent knowledge of the English language.

Candidates who apply for the programme with a degree obtained abroad must produce the Declaration of Value (Dichiarazione di Valore) with the academic qualification and the academic transcript officially translated and



legalised (the translation is not necessary for qualifications and certificates in English).

For academic qualifications awarded by institutions in countries in the European Higher Education Area (Bologna Process), only the declaration of value can be replaced by a Diploma Supplement, based on the European Commission form and issued by the relevant University.

For further information about “Declaration of value, translation, and legalisation” check the Unibo website

<https://www.unibo.it/en/teaching/enrolment-transfer-and-final-examination/declaration-of-value-translation-and-legalization>.

Candidates who, at the time of registration for the selection process, do not have the required qualifications or meet the necessary requirements will be able to participate in the selection process understanding that, if they are successful, they will not be able to enrol until they have sent proof to the Masters Office (master@unibo.it) that they meet the requirements. Candidates who are successful in the selection process but who do not obtain the required qualifications and meet the admission criteria by the enrolment deadlines will not be able to enrol.

Non-EU candidates who, at the time of applying, have a degree providing eligibility for the Master, and who are also registered for an education or course at an Italian university, need to have completed and obtained that title before the registration deadlines indicated above to register for the Master.

The candidate must hold one of the following English language certificates: TOEFL - internet-based at least 79 points; IELTS - at least 6.5 points;



Cambridge Advanced/Proficiency - any result; TOEIC - at least 750 points; BULATS – at least 75. This certificate is not necessary for those who are native English speakers or have obtained a degree from a course of study (1st or 2nd cycle) provided entirely in English. Candidates who are not able to demonstrate their English language knowledge with one of the certificates listed above can participate in the language test organized by the Alma Mater Studiorum - University of Bologna.

b) A Strategy for the programme Management and the Administration Bodies.

During the TESI project, the consortium members have discussed the content of the future joint-master program in Social Innovations and the organizational and administrative issues to ensure that its implementation plan is realistic. One of the topics discussed was the structure of the program's management and administration bodies. The agreed-upon structure of the management and administration bodies is presented hereafter.

The Programme **Scientific Board** will act as the main governing body of the overall programme. Its responsibility will be to oversee strategic academic matters related to changes in the programme's content and structure, selection of lecturers, setting selection criteria for students, choosing members of the admission board, verifying the students' selection process, reviewing the topics of the final thesis, and other academic issues, including academic ethics. The Board will also make some organizational decisions, such as selecting the academic director of the programme. The Board will consist of a



minimum of four professors who teach in the programme, representing various partners of the consortium. The Board members will serve a two-year term, which can be renewed.

The main governing body of the program is the Programme **Academic Director**, who will be responsible for organizing and executing the programme, as well as managing its academic and administrative aspects on a day-to-day basis. The Director will be chosen by the Programme Scientific Board among full professors of the UNIBO. The Director's term will be two years with the possibility of renewal.

The **Management Body** (external agency) is an organisation external to the University responsible for all technical and administrative aspects related to the management of the Joint Master, such as the preparation and control of external contracts and tenders for teaching and services.

The **Advisory Board** will consist of a network of stakeholders, including representatives from non-governmental organizations and public bodies/agencies who are Social Innovation practitioners from the ADRION macro-region, members of the academic community researching social innovations and social transformation, EU-level bodies dealing with social innovations and social changes, as well as representatives from organizations where programme students will undertake internships.

The **Administrative Secretariat** will be responsible for organizing the programme's activities and managing its administration. It will have two segments: the regular administrative service of UNIBO responsible for MA programmes, and academic tutors. The two academic tutors will be selected by the Programme Academic Director through a public call. They will



be responsible for organizing classes and courses, assisting lecturers in preparation and during the conduction of classes, and helping students with academic and administrative issues, such as selecting internships, choosing elective classes, and navigating program requirements. They will also act as mediators between students and the UNIBO students' administration office and will take care of the promotion of the Joint Master through different channels.

c) A strategy for resources and financing.

As it was described above, the primary target group of this programme are junior practitioners of social innovation from ADRION macro-region with a tertiary education degree. Thus, the organization and execution of a joint master programme with international students as the target group requires substantial resources.

First, the strategic decision was made that the program will be comprised of in-person classes, which will be organized in Bologna using premises, equipment and other services of Alma Mater Studiorum-University of Bologna.

The fact that the majority of classes will be in-person is of crucial importance for this program because that will enable formal and informal networking between students is important for building a network of social innovation practitioners in the ADRION macro-region. All lectures will be organized in one place to simplify the program's conduction.

However, the described approach will influence expenses because the program budget will have a high share of travel and accommodation costs both



for the international community of students and the international group of lecturers.

The biggest component of the programme budget will be travel and accommodation costs for 25 students. Each student will get a scholarship, which should be used to cover travel and accommodation costs for eight cycles of in-person classes in Bologna.

The second important component of the budget will cover travel and accommodation costs during the obligatory mobility period. As described above, each student will be obligated to intern in one of the partner organizations from ADION macro-region, which should be in a country different from the student's permanent residence. This activity is very important for the concept of this study programme and its orientation toward learning by doing and getting first-hand experience with social innovations.

The final thesis of the program will also be based on the internship and the project students will do in partnership with the host organization.

The third element of the budget is expenses for travel and accommodation of lecturers. As it was described above, the programme will be delivered by the international community of lecturers from the consortium, and each of the eight in-person sessions in Bologna will be delivered by two teachers.

The Fourth part of the budget is the personal and other direct and indirect costs of the program. This budget line will cover the costs of work of two academic tutors, the program academic director and other direct and indirect costs, including small fees of UNIBO for administrative services.



The organization and execution of this program require additional resources such as educational infrastructure, access to academic publications and libraries, and IT resources. The consortium will ensure the availability of these resources, primarily through Alma Mater Studiorum-University of Bologna.

3. Identification and definition of long-term goals that the strategy intends to achieve.

Part of the TESI project activities was the analysis of a social innovation landscape in the ADRION macro-region, including an analysis of educational offers in countries included in the project and the proximate regions.

The in-depth analysis of the offer of courses and training on Social Innovation in the Adrion Regional area and, in particular, among the partners participating in the TESI Project (Albania, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Serbia and Slovenia) highlighted the need to include the following elements in the program of the Joint Master on Social Innovation:

- a specific and clear definition and approach to Social Innovation able to valorise contributions and suggestions coming from the social economy, urban regeneration and technology, but knowing how to make explicit its own principles, instruments and values regarding social impacts;
- an international approach (and language) to the study of social innovation taking into account also the local and territorial experiences and practices;
- a blended teaching structure to valorize the important elements coming from classes in presence and classes on-line;



- an innovative teaching structure that links together theoretical and practical aspects, together with case study analysis, laboratories and design thinking;
- the definition of a specific professional figure that moves in the social innovation field (it could be a social innovator manager?);
- mobility of teachers and students to know, on the field, different approaches, experiences, and practitioners;
- the institution of an internship in a public, private or third-sector organization helping students in acquiring also practical skills and competencies that can assist them in coming up with truly innovative solutions that can work towards systemic change;
- the creation of a multi-stakeholder network of institutional, third-sector, and business partners.

The overall conclusion presented in the outputs of the project is the offer of educational programs on social innovations in the ADRION macro-region is unequally distributed, with some countries, like Italy, with broad offers and other countries, like Croatia, with minimum or non-existent offers.

An additional important conclusion of the analysis is that there is no study program that has practitioners from the ADRION macro-region as a target group. Based on these findings, we conclude that there is a strong need for such a study program, at least for the next 3-5 years.

This program aims to attract potential students from less developed countries in the ADRION macro-region, with a significant proportion of them from the NGO sector. It is now – for the first year, unlikely that potential students



or their employers will be able to finance the scholarship of this programme. Therefore, it will be crucial to ensure for the first year a form of financing of scholarships for all students (an average of 25 per generation) achieved from the EU institutions, starting with European Social funds, including ADRION Interreg.

After the first year of the Master, the partnership believes it is essential to take action to find new sources of financing, and the consortium will explore funding opportunities directly from social innovation organisations, their national associations, national funds, and other actors who may be interested in training. The consortium will deliberate about these new ways of funding immediately after the beginning of the program.

