



GUIDELINES FOR CARRYING OUT RESEARCH ACTIVITIES IN RISK AREAS¹

INTRODUCTION

Through these guidelines, the School of International Studies shall ensure that those who undertake research in the field are informed and aware of the importance of conducting adequate preliminary assessments on the presence of risks, especially of geopolitical risks.

These guidelines are therefore directed to students enrolled on master's degrees at the School of International Studies, PhD students enrolled on the PhD in International Studies at the University of Trento, research fellows, *incoming* researchers on international mobility projects and teaching staff who constitute the School of International Studies.

These guidelines are mainly aimed at risk avoidance, by promoting informed and responsible choices, vigilance and behaviour appropriate to the activities undertaken, places of transit and destination. Given that inappropriate behaviour by an individual can in itself become a source of risk, interested parties are advised to adopt behavioural standards that respect the rules, customs and people in the places where the research is carried out. In addition, interested parties should avoid being caught up in dangerous situations within areas not assessed as high risk, (referring to marches or gatherings), and avoid relationships with/ties to organisations and people connected to dangerous situations.

The recommendations contained in these guidelines also represent a training tool that the School of International Studies offers to individuals able to undertake research in the field (especially abroad) with a view to helping them acquire information about geopolitical risks.

¹ *Courtesy translation of the document "LINEE GUIDA PER LO SVOLGIMENTO DI ATTIVITÀ DI RICERCA IN AREE A RISCHIO".*

Lastly, through these guidelines, the School of International Studies shall inform those individuals who have the option to carry out research in the field (authorised as necessary), about the behaviour to adopt and actions to take in the case of emergency.

ACTIONS TO TAKE BEFORE COMMENCING RESEARCH IN THE FIELD

a) Geopolitical risks

All those who choose to carry out research in the field need to check whether there are risks, especially geopolitical risks, in transit areas as well as at the locations where research activity is to take place.

If the research is to be undertaken in Italy, it is advisable to consult the latest information available from official bodies (e.g. civil protection) and the media to assess the presence of risks.

If the research is to be undertaken abroad, the primary reference to consider is the list of risk areas published and regularly updated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Ministry's Crisis Unit analyses the security situation in the world thanks to data collected by the Italian diplomatic network, monitoring of open sources and continuous collaboration with other offices of the State and its European partners, publishing the results on the website www.viaggiaresecuri.it, maintained by the same Crisis Unit. The website contains continually updated profiles for all countries: general information, safety, health situation, weather conditions, precautions to be taken, useful links, etc.

Individuals who wish to carry out research abroad must check the website www.viaggiaresecuri.it when planning the activity and as the departure date approaches, because security situations in foreign countries along with legislative and administrative measures can alter quickly. Further information can also be obtained through the Crisis Unit's Situation Room. Furthermore, the www.dovesiamonelmundo.it portal allows those travelling abroad to report their itinerary and personal contact details so that in the event of an emergency, the Crisis Unit can contact the people present in the areas concerned and plan any interventions. When planned activities are in areas susceptible to non-negligible

risks, individuals who wish to carry out research in the field abroad must first submit a report to the portal.

Students who are not Italian citizens are advised to register with similar initiatives put in place by the relevant authorities of their home countries. Should information provided by different organisations be inconsistent, the School of International Studies recommends that the most cautious assessment and highest risk indication are considered to be correct.

The School of International Studies recommends that those who wish to carry out research activities in the field abroad should also consult reports published by reputable international organisations (e.g. Amnesty International) or by reliable local sources. If evidence emerges to indicate the existence of risks not listed by the Crisis Unit, then the School of International Studies recommends that the Crisis Unit itself is consulted about them.

When research activity abroad is subject to express authorisation (in the case of teaching staff, PhD students and research fellows), authorisation can only be granted if the destination country is not considered high risk, i.e. the Crisis Unit is not strongly advising against travelling there nor urging anyone already there to leave the country. Teaching staff, PhD students and research fellows receive specific training on the subject and are therefore able to assess the danger of a mission and which activities can be carried out safely in any context. In the event that any such dangers are identified, you are required to notify the School of International Studies by filling out the "notes" section on the mission authorisation form for reimbursement, so as to evaluate possible actions to reduce risk on a case-by-case basis.

The School of International Studies recommends that the same principles and criteria are adhered to even when the research activity abroad does not require express authorisation (as is the case for independent research by master's students). It is stressed that less experienced individuals are not permitted to go on missions independently to destination countries considered to be high risk.

The School of International Studies asks that an individual who has learned of the existence of potential risks of a geopolitical nature - predictable in the destination's territorial context, but not high enough to cause the Crisis Unit to advise against travelling there - first informs his/her supervisor (or person in

charge of the research project, if there is one) and, when necessary, the person in charge of authorising the mission. In the event of moderate risks, the School of International Studies will endeavour to provide information about what actions are useful for reducing risks. For example, if required by circumstances, the School of International Studies may call the interested party to undertake useful reading and/or follow training courses in advance (also online) to acquire the necessary skills for carrying out activity in the field linked to dangerous situations.

b) Sanitary conditions and possible exposure to biological, chemical or physical agents

Before departing, individuals who wish to carry out field research must always gather information about sanitary conditions in the destination country and about the specific situation in which they will find themselves, both for accommodation and while undertaking research activity. Before leaving on a journey abroad, you need to check that you are up to date with vaccinations required by the national programme. Depending on destination, type of trip, length of stay and personal state of health, certain other vaccines against specific diseases and additional medicines to pack are also advised. The Ministry of Health's website provides information on diseases and preventative treatments for travellers (www.salute.gov.it Home>Temi e professioni > Prevenzione > Malattie infettive e vaccinazioni > Malattie dei viaggiatori e profilassi)

Individuals who choose to travel abroad are advised to obtain a European Health Insurance Card for trips within the EU and health insurance with adequate coverage for trips outside the EU.

If you are aware of the possibility of exposure to particular biological, chemical or physical agents where your research will be carried out (e.g. in contaminated areas), having properly assessed whether there is an actual need to be exposed to such dangers, then check in advance that protective measures will be available on site. For this purpose, it is necessary to communicate beforehand with contact people at the destination.

In the case of missions expressly authorised by the School of International Studies, this risk of exposure must be reported at least one month in advance to the University's Prevention and Protection Service, which will arrange health monitoring by its qualified doctor.

ACTIONS TO TAKE DURING FIELD RESEARCH IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY

In the event that direct, concrete, immediate and ineliminable risks emerge to the safety of the individual in the field once research has begun, the head of the project (if there is one) must notify the interested party of the duty to suspend the activity. If the person carrying out research activities becomes aware of said risks, he/she must notify the head of the research project (if there is one) and suspend the activity. It is therefore necessary that the individual carrying out research abroad regularly checks the website www.viaggiasesicuri.it during the stay because security situations along with the legislative and administrative measures can alter quickly.

In the event of serious risks, the individual must also contact the Crisis Unit for information about what action to take.

ACTIONS TO TAKE AT THE END OF RESEARCH IN THE FIELD

When field research has been concluded, the parties involved are expected to notify the School of International Studies of facts that will enable the institution to assess the actual level of danger in the places visited. Furthermore, if the information enhances the intelligence published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the institution must share this information with individuals who may choose to undertake research in the field.