Basic Information:

Course Title: **‘Sociocultural Paradigms of the Reception and Integration of Refugees from the Middle East in Bulgaria’**
Lecturer: Assoc. Prof. Yelis Erolova, PhD
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Total Teaching Hours: 30

Annotation

The course aims to introduce doctoral students to multifaceted aspects of the integration of refugees from the Middle East seeking international protection in Bulgaria with a focus on the dynamic interplay between national and international legal norms, European discourses on humanism, human rights, and shared responsibility, as well as local traditions of hospitality or rejection. Particular attention is given to the concept of integration as a multidimensional two-way process, analyzing the complex relationships between state and municipal institutions, non-governmental organizations, Bulgarian society, and the refugees themselves. Successful practices, problems, and challenges in the implementation of various integration measures in key areas such as housing, employment, education, cultural orientation, as well as access to legal and health services, are discussed within local, national, and European contexts. Emphasis is placed on developing an applied integration model that responds to the needs of asylum seekers, considers ‘sensitive issues’ in public perceptions, and aligns with current European standards for social inclusion.

Course content

Module 1: Theoretical and Legal Frameworks of International Protection.

Module 2: Conceptual Framework: Concepts, Categories, and Definitions.

Module 3: Challenges and Issues in Reception.

Module 4: Integration as a Multidimensional Two-Way Process. Attitudes of Local Communities and Refugees Themselves.

Module 5: Model(s) for Sustainable Integration.

Teaching and assessment methods

Teaching method: lectures (in-person and distance learning). The course is offered in both Bulgarian and English.

Assessment method: written assignment.

Competencies acquired as a result of training

1. Acquired in-depth knowledge regarding the development of international standards on reception and protection, contemporary sociocultural theories on refugee integration, as well as the application of various approaches and measures in the areas of reception, social inclusion, and cultural orientation.
2. Developed analytical skills for identifying and conceptualizing the distinct social, legal, and cultural challenges impeding the integration of individuals from the Middle East within the

Bulgarian context, alongside the ability to utilize interdisciplinary approaches to create and evaluate cultural orientation programmes and social inclusion models.

3. Enhanced capacities for conducting independent, rigorous research within the field of migratory processes, socio-cultural adaptation, and integration of both asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection.

Literature:

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Additional information

The course is targeted at doctoral students in ethnology, history, political science, law, psychology, education, and other fields within the humanities and social sciences.