



Erasmus+

BERNICA
Building Educational and Research
Capacities in Nutrition and Dietetics in Central Asia



BERNICA KHATLON STATE MEDICAL UNIVERSITY



DANGARA - 2025

Kick-off meeting BERNICA

The project “Enhancing Educational and Research Capacity in Nutrition and Dietetics in Central Asia (BERNICA)” has been implemented since February 2023 with the support of the Erasmus+ Programme. Its main goal is to strengthen the educational and research capacity of universities in Central Asia in the field of nutrition and dietetics, introduce modern teaching methods, and conduct scientific research.

The project involves several medical universities in Central Asia, as well as universities in Turkey and Austria. Within the framework of the project, educational activities, seminars, and training sessions are organized for teachers and students aimed at developing competencies in the field of nutrition and dietetics. Special attention is paid to the use of modern educational platforms such as Moodle and the implementation of international educational standards.

On March 15–16, 2023, the official opening of the project took place at the Asfendiyarov Kazakh National Medical University, where partner universities, as well as the goals and prospects of the project, were presented. Representatives from Khatlon State Medical University — Chomi Aseev and Umeda Shokiri — took part in the event.

The project “Enhancing Educational and Research Capacity in Nutrition and Dietetics in Central Asia (BERNICA)” is aimed at strengthening the educational potential of universities in Central Asia, introducing advanced teaching methods, and improving the level of knowledge of students and teachers in the fields of nutrition, dietetics, and public health.



Study tour - ISTANBUL

From November 6 to 10, 2023, representatives of Khatlon State Medical University took part in training sessions organized within the framework of the Erasmus+ Programme BERNICA project, which were held at Istanbul Medipol University in Istanbul.

The following participants attended the event: Chomi Aseev — project administrator; Jahongir Nazarov — Head of the Department of Normal Physiology; Khusanjon Ergashev — Head of the Department of Internal Diseases No. 1; Bahriniso Isodukht — Head of the Department of Infectious Diseases; Izatullo Zaripov — Head of the Department of Human Anatomy and Latin Language.



During the training sessions, special attention was paid to modern approaches in the field of nutrition and dietetics, as well as to the development and implementation of educational courses on the Moodle platform. The participants exchanged experience with international partners and strengthened academic cooperation. The knowledge gained is planned to be implemented in the university's educational process.



Clinical Applications



Khatlon State Medical University has acquired modern laboratory equipment for the Department of Hygiene with the support of the project “Building Educational Reform in Nutrition and Clinical Applications (BERNICA)”.

On March 5, 2024, within the framework of the international project “Building Educational Reform in Nutrition and Clinical Applications (BERNICA)”, aimed at developing educational and research capacities in the field of healthcare, the university received new laboratory equipment for the Department of Hygiene.

The total amount of funding was 28,000 euros, which made it possible to equip the department with everything necessary for conducting practical classes, laboratory studies, and scientific experiments in the fields of hygiene and preventive medicine.

The acquired equipment will allow the university to:

- improve the quality of practical training for students;
- expand opportunities for scientific research and the implementation of modern health monitoring methods;
- promote the integration of the educational process with international standards of medical education.

The university administration noted that the support of international projects such as BERNICA plays a strategic role in modernizing the university’s educational and research infrastructure. It also contributes to improving the qualifications of teachers and students and strengthening international cooperation.

“We are pleased that thanks to the BERNICA project our departments can be equipped with modern equipment, which directly influences the quality of training of future healthcare professionals,” the university administration emphasized.

The staff of the Department of Hygiene have already begun integrating the new equipment into the educational and research process, which will enable students to gain up-to-date practical skills that meet international standards.



Study tour - Graz



In accordance with item 2 of the work package of this project, from April 15 to 19, 2024, a training and study visit course was held at the Graz University of Applied Sciences. Khatlon State Medical University was represented by the project coordinator U.G. Shokirova, project participant H.A. Boronov, and project participant I.Ch. Khomidzoda.

The main objective of organizing this short-term training and study visit course was to implement the educational programs, modules, and other teaching materials in the field of healthy nutrition and dietetics that have been developed and validated to date. These materials were divided into the following groups:

- Nutrition for schoolchildren
- Nutrition for athletes
- Nutrition for patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- Nutrition for patients with metabolic syndrome

Representatives from seven higher medical education institutions in Austria, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan participated in the course.

On April 15, the project coordinator at Graz University of Applied Sciences, Professor Manuela Konrad, provided a detailed overview of the program and agenda for the course, after which the course officially began. The director of the institute, Professor Elisabeth Peil, then presented information on the main activities and focus areas of the university.

Following this, Professor Bianca Fuchs-Neuhold gave a lecture on conducting laboratory research in the field of nutrition and on writing scientific articles on the topic. She provided participants with information under the theme: "Advancing Nutrition Science: Laboratory for Understanding Health and Key Directions for Future Research."



BERNICA International Days in Khatlon State Medical University

The BERNICA project has been implemented since February 2023 with the support of the ERASMUS+ program in several medical universities in Central Asia, Turkey and Austria. According to the 5th work package of the project, an event titled "International Days" was held at Khatlon State Medical University on November 4-5, 2024.



The purpose of the International Days meeting was to exchange knowledge and experience, increase the level of understanding of specialists in the field of nutrition and dietetics in Central Asia, as well as promote healthy nutrition for the health and well-being of the population. The event brought together representatives of partner universities in Central Asia with the support of European universities within the framework of the BERNICA project. The meeting consisted of several sessions, workshops and cultural events that provided useful learning environments for the participants.



The following representatives of universities reported at this event in online and in-person formats:

- Professor Indrani Kalkan from Istanbul Medipol University - reported online presentation on "Sustainable Nutrition", in which she talked about the beneficial value of products in the field of nutrition.
- Bahriniso Isayeva from Khatlon State Medical University spoke on "Nutrition in schoolchildren" and gave information on the nuances of the correct use of food products for children.
- Rabiga Khodjamkul from the Kazakh National Medical University named after S.D. Asfendiyarov in her speech spoke about the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals 3, 5 and 17 through the Central Asian Cooperation Network.
- Khusanjon Ergashev from Khatlon State Medical University spoke on "Nutrition for chronic stomach disease" and expressed his opinion on the choice of proper nutrition for patients with diseases of the digestive system and the effectiveness of treatment in the field of therapy.

Training seminars:

On November 4, the international BERNICA team began their work with the broad participation of the Department of Epidemiology and Hygiene, as well as students of the Faculty of Preventive Medicine. Professor Gulgun Ersoy and Professor Indrani Kalkan provided the participants with useful information about the metabolism in the body when eating food, how to calculate the energy metabolism in the body.



BERNICA in KHSMU



On May 15-16, 2025, Dr. Kenesh Dzhusupov visited Khatlon State Medical University to review the implementation of the BERNICA project. The purpose of the visit was to inspect the developed modules, assess the utilization of nutrition laboratories, and examine the project's financial documentation. During the visit, he also held a meeting with the local project teams to discuss the project's progress, identify challenges and obstacles faced by Tajik universities, and plan for upcoming activities and the final report.



BERNICA International Days in Uzbekistan

From April 10 to April 11, 2025, a significant event called the “International Days” of the BERNICA project took place at the Tashkent Medical Academy within the framework of the Erasmus+ program in Uzbekistan. The event featured an international scientific-practical conference on “Current Issues in Nutrition and Dietetics: Dietary Features of Different Population Groups.”

The event aimed to develop educational and research competencies in nutrition and dietetics in Central Asia, as well as to promote healthy eating for the improvement of public health.



On April 14, a meeting was held with the Rector of the Bukhara State Medical Institute named after Abu Ali Ibn Sina, Doctor of Medical Sciences, Professor Shukhrat Dzhumaevich Teshayev, where international issues in medical education, nutrition, and patient nutritional support were discussed. An introductory tour of the institute’s clinic, simulation center, and ginseng cultivation laboratories was also organized.

As part of the cultural program, participants visited the Mausoleum of Bahaiddin Naqshband, Lyabi Hauz, the Mausoleum of Ismail Samani, the Ark Citadel, and the Emir’s Summer Palace (Sitorai Mohi Hosa).

