



SIS Intercultural  
Study Abroad

*Engage with the World. Study Abroad.*

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[www.sisstudyabroad.com/](http://www.sisstudyabroad.com/)



# Siena Italian Studies Intercultural Study Abroad

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## OUR PHILOSOPHY:

**SIS is independent, flexible program with the core goal to provide immersive experiences to all students.**

*This means that we are 100% focused on the students enrolled in the program, thus offering a model for sustainable intercultural study abroad.*

*Instead of looking at the local culture as if it were a museum, students at SIS are integrated into local society through coursework, host families, and service-learning projects.*



# Background

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**2004 - 2005**

Siena Italian Studies was founded & the faculty first developed the instructional approach: **FICCS (Full-Immersion: Culture Content Service)**, began providing students a “gentle” full-immersion program utilizing FICCS.

Conceptualization of **NOLC (Non-Level Concept)** instruction and integration into the FICCS approach.

Became Italian site for International Partnership for Service-Learning (IPSL).

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# Background

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**2008**

First conference on International Service-Learning “Service-Learning in Italy: Exploring the Relationship between Volunteerism and Academic Institutions” April 12, 2008

The SIS team developed an assessment tool, **RICA**, to measure the **unique competence** resulting from the use of the FICCS approach: **Reflective Intercultural Competence.**



# Background

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## 2011 - 2015

First Intercultural Horizons Conference “Best Practices in Intercultural Competence Development” Siena, May 7-8, 2011, to be followed by 4 more Intercultural Horizons conferences 2012-17.

First external 3-year grant from **Lifelong Learning Programme** of the EU to support the expansion of FICCS to Spanish and Portuguese partner institutions 2011-2014, called EUFICCS.

A number of publications on **RICA** and **FICCS/EUFICCS**.





# Background

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**2016 - 2020**

Opening the program to **European students**, especially Polish students from The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin and students from Brussels School of Governance.

Opening of the **Multi-Destination program**, which includes 6-weeks of classes in Siena followed by 8 weeks of internship in Brussels (Belgium), Yaoundé (Cameroon) or Chiang Mai (Thailand).

Development of many European projects through Nuova Associazione Culturale Ulisse and in collaboration with the **Council of Europe**.



# Background

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## TODAY

Renewal of our identity during the pandemic so that it could reflect all of our new projects and multiple destinations.

This "renaissance" led to **SIS Intercultural Study Abroad**, which reflects our roots in Siena but our expansion towards Europe (Italy, Belgium and Poland) and the world (Cameroon, Canada, Thailand, Ecuador).



Siena Italian Studies  
*Engage with the world. Study Abroad.*



SIS Intercultural Study Abroad  
*Engage with the World. Study Abroad.*

# What kind of students come to SIS?

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**Anyone can come to SIS Intercultural Study Abroad.** Since we are an independent program we have the flexibility to create **individual agreements** with partner institutions in order to meet their **specific needs**. SIS currently holds formal and direct agreements with these institutions of higher education:

Baldwin Wallace University  
Carroll College  
Franklin University – Switzerland  
Lewis and Clark College  
Montana State University  
Oklahoma City University  
Portland State University  
Saint Michael's College

Siena College  
SUNY (through SUNY Geneseo)  
Susquehanna University  
College of Mount Saint Vincent  
The Ohio State University  
UEES – Ecuador

University of Georgia  
University of Minnesota  
Williams College  
Winona State University

SIS also works closely with the following **provider organizations** that facilitate study abroad for a greater range of students.

SAI Programs  
Map the Gap International





# What kind of students come to SIS?

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SIS receives students of ALL MAJORS and from everywhere around the world.

Of course, Italian majors might find SIS particularly rewarding, but **the majority of our students have no prior experience with the Italian language** and are not Italian majors.

Additionally, we are working intensively to diversify our course offerings to satisfy the needs of students with majors in **Business, Humanities and Social Sciences, Music and Visual Arts, Natural and Environmental Sciences.**





# What kind of students come to SIS?

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We have also developed partnerships with several European universities. These include **Brussels School of Governance** (Belgium) with whom we exchange students during our summer programs. We welcome also students enrolled at **The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin** from Poland.

We are currently developing programs with our partners in **Canada, Cameroon, Thailand, and Ecuador** in order to welcome even more students from these countries and also to be able to send SIS students to these countries as well..

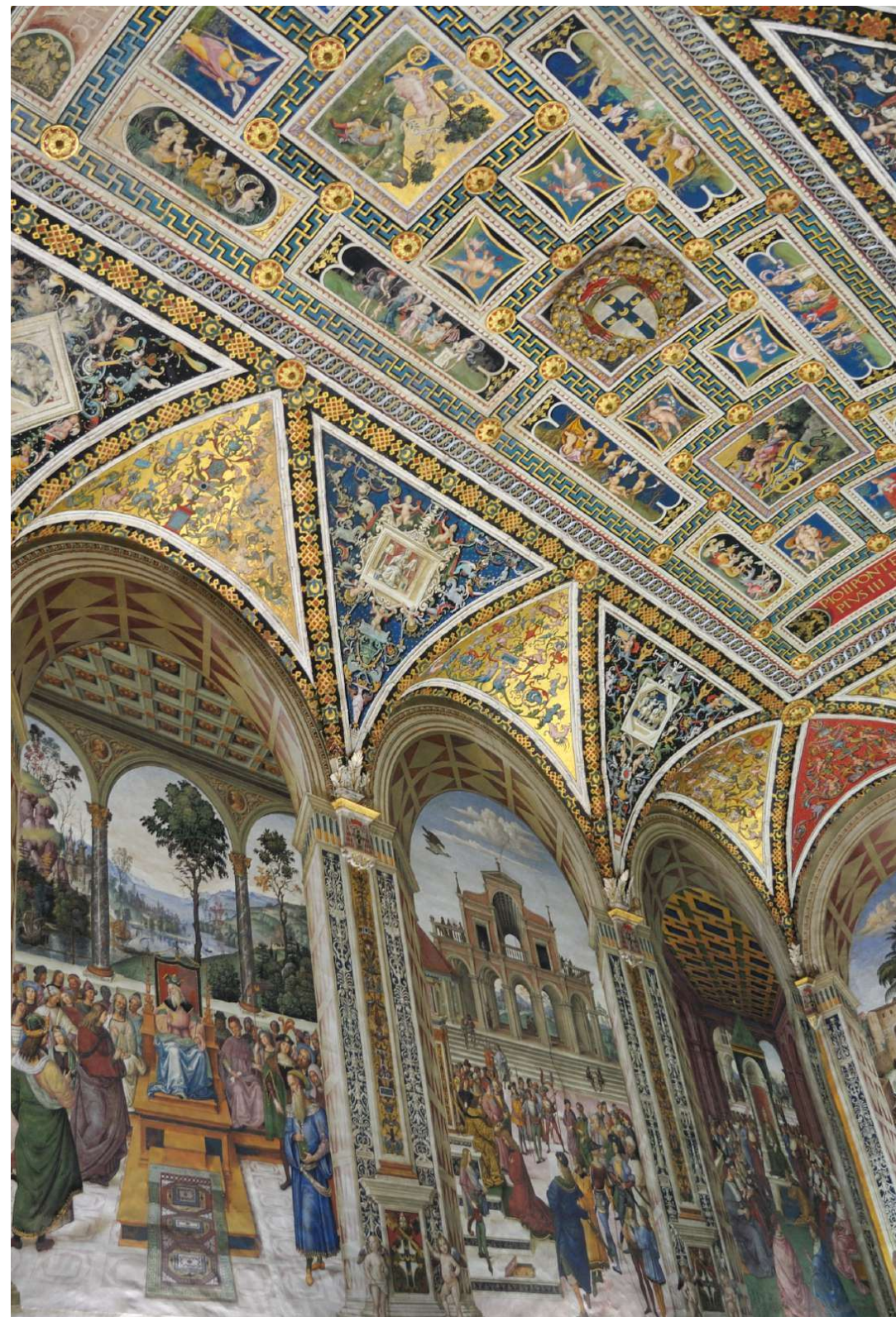




# Current Initiatives

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- Full Immersion Programs
- Multi-Destination Programs
- Graduate Level Programs
- Custom and Faculty-Led programs
- Janmester & Maymester
- Opportunities for High Schools





# Current Initiatives

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## Full-immersion programs: Siena and **(NEW!)** Brussels

Semester, summer and academic year undergraduate programs for individual students and in partnership with postsecondary institutions and organizations such as Siena College, SUNY-Geneseo, Lewis & Clark College, Ohio State University, University of Georgia.

### Semester programs:

15 weeks, up to 16 credits awarded, all-inclusive program (fee includes airport pick-up, tuition, all program activities including two over night trips, accommodations in a host family, lunches, and local bus passes).

### Summer programs:

8, 6, and 4-week options, up to 13 credits awarded, all-inclusive program.





# Current Initiatives

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## Multi-destination programs AND **(NEW)** Full program in Brussels

From 2017 SIS offers the choice of two Multi-destination programs for both graduate and undergraduate students. Academic course work and language study is completed in the **first 6 weeks of the semester in Siena and the following 8 weeks are spent participating in internships with NGOs in Brussels, Belgium or service-learning with associations and credit institutions in Yaoundé, Cameroon.**

In both scenarios students study both Italian and French language, and are accommodated in host-families. **Coursework is completed in English.** The program includes all meals, activities and excursions while in Siena as well as Brussels and Yaoundé, but transportation to/from Italy and the second destination is at the student's expense.

**Our **(NEW)** Full Program in Brussels** is intertwined to the one in Siena (immersion, host family, service learning) and would emphasize not only immersion in the French language but also in the European identity. Courses would be organized in English for summer programs and in French for each semester.



# Current Initiatives

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## Graduate level courses

SIS can provide accredited Graduate courses in the following areas:

- Intercultural Communication
- International Education
- EU Development
- New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) (among others)

This program format is also **all-inclusive**. Though graduate students still study Italian language, the MS-level courses are instructed in English.

SIS can also provide accredited MA-level courses in:

- Second Language Acquisition
- Glottodidactics
- Italian Literature





# Current Initiatives

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## Custom and Faculty-Led programs and Study Trips **(NEW)**

SIS has always accommodated **special requests and the needs of pre-formed groups and faculty-led programs**, both for an entire semester and for short term programs (10 to 14 days) and both in **Siena and Brussels**.

Groups can choose to use any portion(s) of our program that they wish. For example: homestay, facilities and staff assistance, Italian Language, excursions + faculty-led course of their own **OR** a full-SIS program with special request trips or academic focus. **Almost anything is possible!**

In **Siena and Brussels** we propose faculty-led study trips around:

- Climate Change,
- Education,
- Healthcare (Pharmacy and Vaccines),
- Global Citizenship,
- Gender Studies.



# Current Initiatives

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## Janmester and Maymester

SIS has developed a special Janmester and Maymester offer with an Italian language component and 1 or 2 specially developed courses, one of which is instructed in English. For January 2022 and May 2022 the courses are:

- A Green Renaissance: Sustainable Development in Siena and Tuscany (**instructed in Italian or English**)
- Italy – Land of Migrations: Emigration and Immigration Through History (**instructed in English**)





# Current Initiatives

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## **Opportunities for High Schools**

SIS has recently started to arrange short-term study abroad experiences for faculty led High-school or University groups. These study trips can be tailored to the group's needs, and, at the time being, can take place either in Siena, Italy or Brussels, Belgium.

These study trips can take place during winter break, spring break or at the beginning of summer and can be customized and vary in length.



# Starting soon

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From 2023

## Scientific Track

We all know how hard it is for students studying science to find both the time and the right courses in a study abroad program. This is why SIS Intercultural Study Abroad created a Scientific Track to satisfy this need. **Courses in natural, environmental and applied sciences, as well as select courses in math and statistics** are available to students choosing this track.

Students can choose 2-3 of the following science courses (**taught in English**), and have the option to choose their third course from the list of semester courses (**taught in Italian**).





# Program Offerings

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## FULL-IMMERSION SEMESTER PROGRAMS

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|------------------|---|
| <b>Duration:</b> | 15-16 weeks   |
| <b>Dates:</b>    | Early September – Mid December; Mid January – Early May |

## MULTI-DESTINATION SEMESTER PROGRAMS

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| <b>Duration:</b> | 15-16 weeks   |
| <b>Dates:</b>    | Early September – Mid December; Mid January – Early May |

## JANMESTER - MAYMESTER

|                  |               |
|------------------|---------------|
| <b>Duration:</b> | 3 weeks       |
| <b>Dates:</b>    | January ; May |

## SUMMER PROGRAMS

|                  |                                       |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Duration:</b> | 4 weeks, 6 weeks, 8 weeks or 10 weeks |
| <b>Dates:</b>    | Mid May - End of July                 |

## CUSTOM PROGRAMS

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| <b>Duration:</b> | All lengths (from 10-days - Academic Year) |
| <b>Dates:</b>    | Spring, Summer, Fall, Academic Year        |

# What kind of course offerings can students of Business find?

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From 2022, we are exploring the possibility of expanding our Business course offerings. They have not yet been activated but will be offered soon.

## 1) Basic course offerings:

### Coming soon:

- **Business and Legislative Italian**
- **Finance Ethics: From an Italian Perspective**
- **International Business**
- **Past and Present in Accounting: from the Italian tradition to the EU perspective**

- Intercultural Communication in Business
- Agri-food Business and Policies: An Italian Perspective
- International Financial Accounting
- Practical Seminar in Business Financial Control

**2) Business service-learning opportunities: with small-medium local businesses in Siena, Italy.** We have contact with a number of local businesses that may be willing to offer opportunities for service-learning such as marketing and promotion, to be tied to their academic and reflective writing courses.

## 3) Internship possibilities:

**In Siena:** 1 or 2 possible internship experiences for highly qualified students in Siena.

Through our **Multi-destination program (Siena + Brussels)** or our **Full Program in Brussels** there is a more ample selection of internship possibilities.



What kind of course offerings  
can students of Sciences find?

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SIS developed the following offer for Science majors (*BRAND NEW* Scientific Track):

**1) Course offerings:**

**The Italian Contribution to Science**  
**Spatial and Settlement Archaeology**  
**Organic Chemistry**  
**Introduction to Mathematical Statistics**  
**Introduction to Archaeology**  
**Introduction to Environmental Chemistry**  
**Human Evolution**  
**Fundamentals of Geology**

**Ethnobotany and Phytotherapy**  
**Calculus 1**  
**Calculus 2**  
**Introduction to Astronomy**  
**Physics 1**  
**Physics 2**  
**Prehistoric Ecology and Global Warming**  
**Chemistry in the Kitchen**  
**Computer Network Fundamentals**

**2) Internship possibilities: In Siena:** 1 or 2 possible internship experiences for highly qualified students in Siena. An Introduction to the study of Italian Prehistory.

What kind of course offerings can students of Humanities find?

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SIS developed the following offer for Humanities and Social Sciences majors:

**1) Course offerings:**

**Art History: History of Italian Costume**

**Art History: Rediscovery of Humanity – The Renaissance in Central Italy**

**Contemporary Italian History: From the Italian Unification to the European Union**

**Art History: The Middle Ages**

**Medieval Italian History**

**Greed, Politics and the Arts in the Renaissance**

**History of Italian Cuisine**

**Intercultural Dialogue, Democracy and Global Citizenship through Reflection\***

**2) Internship possibilities: In Siena:** 1 or 2 possible internship experiences for highly qualified students in Siena.

In the **Multi-destination program Siena + Brussels** there is a more ample selection of internship possibilities.



What kind of course offerings can students of Social Sciences find?

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SIS developed the following offer for Social Sciences majors:

**1) Course offerings:**

**Cultural Anthropology**

**Sociolinguistic Studies**

**Religious Culture and Traditions in Italy**

**Italy – Land of Migrations: Emigration and Immigration Through History**

**European Development Policy: a European Perspective on International Engagement**

**NEPAD (New Partnership for Africa's Development): New Ways to Define Development in Africa**

**Intercultural Communication and Studies**

**Intercultural Dialogue, Democracy and Global Citizenship through Reflection \***

**International Education in the European Context**

**Human Rights**

**2) Internship possibilities: In Siena:** 1 or 2 possible internship experiences for highly qualified students in Siena.

In the **Multi-destination program Siena + Brussels and Siena + Yaoundé** there is a more ample selection of internship possibilities.







More on our Instructional approach: WHAT IS EUFICCS?

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The **EUFICCS** (European Use of Full Immersion, Culture, Content, Service approach for language learning) **methodology** was initially created to satisfy the demands of a specific target: foreign students who come to Europe for a semester in order to get to know a new language and culture through the essential tool of service in the host society.



Education and Culture DG

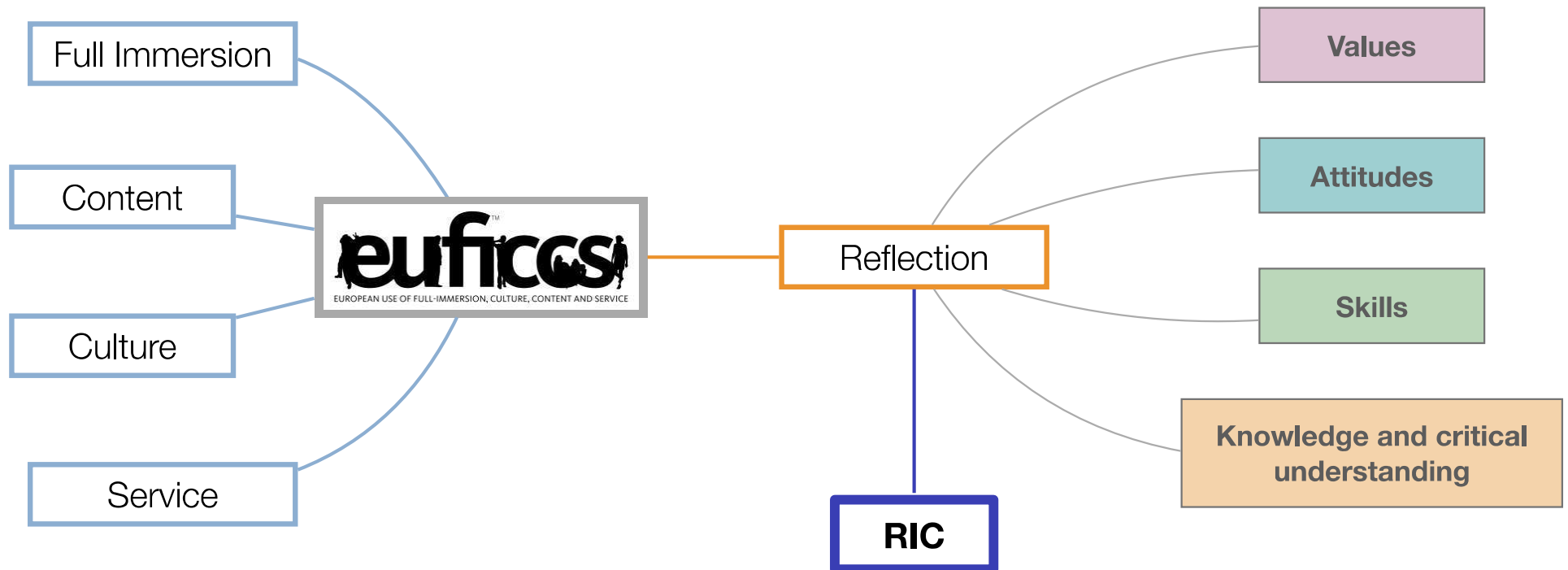
Lifelong Learning Programme



# WHAT IS EUFICCS?

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EUFICCS is the union of guided and spontaneous acquisition in order to develop Reflective Intercultural Competence through the components of its acronym along with *reflection* via the Intercultural Reflections Seminar.



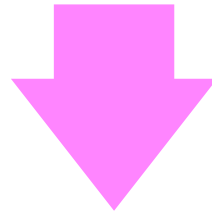


# FULL IMMERSION

into the language and the local community

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- intensive courses of Italian **language**,
- life in Italian **families**
- participation in the full set of activities organized by the program
- .....



- Experiencing the personal and collective dynamics of a different social environment
- being aware of the differences, experiencing a different perspective,
- using language as a support to create meaning.

# CULTURE

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Culture is embedded in every aspect of student experience: living with the host family, making acquaintances or friends, building relationships with the local community, traveling inside the host country, reading newspapers....





# CONTENT

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- Different academic disciplines and their contents (e.g. Art History, Contemporary History, Literature, Linguistic Studies, History of EU Integration, etc.)
- Teaching content in Italian and French, through **Non Level Concept (NOLC)**: in content classes, students sit together, irrespective of their linguistic level



# SERVICE

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Another mechanism for enhancing the linguistic and cultural repertoire. Places where students volunteer often require the use of specific vocabulary and service opportunities, open a window to diverse socio-cultural situations that otherwise learners would rarely experience.





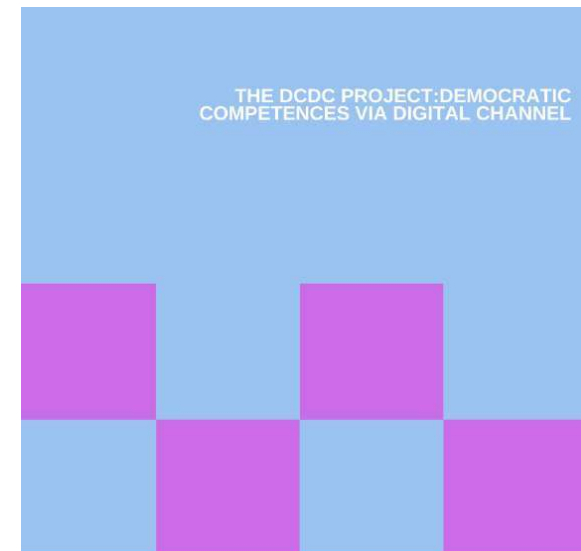
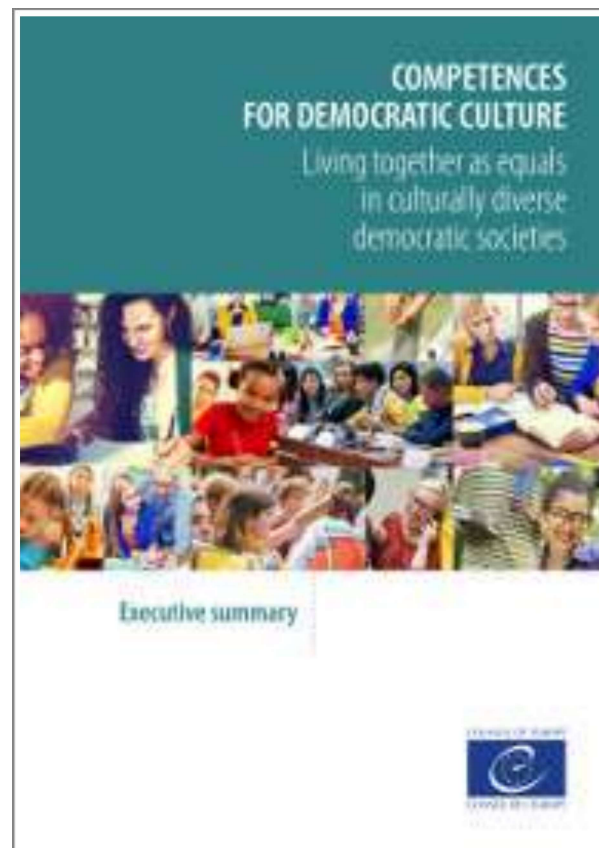
# Reflective Intercultural Competence (RIC)

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A specific competence gained through a structured and guided reflection process. It implies a conscious elaboration of intercultural encounters thus allowing a full engagement of the student who – hopefully – becomes a social actor in the host culture.

# Council of Europe

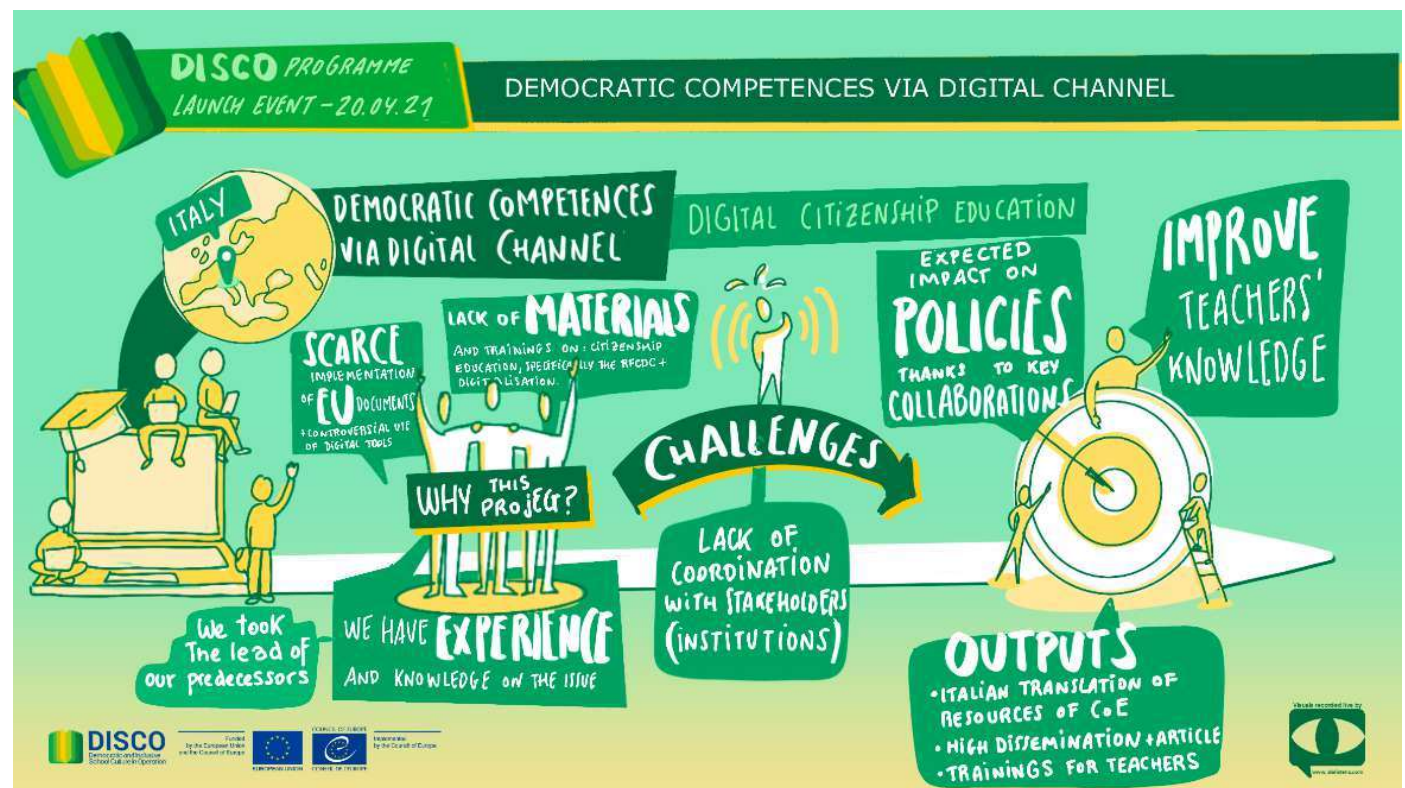
SIS maintains a collaborative relationship with several key figures involved in the initiatives of the Council of Europe and is currently part of a working group to develop a portfolio for the Reference Framework of Competencies for Democratic Culture.





# Council of Europe

Between March and November 2021, our sister association Nuova Associazione Culturale Ulisse implemented a project called "**Democratic Competences Via Digital Channel (DCDC)**" and funded by the European Union/Council of Europe Joint Programme "**Democratic and Inclusive School Culture in Operation (DISCO)**"



# Thank you!

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We look forward to working with you and we welcome any questions and comments you might have about SIS and what we do.

