

BGP^{plus}

10 years of Brain Gain in Kosova

w u s a u s t r i a
right to education

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financed by

Austrian

 Development Cooperation

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IMPRESSUM:

Published by: WUS Austria

Authors: But Dedaj, Mjellma Carabregu, Alfred Marleku and Granit Gjevukaj

Design: Ringeis promotion

Printed: Dizajn studio Ringeis

Number of Copies: 200

Financed by: Austrian Development Cooperation

Issued on: June 2011

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1. FOREWORDS:

Foreword by University of Prishtina

The University of Prishtina (UP), a public institution with the largest number of faculties and students in Kosova, was established in 1970. During the entire time of its functioning, the UP has been the main pillar in supporting the social and economic development of Kosova. Since 2001, the UP has voluntarily started with the implementation of the Bologna Agreement. This was a very important step for the UP, *inter alia*, for two main aspects:

2. Enhancing the quality of higher education in Kosova and
3. Achieving the European standards in the field of higher education and the involvement of the UP in the European network of universities.

The implementation of the Bologna Agreement, as one of the main objectives of the University of Prishtina, requires the realization of imperative changes. In practice it has been proven that the accomplishment of these objectives is a serious challenge even for developed countries with a long tradition in higher education and with strong economic development. Considering the situation at the UP, especially the lack of financial resources, the assistance and support of international institutions is therefore considered to be crucial in making the implementation of the Bologna process a reality at the UP. In this regard, the support provided by the Austrian Government to Kosova's Higher Education in general, and to the University of Prishtina in particular deserves a great emphasis. The Republic of Austria was the first country to establish communication with and to open doors of Austrian Universities during the most difficult times of the UP of parallel education systems. Thanks to the Austrian support, a large number of UP students has gained academic degrees at Western Universities. Some students have returned to Kosova and are actually providing substantial impact to the social and economic development of Kosova.



**Prof. Dr. Mujë Rugova,
Rector of the University of
Prishtina**

The content of the projects, such as stimulating brain gain from abroad, the support to course development, the purchase of equipment for labs etc., are some of the areas which required not only funding but expertise as well. WUS Austria and the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC) have managed to achieve this successfully. Therefore the Chairman of WUS Austria, Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Benedek, was honored by the UP in 2004 with the title of “Doctor Honoris Causa”. However, by no means this has repaid the contribution provided by WUS Austria to the UP.

The implementation of ADC/WUS Austria projects during this period of time has been continued and has led to a very systematic and substantial impact on the teaching and learning process at UP. Considering this and the fact that we were directly involved during the implementation period, we would like to emphasise that these projects indeed directly referred to the needs of the University of Prishtina. Furthermore, I can say that these projects have directly supported the reform process at the UP and have mitigated the road towards the European Higher Education Area.

I would like to use this opportunity to express my utmost gratitude to the Austrian Government as well as to the Austrian Development Cooperation for the support provided during this period of time. I would also like to thank WUS Austria for the sincere and professional cooperation during the project implementation. I remain with the hope that I can count on this support and this fruitful cooperation to be continued in the future as well. We welcome and are in need of this kind of sincere and professional cooperation, and only through such projects we can smoothly overcome the difficulties that the UP is facing. We have the strong conviction that with your support we are able to join the European University Association and be part of the European Higher Education Area which is the main objective of the UP.

Prof. Dr. Mujë Rugova,
Rector of the University of Prishtina

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Foreword by Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC)

Well founded education and continuous learning are necessary preconditions for graduates to succeed on the national and international labor markets. At the same time, countries experience difficulties facing the challenge of shaping and thus providing their citizens a state of sustainable social and economic development. Education on all levels is playing an ever increasing role as a driving force of a modern society. In other words, states are in growing need of a highly qualified workforce in order not to lose pace and meet the needs of a faster and faster spinning world.

Every aspect of the educational circle is of equal importance, one is building on the other, Higher Education of course having a significant impact on development processes. The Austrian Development Cooperation has chosen Higher Education and Research as a strategic priority for its work in Kosovo, building on a long standing support of the Republic of Austria for this sector since the acknowledgment of the underground diplomas in the early 1990s. Nowadays, our goal must be to contribute to the creation of modern conditions for the country's youth at higher education institutions as well as to help preparing students for the labor market. Therefore, amongst others, the ADC assists in the implementation of the Bologna process framework, quality assurance systems for Kosovo's higher education sector, and creates links between the relevant institutions in Kosovo with others in Austria and Europe.

The University of Prishtina and World University Service Austria have been long standing partners in this endeavor to create a better future for the youth of this ever so youthful new state. The Brain Gain Program is an important pillar in the cooperation with our partners, because it can directly benefit students from the experiences of those who increased their knowledge abroad, now giving parts of it back to the youth of this country, and even increasing their links with what has often been the Alma Mater.

I would like to congratulate the University and WUS Austria for 10 years of success in this program.

Best wishes,

Mag. Christian Geosits,
Head of the Office
Coordination Office for Technical Cooperation Prishtina



***Mag. Christian Geosits,
Head of the Office,
Coordination Office for
Technical Cooperation
Prishtina***

Foreword by WUS Austria

The Brain Gain Program is a project that has been implemented by the World University Service (WUS) Austria with the support of the Austrian Development Cooperation since 2002. The project aims at opening and enriching the higher education sector in Kosova, by inviting the emigrated academic staff from the region to provide courses which are not available at the University of Prishtina (UP). Since its beginning, the project was very much welcomed by the UP.

The BGP project has become an important tool for strengthening the institutional cooperation between University of Prishtina and universities all around the world from which the visiting professors come. This action also created space for cooperation on numerous other projects, including scientific research, exchange of lecturers and students, and the adoption of best practice in the field of applying the Bologna reforms.

Our expectation is that the potential and advantages offered by the BGP program will be recognized by the state structures of Kosova. Such project is in the interest of the entire academic community, while the greatest benefits of it go to the final beneficiaries - the students. And, it is for the students, but also the staff-development of University of Prishtina that the continuation of the BGP is of utmost importance.

I also use this opportunity to publicly express my gratitude to, first of all, the Austrian Development Cooperation, without whose help and support this project certainly would not have achieved the results all partners are so proud of. We owe gratitude to all the guest lecturers who have devoted their precious time to come to Kosova, to fill with their courses the gaps in the curriculum of University of Prishtina. The University of Prishtina also deserve words of praise, because they recognized the possibilities of the BGP, and, by applying for the project, made the first step towards the implementation of the BGP.

Finally, I would like to thank the staff of WUS Austria for their good work in coordination, communication with all stakeholders and for the successful implementation of the Brain Gain Program.

Professor Wolfgang Benedek
 Chairman of WUS Austria



Professor Wolfgang Benedek, Chairman of WUS Austria

2. BGP IMPRESSIONS: MAKING A DIFFERENCE

During the 1980s and the 1990s, many Western countries witnessed an exodus of people from Kosovo into their territories as a result of political instability and civil war in former Yugoslavia. This flux of immigration from this country into Western countries was accompanied by a brain drain, due to the fact that many educated people left the country in pursuit of safety and new opportunities.

The nation-building that succeeded the Kosovo war did not only stop massive emigration, but also initiated a process of reverse migration or brain gain, especially within the educated strata of the immigrant community that was determined to participate in the process of rebuilding Kosovo. The resulting brain gain has proved beneficial because a number of reverse migrants have been educated in the West, and are bringing a unique set of knowledge and skills that will enable Kosovo to better get through the transition period of nation-building and state formation.

Organizations like the World University Service (WUS) Austria are the chief promoters of such brain gain to Kosovo. Through its financial sponsorship and networking, WUS Austria has enabled many Kosovar people to return to Kosovo and to actively contribute to the education of new generations of students through short-term lectures and/or research at local universities. Scholars that are sponsored by WUS Austria are able to open new horizons for local students by offering courses in subjects that are not offered by local universities; by introducing new teaching techniques; and by engaging students in debates and discussions.

I have had the honor and the privilege of giving my lectures at the Prishtina International Summer University and the University of Prishtina sponsored by WUS Austria. I organized seminars on the Role of Media in Politics, Political Campaigning, and Campaign and Policy Research. The number of students attending my lectures ranged from 17 to 54, and it was empowering to see so many students interested in gaining new knowledge and applying these lessons to the development of Kosovo and the region. While I would like to believe that I have been able to make a difference in students’ learning through many lectures, I know that my experiences, gained from having encountered and interacted with wonderful students from across the Balkans, have been amazing.

Mr. Elis Vllasi, MS, MA,
The University of Tennessee, USA

3. THE IMPACT OF BRAIN GAIN IN KOSOVA

The Brain Gain Program (BGP) is a project implemented by WUS Austria and financed by the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC) since 2002. The main aim of the project is to open up the higher education sector in South Eastern Europe (SEE) by inviting emigrated academics from the region to deliver courses, which are not available at the local universities. Like other universities in the region, the University of Prishtina recognized this as its true need.

For the last ten years, the project has supported the invitation of professors, assistants and experts from relevant study fields to enable the UP and its students to benefit from their knowledge and expertise. Through their engagement at the UP, the emigrated academics also supported the ongoing reform processes at the University of Prishtina. Through BGP, Diaspora scholars and experts as well as academics, teaching at Austrian institutions, were encouraged to come to Kosova and to teach, research, and conduct mentorships for a period of one to three weeks up to four months.

The aim of the project fully complies with the goals of Kosova’s higher education institutions in general, and the University of Prishtina in particular: to reduce the effects of brain drain at the SEE universities and thus enhance knowledge transfer (brain gain). The knowledge, experience and expertise gained from emigrated academics through this project, play a crucial role in improving the economic and social situation in Kosova.

Whereas in the period 2002-2007, BGP included only guest lecturers (mostly emigrated academics from SEE, teaching and living abroad, and Austrian lecturers), in the period 2008-2011 the project was enriched by the possibility to stay at the UP for an extended period (up to 4 months/ 1 semester). Academics, choosing this option were also conducting research activities and/ or providing mentorships for students.

Guest lecturers participating in BGP, through their lectures, have made a significant impact for the benefit of the UP, especially in the following fields:

- Further development of the UP by filling the gaps in the local teaching capacity;
- New teaching methodologies following recent trends and developments of science and technology;
- The introduction of recent literature from renowned authors from various fields of studies;
- Bringing a new spirit and concept of communication in the student – professor relationship;



*Mr. Sc. But Dedaj, Regional
Manager of WUS Austria
in Kosova*

- Strengthening institutional cooperation between the University of Prishtina and the home universities of the visiting academics around the world. This process created space and possibilities for further cooperation in numerous other joint projects including scientific research, exchange of lecturers and students, as well as the adoption of best practices when it comes to applying the Bologna process;
- Fostering joint research between the UP and the home universities of the BGP lecturers.

During this period of almost ten years of BGP implementation, more than 140 guest lectures were given at the University of Prishtina, with the involvement of around 70 visiting academics. Even though the objective of the project was not to support the permanent return of these scholars and experts to Kosova, some of them, through the connections created during their BGP visits, did indeed decide to permanently relocate to Kosova.

Without the help and continuous support of the Austrian Development Cooperation, the project certainly would not have achieved the results all partners are so proud of. The University of Prishtina also deserves words of praise for its professionalism throughout these years of cooperation. Last but not least, I owe gratitude to all the guest lecturers and researchers participating in the project who devoted their time to come to the University of Prishtina in order to fill existing gaps in the areas of teaching and research.

Mr. Sc. But Dedaj,
Regional Manager of WUS Austria,
Prishtina Office

4. BRAIN GAIN INSTEAD OF BRAIN DRAIN

From the prehistory to the contemporary era, people emigrated from their homelands to other places. Social scientists, who deal with the issue of emigration, identified a range of reasons that influence emigration. In most of the cases, people emigrate in order to improve their economic situation, or in order to escape from wars or natural disasters.¹ Reasons encouraging people to emigrate from one country to another, according to sociologists, are labeled in two categories known as “push” and “pull” factors. Push factors are negative aspects of the sending country, while pull factors occur within receiving states.²

Brain drain, which is defined as the permanent loss of a vital driving force of any country³, was encountered for the first time in the United Kingdom during the 1960s when a large number of qualified engineers and scientists from UK – being attracted by better working and living conditions – immigrated to the United States. Even though this is considered a global phenomenon, usually developing countries suffer more severely from brain drain. For these countries it takes many years, usually generations, to replace the loss of human capital.

Kosova is a country with a very large Diaspora community. A common, yet disputed, figure shows that around 800,000 of Kosova Albanians live abroad, mainly in Germany (300,000), Switzerland (155,000+),⁴ and in other countries of the world. The brain drain phenomenon in Kosova was stimulated mainly by “push” factors such as political instability which culminated in a war in 1999, violation of human rights, lack of economic perspective, unemployment etc. Thus, considering the role which human capital has in the socio-economic development of a country and its importance for capacity building and European integration, in 2002 WUS Austria started with the implementation of the **Brain Gain Program (BGP)**. Brain gain, as a sociological phenomenon, in the broadest way possible, is understood as the reverse effect of brain drain. It includes certain actions, policies and strategies which tend to create and offer proper conditions and possibilities to stimulate and encourage qualified emigrants to return to their home country. This purpose serves in the best way possible the BGP program, generously financed by the Austrian Development Cooperation, which aims to bring professors, assistants or experts in relevant fields from former Yugoslavia back to the region by inviting them to teach as guest lecturers, participate in research and development, and mentor student theses at the University of Prishtina in Kosova.

¹ Globalization 101, “Migration and Globalization”, The Levin Institute, The State University of New York, p. 2.

² Ibidem, p. 8.

³ Vedran Horvat, “Brain Drain: Threat to Successful transition in South Eastern Europe?” South Eastern European Politics, June 2004, Vol. V, No. 1, p. 77.

⁴ Amir Haxhikadrija, “Assessing the Role of Diaspora on Kosovo’s Development” (Forum for Democratic Initiative, Luzern, 2009), p. 4.

During the years of project implementation, scholars from different countries of the world came to the University of Prishtina to give lectures, thus transforming the BGP project from a simple and small project, to a crucial one with great impact for initiating and strengthening the cooperation between the University of Prishtina and institutions all around the world. This cooperation, during the years, has increased the mobility of academics and researchers of Kosova and contributed in different aspects to improving the quality of learning processes at the University of Prishtina.

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M.Sc. Alfred Marleku,
Project Manager,
WUS Austria, Prishtina Office

5. BGP – PROGRAM OVERVIEW

BGP was designed with the aim to reduce the effects of the brain drain at South Eastern Europe (SEE) universities by providing the opportunity to emigrated academics from the region, or teaching staff at Austrian universities, to give guest lectures at a SEE university and thus enhance knowledge transfer (brain gain).

The loss of human capital can be, at least partially, offset by the temporary return of experts and the development of networks facilitating the circulation of experts between host countries and their countries of origin.

Furthermore, the BGP project has been a significant means of strengthening institutional cooperation between the University of Prishtina and universities all over the world from which the guest lecturers are coming. This was especially the case with European and American universities, but also with Australian universities.

Since 2002 the interest and demand for WUS Austria’s project BGP has grown constantly, which shows that it still meets the needs of the University of Prishtina.

The idea of BGP is based on facts. The fact is, as mentioned above, that many people have left Kosova to study and teach abroad, which has led to the widespread phenomenon of brain drain. Some of them have finished their studies and specializations, and have worked at universities and similar institutions all over the world, or are experts in various fields. It is also a fact that there are gaps in the local teaching capacity at the universities in SEE, especially at the postgraduate level.

This type of international scientific exchange and cooperation is not only considered to be important for the development of the University of Prishtina, but it also has a „brain gain effect“, although it is not targeted at the final return of the emigrated academics. Even though this would be desirable, it is not realistic due to the current situation in the region and it would go beyond the scope of this project. Nevertheless, the BGP is a very effective mean for linking guest lecturers to already existing networks in their home countries and turning them into a driving force of knowledge transfer to and from their countries of origin.

From our experience with the BGP, since the beginning of its implementation, we know that there is a lot to gain from the emigrated academics and that they are willing to contribute. This contribution should be viewed through several aspects:

- Link between hosting institution (local university) and guest lecturers’ home institution – there are a lot of examples of how multifunctional international cooperation can evolve thanks to these visits.
- Improvement of the existing courses at local universities – by presenting state-of-the-art teaching methods to the local academic community by the guest lecturer.
- Adjustment of the teaching processes at local universities in order to meet the requirements of the local labor market.
- Fostering national, regional and international research activities.

6. BGP SUCCESS STORIES

The BGP supported the development of the University of Prishtina where organized lectures from different Guest Lecturers (GL) covered a variety of academic fields such as Social Sciences, Engineering, Medicine, Natural Sciences, Agriculture, Veterinary Medicine, etc. at the respective faculties.

Since the beginning of the project implementation in 2002, more than 130 lectures were given at the University of Prishtina, with the involvement of around 70 Diaspora lecturers. Even though the direct objective of BGP was not to make emigrated academics return to Kosova, but the permanent return of several academics was a valuable added value of the project.

Success Story 1: “Public Relations”, Prof. Dr. Bekim Baliqi, University of Vienna, Austria

Prof. Dr. Bekim Baliqi was one of the first lecturers to apply for the BGP+ with an extended period of stay which enabled him to spend an entire semester in Kosova. Prof. Baliqi came from the University of Vienna and held lectures at the Department of Political Science (Faculty of Philosophy) in “Public Relations”, a field of study which did not exist in UP study programs.



Students during the lecture

Comments made by the Host Institution:

“For our faculty and, above all, for the Department of Political Science, it was very important to have access to a new scholarly and scientifically important knowledge and to approach subjects that correspond with the mission of the Department and our educational objectives. For these and other reasons, the Philosophic Faculty of the UP is very satisfied with the outcomes and effort of Professor Baliqi whose research areas, scientific knowledge and professional competence have been a large contribution to students and the Department of Political Science.”

After Prof. Baliqi participated two times in the BGP+ project and after the Faculty received a lot of positive feedback from the students who participated in his lectures as well as from the teaching staff of the Faculty, Prof. Baliqi was offered the possibility to work as a regular teaching staff at the Faculty of Philosophy. His professionalism and commitment opened ways to new opportunities. After a short period of time working as a professor, he was elected “Head of Department of Political Science” at the Faculty of Philosophy.

Success Story 2: “Algebra”, Prof. Dr. Qendrim Gashi, European Post-Doctoral Program, Max-Plank Institute for Mathematics, Germany

Another case where the cooperation through BGP led to a permanent engagement at the UP is the study visit of Prof. Dr. Qendrim Gashi which took place in the winter semester 2009 at the Department of Mathematics, Faculty of Mathematical and Natural Sciences. Dr. Gashi, who is a Fellow of the European Post-Doctoral Program at the Max-Plank Institute for Mathematics in Bonn, has been engaged as an Associated Professor at the University of Prishtina, Faculty of Mathematical and Natural Sciences, Department of Mathematics from October 2010. It is worth mentioning that Dr. Gashi is only 26 years old and holds two Master Degrees in Mathematics from the University of Cambridge and the University of Chicago as well as a PhD in Mathematics from the University of Chicago.

Comments made by students:

“The lectures were very interesting and it was a good opportunity for us to improve our knowledge in Algebra.”
“Professor Gashi was very well prepared and we learned a lot during these two weeks, I strongly recommend that Prof. Gashi should continue teaching at this faculty.”
“The lectures were very interactive and better than our previous lectures in Algebra, I hope this kind of lectures will also be given in the future.”

This and also other cases proved that the BGP has given an excellent contribution to the improvement of Human Resources at the University of Prishtina.

Success Story 3: “The use of Language in Political Science”, Mrs. Kimete Canaj, University of Graz, Austria

BGP has not only contributed to the capacity building at the UP, but has also enabled its beneficiaries to work for other institutions related to Higher Education. Mrs. Kimete Canaj, currently National TEMPUS Coordinator at the European Commission, Liaison Office in Prishtina, participated in the Brain Gain Program at the Faculty of Philosophy, Department of Political Science in the academic year 2008/2009. The purpose of the subject taught by her was focused on explaining to students the use of language in the political rhetoric. Mrs. Canaj is also a lecturer at the University of Graz. Covering a topic such as rhetoric made the study visit a real success story, where she gained a lot of positive feedback from the participating students.



Students during the lecture

Comments made by students:

“I think Professor Canaj was great in teaching communication skills and it would be great if she could come again to give some lectures at the University of Prishtina.”

“I really liked the way how the lecturer handled the topics. I hope that in the future we will have more professors from Western countries to come and give lectures at our university. I encourage WUS to make it possible, to bring new professors from other countries to our university.”

To the knowledge of WUS Austria, as many as 20 emigrated academics who participated in the BGP have become regular staff of the University of Prishtina so far. Their decision to return to Kosova was certainly driven by diverse motivational factors. We, from WUS Austria, believe that getting a position at the UP was certainly one of the most important ones, as it has enabled them the continuation of their academic careers that have started abroad. The following table gives an impression of the variety that Brain Gain has enabled so far:

Name	Home Institution	Current Position
Prof. Dr. Blerim Rexha	Technical University of Vienna, Austria	Regular Professor at the Faculty of Electrical and Computer Engineering
Prof. Dr. Vilson Mirdita	University of Hohenheim, Germany	Ambassador of the Republic of Kosovo in Germany
Prof. Dr. Avdulla Alija	University of Salzburg, Austria	Regular Professor at the Faculty of Mathematical and Natural Sciences
Mr. Blerim Canaj	University of Graz, Austria	Teaching staff at University of Prizren
Prof. Dr. Arben Hajrullahu	University of Vienna, Austria	Regular Professor at the Faculty of Philosophy
Prof. Dr. Bedri Drini	Delft University of Technology, The Netherlands	Director of a local NGO: Global Development Network
Prof. Dr. Besnik Bislimi	University of Freiburg, Germany	Regular Professor at the American University in Kosovo
Ass. Kristë Shtufi	University of Graz, Austria	Regular Professor at the Faculty of Philology
Prof. Dr. Vitore Shala-Mayerhofer	University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna	Part time teaching staff at the Faculty of Agriculture
Prof. Dr. Anton Berisha	University of Calabria, Cosenza, Italy	Part time teaching staff at the Faculty of Philology
Prof. Dr Naser Sahiti	University of Nuremberg, Germany	Assistant Professor at the Mechanical Faculty
Prof. Dr Yll Haxhimusa	Vienna University of Technology, Austria	Part time teaching staff at the Faculty of Electrical Engineering
Prof. Dr Astrit Ademaj	Vienna University of Technology, Austria	Part time teaching staff at the Faculty of Electrical Engineering
Prof. Dr Eqrem Zenelaj	Danube University Krems, Faculty of European Law	Regular teaching staff at the Private College “FAMA”, Prishtina
Prof. Idriz Smaili	Telecom Consulting Department, United Kingdom	Part time teaching staff at the Faculty of Electrical Engineering
Prof. Dr Bedri Dragusha	Vienna University of Technology, Austria	Part time teaching staff at the Mechanical Faculty

Prof. Dr Salem Lepaja	Vienna University of Technology, Austria	Part time teaching staff at the Mechanical Faculty
Prof. Dr Ismail Hasani	University of Stavanger, Norway	Part time teaching staff at the Faculty of Philosophy
Prof. Dr Ismail Kabashi	Faculty of Mathematics and Geosciences, Austria	Part time teaching staff at the Faculty of Civil Engineering and Architecture
Prof. Dr Driton Statovci	Telecommunication Research Center Vienna	Part time teaching staff at the Faculty of Electrical Engineering
Prof. Bekim Baliqi	University of Prishtina	Head of Department of Political Science, Faculty of Philosophy
Prof. Lulzim Dragidella	University of Applied Sciences, Regensburg, Germany	Professor at Faculty of Philosophy, Department of Pedagogy
Prof. Kimete Canaj	University of Graz, Austria	Coordinator National TEMPUS Office in Kosovo
Prof. Dr. Qendrim Gashi	European Post Doctoral Institute, Cambridge, United Kingdom	Professor at the Faculty of Mathematical and Natural Sciences, Department of Mathematics
Prof. Dr. Xhevdet Thaqi	University of Barcelona, Spain	Professor at the Faculty of Education

List of BGP Guest Lecturers who currently work in Kosova

Success Story 4: “Propaedeutics”, Dr. Bardhyl Noci, Institute of Veterinary Anatomy, Free University of Berlin, Germany

Dr. Bardhyl Noci held lectures at the Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary, University of Prishtina, Department of Medicine. Dr. Noci is a lecturer at the Institute of Veterinary Anatomy at the Free University of Berlin. The lectures were held within the subject of “Propaedeutics” with a strong focus on the practical work. This was a very important experience for the Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary which is still an emerging institution with little experience of new methods which are applied in Western European countries. Thus, the visit of Dr. Noci contributed to know-how and knowledge transfer.

Comments made by the Host Institution:

“From our point of view the project was a great success because the aim of the project was to make new methods of clinical propaedeutics accessible to the students and this goal was achieved. The students gave feedback concerning the organization and the conducting of the module. But not only the students benefited from this program, for our faculty it is of great value to build up and sustain a fruitful and cooperative relation with the Free University of Berlin, through projects like this. In summary, we can draw a very positive conclusion about the project and we would like to emphasize that further cooperation of this kind would be highly desirable.”

Success Story 5: “Artificial Intelligence”, Prof. Dr. Nysret Musliu, Vienna University of Technology, Austria

There were not only courses offered which were not available at the hosting institutions, the Guest Lecturers also came to share their knowledge and experiences in existing courses of the UP curricula, and thus contributed to the quality of existing lectures by offering complementary approaches from different perspectives. Prof. Dr. Nysret Musliu, a lecturer at the Vienna University of Technology, Institute for Information Systems, Database and Artificial Intelligence, covered the lectures in the compulsory course of “Artificial Intelligence” at the Master level. Dr. Musliu has been working for more than ten years at the Vienna University of Technology and was involved in several research projects, thus, the main objective of this course was to give the students a broad introduction of core concepts of artificial intelligence, including problem solving and search, knowledge representation and machine learning. The positive feedback gained from the students enabled the faculty to invite Dr. Musliu again to teach at the Faculty of Electrical and Computer Engineering for several times.

Comments made by students:

“The Professor did his job in a very professional way.”

“The subject was very challenging and we learned new techniques.”

“I hope that we’ll have more opportunities like this to learn with these methods.”

Comments made by the Host Institution:

“Artificial Intelligence is a compulsory course of Master studies in Computer Engineering at our Faculty. This course cannot be covered by our faculty at the moment, so it was very important to have Dr. Nysret Musliu as a visiting professor to teach this course again. We were very pleased to cooperate with Dr. Musliu and we are grateful to WUS Austria for supporting him, and thus supporting the studies at the Faculty of Electrical and Computer Engineering.”

Success Story 6: “Mass Communication” & “Language and Ideology”, Dr. Sahadete Limani-Beqa, Europa Universität Viadrina Frankfurt, Germany

Dr. Sahadete Limani-Beqa, Researcher at the Europa Universität Viadrina Frankfurt, participated twice in the BGP project using the component with an extended period of stay. During the 4 months of her stay in Prishtina, she taught the courses “Mass Communication” and “Language and Ideology” for students at the BA and MA level at the Faculty of Philology, Department of Journalism. It is worth mentioning that Dr. Limani-Beqa mentored several dissertations for last-year students. The mentoring of final theses is a very valuable component of BGP, as it enables the guest professor to get more familiar with his/her students and to demonstrate how mentoring work functions at their home institutions, which is very valuable both for the UP and for its students. The dissertations covered the following topics: “Mass Media and Mass Mobilization”, “How much Public is the Public Television of Kosovo?”, “Audio Visual Views of TV News Editions and their Impact on the Public”, “The Role of the Press in Building Public Opinion”. The aims of the courses taught by her were to give the students knowledge about the main concepts of communication in general, and about mass communication in particular. The explanation of the nature, theory and effects of mass communication and the analysis of the impact of mass communication for the social, cultural and political processes were also objectives of the lectures held by Dr. Limani-Beqa.

Comments made by students:

“Introduction to Mass Communication was a very attractive subject and also the lecturer was very well prepared. We had a good time and we gained a lot of new knowledge.”

“I think that the course Introduction to Mass Communication has achieved its objectives thanks to the work of the lecturer and her good methods.”

“The subject was very interesting because apart from the lectures, the students took actively part in the process.”

“I’m very satisfied with the teaching methods and also with the debates that the professor initiated and the interactivity of the course.”

The Faculty of Medicine benefited from the BGP by inviting several specialists from various fields of medicine to give lectures for the students of this faculty including Bachelor, Master and PhD students. The experts came from several EU countries and also from the United States.

Success Story 7: “Neuroscience”, Dr. Bashkim Kadriu, M.D., University of Illinois at Chicago, USA

Dr. Bashkim Kadriu, M.D. Research Associate at the University of Illinois at Chicago, Department of Neuroscience/Psychiatry held a series of open lectures in the field of “Neuroscience” at the Faculty of Medicine. The audience consisted of a wide range of interested

persons, students, teaching staff of the faculty and other interested persons in Neuroscience. The lectures were held at the Centre of Telemedicine of the University of Prishtina, and thus the Faculty of Medicine is planning to extend the cooperation between the UP and the University of Illinois in the area of medicine.

Comments made by the Host Institution:

These lectures meant to bring an insight and understanding for the field of Neuroscience in general, and in particular to discuss the role of GABAergic dysfunction and its association with brain disorders. The course entitled “The Role of Epigenetic Mechanisms in the Regulation of GABAergic Function”, which was divided into eight topics, brought to the scientific community in Prishtina the latest achievement from the Institute of Neuroscience at the University of Illinois at Chicago. The lecturer Dr. Kadriu was here for two weeks. We believe that our Faculty of Medicine should encourage this cooperation in the future, to aim at not only returning our potential faculty back home, but also to create bridges of opportunities for our students and faculty. Dr. Kadriu is continuing his venues of research in the basic and clinical field of Neuropsychiatry and Neuroscience at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine at Yeshiva University. He has expressed his willingness to come again next year and to continue his cooperation with the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Prishtina.



Lecture held by Dr. Bashkim Kadriu at Faculty of Medicine, UP

Lecture
Announcement of
the guest lectures by
Dr. Bashkim Kadriu
held at Faculty of
Medicine of UP

UIC Department of
Psychiatry
COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

BGP plus

Neuroscience Lecture series by: Bashkim Kadriu, M.D.

The Role of Epigenetic Mechanisms in the Regulation of GABAergic Function

1. The GABA (γ -Amino Butyric Acid) Receptor Function and Benzodiazepines. (Date: 23/05/2011; Lecturer: Bashkim Kadriu, M.D.)
2. The Anticonvulsant, Non-Sedative and Neuroprotective Properties of Imidazo-Benzodiazepine Derivatives. (Date: 24/05/2011; Lecturer: Bashkim Kadriu, M.D.)
3. Imidazenil, a Long-Lasting Non-Sedative Benzodiazepine in Protecting Against DFP-Induced Seizure and Neuronal Damage. (Date: 25/05/2011; Lecturer: Bashkim Kadriu, M.D.)
4. DNA Methyltransferase-1 (DNMT1) Overexpression in Anterior Prefrontal Cortex GABAergic Interneurons in Psychosis. (Date: 26/05/2011; Lecturer: Bashkim Kadriu, M.D.)
5. Reelin in Brain Development and Schizophrenia. (Date: 27/05/2011; Lecturers: Bashkim Kadriu, M.D. & Ekrem Madiku, M.D.)
6. Full or Partial Agonists of nAChR Target Epigenetic Mechanisms in Cortical GABAergic Neurons. (Date: 30/05/2011; Lecturers: Bashkim Kadriu, M.D. & Ekrem Madiku, M.D.)
7. Wrap-Up of Epigenetic GABAergic Targets in Psychosis. (Date: 31/05/2011; Lecturers: Bashkim Kadriu, M.D. & Ekrem Madiku, M.D.)

The BGP, as a program aiming to give emigrated scholars the opportunity to contribute to the reformation process at the UP, was open to academics from former Yugoslavia, but mostly Kosovar academics from all over the world participated. The scope of the countries where the Guest Lecturers came from stretched from a lot of Central European and Mediterranean Countries to America.

Success Story 8: “Discovering Geometrical Transformation and Development of Geometric Thinking”, Prof. Dr. Xhevdet Thaqi, University of Barcelona, Spain

Prof. Dr. Xhevdet Thaqi, lecturer and researcher at the University of Barcelona, Spain, gave the lecture “Discovering Geometrical Transformation and Development of Geometric Thinking” at the Faculty of Education at the UP. After a successful introduction of the course at the Faculty of Education and since the management of the faculty was satisfied with the positive outcomes of the organized lectures and the success that students have shown, and due to the fact that the faculty lacked this subject, it was decided that the course should be included in the existing curricula as a compulsory course.

Comments made by the Host Institution:

“The lectures were very relevant for the students’ professional life. During the lectures the teaching process was organized in group activities in which students used reasoning to explain why conjectures are true. This course was also useful on knowing the Van Hiele levels on Geometrical thinking that are very important on pre-service teacher training. We are planning this course to be incorporated into the existing curricula.”

Success Story 9: “Operating Systems”, Dr. Alban Rrustemi, University of Cambridge, United Kingdom

Dr. Alban Rrustemi, Researcher at the University of Cambridge, Faculty of Technology, was very active in his lectures “Operating Systems” at two faculties of the UP: Faculty of Electrical and Computer Engineering and Faculty of Mathematical and Natural Sciences, Department of Computer Science. In both cases the faculties invited Dr. Rrustemi to give lectures on the topic of “Operating Systems”, an essential course in Computer Science and therefore it is of importance to these departments to provide high quality teaching in Operating Systems. According to the faculties benefiting from courses delivered by Dr. Rrustemi, the overall aim of the course was to provide students with general knowledge on how an operating system works and these key concepts were successfully achieved.

Comments made by students:

“It was a very good idea from our faculty to invite Prof. Alban, because it is very important for our careers to have a better understanding of Operating Systems, so I suggest that these lectures will be continued also in the future.”

“It is great to have a chance to hear lectures from such an experienced Professor as Prof. Rrustemi. And I’m grateful to WUS for supporting this course and thus supporting us in our development.”

“I can say that it was a very successful course and I think all students are satisfied with the overall course.”

Success Story 10: “Psychodrama”, Dr. Gonxhe Boshtrakaj, University of Konstanz, Germany

Another lecturer who applied for the BGP with an extended period of stay was Dr. Gonxhe Boshtrakaj from the University of Konstanz. She introduced the course of “Psychodrama” at the Department of Psychology at the Philosophic Faculty. This is a course which was not present in the curricula, but it was successfully implemented twice with the help of Dr. Boshtrakaj. From the beginning there was a huge interest from the students to follow the course where the most important psychodrama methods were explained.

Comments made by students:

“The course was really interesting, and the practical part was very effective and it enabled us to understand the subject better.”

“I think that these lectures were successful because the methods how to tackle the problems were very effective and easy to understand.”

“Psychodrama was quite interesting and we learned a lot of new things and I think that this has to be continued in the future in order to achieve more success.”

“I would personally like to take part in more modules of psychodrama, because it really helped us a lot. I’m very satisfied with the outcomes of the course.”

7. CONCLUSION: FUTURE CHALLENGES

Brain gain, instead of brain drain, is a process which can have essential impact on the successful economic and political development of a country. Its importance is much noticeable in small and transition countries such as Kosova, with a great demand for highly educated and skilled people and with a lot of challenges ahead. The need of this demand is being filled by higher education institutions in Kosova, led by the University of Prishtina. Its mission is to provide high quality education, comparable and competitive in the European Higher Education Area. With the proper policies in place, qualified persons from Kosova, living abroad, can be also involved in the development processes. By doing so, Kosova can have the opportunity to gain knowledge of European quality with the lowest cost possible.

The Brain Gain Program, financed by the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC) and implemented by WUS Austria since 2002, has become a very important tool for establishing and strengthening the institutional cooperation between higher education institutions of Western European countries and the University of Prishtina. Referring to this long experience, it has been proven that the strengthening and the use of the Diaspora networks are considered appropriate mechanism for the proper use of human capital abroad which exists for supporting internal developments.

The Government of Kosova understood the role and the potential of its Diaspora in the economic and social development of Kosova. For this reason, based on the BGP program of WUS Austria, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology started with the implementation of the Brain Gain project in 2008 with the aim of returning qualified Kosova Diaspora and involving them in Kosova institutions. In addition to this, in 2011, the Ministry for Diaspora was established. One of the priorities that this Ministry will have is to create proper policies in contributing to Brain Gain. These policies, led by the ministry, will not cover only the public sector but will be also focused on the private sector. Kosovar institutions must be more flexible and open to use the Diaspora potential, and by doing so, to establish networks with foreign institutions. These kinds of cooperation promote progress and development and build the basis for further joint projects in fields like scientific research and economy. Besides, the mutual cooperation will stimulate the process of ‘brain circulation’ which will enable Kosova to successfully pass the transition phase and which will contribute to the European integration processes of Kosova.

WUS Austria, Prishtina Team

List of all Guest Lecturers and their Home Institutions in the period 2002 - 2011

Name of the lecturer	Hosting Institution	Home Institution/Country
Krist Shtufi	Faculty of Philosophy	University of Graz, Austria
Vilson Merditaj	Faculty of Agriculture	University of Honenheim, Germany,
Bajram Berisha	Faculty of Agriculture	University of Munich, Germany
Salih Salihu	Faculty of Agriculture	University of Boku, Vienna, Austria
Vitore Shala – Mayrhofer	Faculty of Agriculture	University of Boku, Vienna, Austria
Konrad Koestlin	Faculty of Philosophy	Institute for European Ethnology
Anton Berisha	Faculty of Philology	University of Calabria, Kozenca, Italia
Gonxhe Boshtrakaj	Faculty of Arts	University of Salzburg, Austria
Blerim Canaj	Faculty of Philology	University of Salzburg, Austria
Naser Sahiti	Mechanical Faculty	University of Nurnberg, Germany
Yll Haxhimusa	Faculty of Electrical Engineering	Vienna University of Technology, Austria
Nysret Musliu	Faculty of Electrical Engineering	Vienna University of Technology, Austria
Astrit Ademaj	Faculty of Electrical Engineering	Vienna University of Technology, Austria
Idriz Smaili	Faculty of Electrical Engineering	Software Product TTP-view, Austria
Xhafer Krasniqi	Faculty of electrical Engineering	Telecom consulting dep. Network, United Kingdom
Naim Gjergji	Faculty of Electrical Engineering	PSI, Product and Systems, Germany
Salihe Salihu Abazi	Faculty of Philosophy	Lund University, Sweden
Fatmir Asllanaj	Faculty of Natural Sciences	LEMETA, France
Arian Shala	Faculty of Economics	IAEA, Austria
Bedri Dragusha	Mechanical Faculty	Vienna University of Technology, Austria
Bernhardt Hurch	Faculty of Philology	University of Graz, Austria
Avdulla Alija	Faculty of Natural Sciences	University of Salzburg, Austria
Arben Hajrullahu	Faculty of Philosophy	University of Vienna, Austria
Bedri Drini	Mechanical Faculty	Delft University of Technology, Netherlands

Salem Lepaja	Faculty of Electrical Engineering	Vienna University of Technology, Austria
Besnik Bislimi	Faculty of Philosophy	University of Freiberg, Germany
Peter Cepuder	Faculty of Agriculture	University of Boku, Vienna, Austria
Blerim Rexha	Faculty of Natural Sciences	Siemens AG, Germany
Nexhmedin Morina	Faculty of Philosophy	Univeristy of Jena, Germany
Visar Belegu	Faculty of Medicine	Johns Hopkins University, U.S.A, Postdoctoral Fellow
Manfred Grafinger	Faculty of Applied Sciences, Ferizaj	University of Technology, Vienna, Austria
Ismail Hasani	Faculty of Philosophy	University of Stavanger, Norway
Ismail Kabashi	Faculty of Civil Engineering and Architecture	Faculty of Mathematics and Geosciences, Austria
Bekim Baliqi	Faculty of Philosophy	Faculty of Human and Social Sciences, Austria
Lulzim Dragidella	Faculty of Philosophy	University of Applied Sciences, Regensburg, Germany
Driton Statovci	Faculty of Electrical and Computer Engineering	Telecommunication Research Center Vienna, Austria
Petrit Beqiri	Faculty of Medicine	Martin Luther University, Faculty of Medicine, Germany
Eqrem Zenelaj	Faculty of Philosophy	Danube University Krems, Faculty of European Law
Dritero Arifi	Faculty of Philosophy	University of Vienna, Austria
Herbiert Kahmen	Faculty of Civil Engineering and Architecture	Vienna University of Technology, Austria
Kimete Canaj	Faculty of Philosophy	University of Graz, Austria
Alban Rustemi	Faculty of Computer and Electrical Engineering	University of Cambridge, United Kingdom
Naim Shabani	Faculty of Medicine	University of LMU Munich, Germany
Bardhyl Noci	Faculty of Agriculture	Free University of Berlin, Germany
Rifat Morina	Faculty of Medicine	Georg-August University
Lema Kabashi	Faculty of Education	University of Pittsburg, USA

Qendrim Gashi	Faculty of Mathematical and Natural Sciences	European Post-Doctoral Institute, United Kingdom
Xhevdet Thaqi	Faculty of Education	University of Barcelona, Spain
Kemajl Stuja	Faculty of Mechanical Engineering	FH Technikum, Vienna, Austria
Fahri Beqa	Faculty of Medicine	University of Medicine Charite, Berlin, Germany
Sahadete Limani Beqa	Faculty of Philology	Europa Universität Viadrina, Frankfurt, Germany
Xhevat Lumi	Faculty of Medicine	University Medical Centre, Ljubljana, Slovenia
Bashkim Kadriu	Faculty of Medicine	University of Illinois at Chicago, USA
Peter Kopacek	Faculty of Mechanical Engineering	Vienna University of Technology, Austria
Elis Vllasi	Prishtina International Summer University	The University of Tennessee, USA
Mimoza Hyseni	Faculty of Mathematical and Natural Sciences	University of Zurich, Switzerland
Nezir Kraki	Faculty of Philosophy	Université Paris Est (Paris 12) France
Besnik Pula	Faculty of Philosophy	Institute for Public Knowledge, New York University, USA
Gjon Culaj	Faulty of Philosophy	University of Paris 13, France
Gurakuq Dajaku	Faculty of Electrical and Computer Engineering	University of Federal Defense Munich, Germany
Martina Melcher	Faculty of Law	University of Graz, Austria
Judith Grimm	Faculty of Law	University of Graz, Austria
Klaus Pateter	Faculty of Law	University of Graz, Austria
Carolin Leutloff-Grandits	Prishtina International Summer University	University of Graz, Austria
Ernst Heiduk	Prishtina International Summer University	Carinthia University of Applied Sciences, Austria




8. PROJECT STAKEHOLDERS

University of Prishtina

The University of Prishtina was founded on the Law on the Establishment of the University of Prishtina which was approved by the Assembly of the Socialist Province of Kosovo on 18th of November 1969. The Establishment Assembly was held on 13th February 1970. Two days later, on 15th February 1970 the solemn Assembly gathering was held, whereby this day was declared as the Day of the University of Prishtina. Currently, the UP has 17 faculties, 14 of which are academic faculties whereas 3 are faculties of Applied Sciences. The University of Prishtina registered 41,833 students in the academic year 2009/2010. The main values of the UP are diversity (freedom of expression, gender, culture, age etc.). Its mission is directed towards Europeanization and Internationalization, thus greatly contributing to increasing the quality of education.

The University of Prishtina is one of the first institutions of higher education in the region that has undertaken the process of thorough reforms in accordance with the Bologna Process since 2001/2002. As acquiring internal and external quality is one of the main pillars of the Bologna Process, in February 2007 the UP Senate decided to establish the Unit for acquiring quality since the beginning of the academic year 2007/2008. The so-called Coordinators for Academic Development are responsible for ECTS and for acquiring quality in academic units.

The UP gives high priority to international cooperation focused on an intensive participation in the following programs: TEMPUS, Erasmus Mundus, Erasmus (external window), Leonardo Da Vinci, regional initiatives of South Eastern Europe, cooperation with neighboring countries and others. Taking into consideration the Bologna Principles of diploma and grade recognition, the promotion of the Diploma Supplement, the implementation of ECTS, the development of the Strategy for Continuous Education, the UP participates in different European projects for development and harmonization of curricula, mobility of students and academic staff as well as multilateral and bilateral cooperation in different fields.



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Program Donor - Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC)

Austrian Development Cooperation promotes sustainable development by reducing poverty. Bilateral development cooperation concentrates on partner countries in Africa, Asia and Central America as well as in South Eastern and Eastern Europe.

In South Eastern Europe Austrian Development Cooperation supports countries in their social, economic and democratic development and helps them prepare for their accession to the European Union. The main priorities of cooperation with South Eastern Europe lie in the fields of business and employment, education, environment and the rule of law.

Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC) in Kosovo

Kosovo is a major focus of Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC). Since 1999, Austria has been assisting the country in developing basic infrastructure, such as roads and water supply, and in education, democratization and economic development.

Even after declaring independence in 2008, Kosovo still faces serious political, economic and social problems. The present phase of transition is decisive for the development of democratic values, rule of law and an effective market economy. To support progress here, Austrian Development Cooperation focuses its work on rural development, which affords particular scope for poverty reduction and economic growth. With a view to sustainable and socially equitable development, ADC also assists in promoting the private sector.

Framing education programmes and building capacity is another priority of ADC. Austria supports the development of an educational system to meet needs at the higher education and vocational training level. ADC also helps Kosovo to implement measures in good governance and rule of law and seeks to foster democratic values by promoting conflict prevention and human rights programmes.

Tense relations still prevail among the various ethnic groups, particularly between the Kosovo Albanians and Kosovo Serbs. This is why Austrian Development Cooperation promotes peaceful co-existence among the various sections of the population.

Implementing Agency - World University Service (WUS) Austria

World University Service (WUS) Austria (www.wus-austria.org) is a politically independent, non-governmental organization committed to the promotion of the human right to education on the basis of academic freedom and university autonomy. Since its establishment in Graz in 1983, WUS Austria has been working on the promotion of this aim in various countries all over the world.

Today the organization has a regional focus on the countries of South-Eastern and Eastern Europe and employs 4 branch offices in Sarajevo, Prishtina, Podgorica and Belgrade. While this area remains at the centre of WUS Austria’s work, the organization additionally focuses on other regions such as the ACP countries, Northern Africa, the Middle East and the Caucasus and is further interested in cooperation with other countries in the world. During its 28 years of existence WUS Austria has positioned itself as one of the most important operative partners for enhancing knowledge transfer and comparability in Higher Education between EU and non EU countries. WUS Austria provides operative and technical support, and consultancy for a faster, more efficient implementation of the Bologna system and global trends in the Higher Education (HE) sector.

Sustainable development of Higher Education goes beyond the university level. Responding to this, WUS Austria works together with the public sector, economy and society as a whole.

WUS Austria in Kosova

Reacting to a call for support, WUS Austria established its office in Prishtina in 1998 and started first “aid” activities such as language and computer courses, micro-projects for students, academic mobility grants and counseling.

Not long afterwards, during the NATO air strikes in March 1999, the WUS Austria Pristina Office needed to move to Tetovo in Macedonia, but continued to support the academic community in Kosova from there. In July 1999, the office was reallocated to Prishtina and the activities were resumed in Kosova.

The past 13 years of our work in Kosova can be summarized in three main phases:

- **Humanitarian Aid** – In that phase, besides the above mentioned activities, the Austrian Ministry of Education made a significant amount available for the employees of the University of Prishtina, who were working at that time without any payment.
- **Stabilisation and reconstruction** – Provision of first equipment, support in re-establishing international links; each faculty and college received a technical start-up package consisting of: computers, printers, a copy-machine, a fax-machine, and an overhead projector.
- **Reform Phase** - During the last years WUS Austria focused on supporting the further development and advancement of the higher education system in Kosova. Additionally, all projects of WUS Austria at the University of Prishtina are in line with the Bologna principles and current European standards in the field of Higher Education.

CONTACT:

WUS Austria
Head Office Graz
Lichtenfelsgasse 21
8010 Graz
Phone: +43 316 38 22 58
Fax: +43 316 93 17 51
office@wus-austria.org

WUS Austria
Prishtina Office
St. Nena Tereze n.n.
10000 Prishtina
Phone/Fax: +381 38 241 472
prishtina@wus-austria.org

CONTACT:

WUS Austria - Head Office Graz

Lichtenfelsgasse 21, 8010 Graz

Phone: +43 316 38 22 58. Fax: +43 316 93 17 51

office@wus-austria.org

WUS Austria - Prishtina Office

St. Nena Tereze n.n., 10000 Prishtina

Phone/Fax: +381 38 241 472

prishtina@wus-austria.org

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