



**RE-ACCREDITATION OF THE FACULTY OF ECONOMICS OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF SPLIT**

24-25 March 2011, Split

Composition of the expert panel

Pursuant to Article 22 of the *Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education* and Article 30 Paragraph 1 Item 4 of the Statute of the Agency for Science and Higher Education, the Accreditation Council of the Agency for Science and Higher Education at its 11th session on 9 December 2010 passed the decision to appoint panel of experts for re-accreditation of the Faculty of Economics and Business, University of Split composed of the following members:

- **Prof. Slavica Singer**, PhD – Faculty of Economics of the J.J. Strossmayer University in Osijek (head of panel)
- **Prof. Othon Anastasakis**, PhD, University of Oxford
- **Prof. Irwin Collier**, PhD, Freie Universitaet Berlin
- **Prof. Ivan Mencer**, PhD, Faculty of Economics of the University of Rijeka
- **Mladen Koturović**, student, Faculty of Economics of the University of Rijeka

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INTRODUCTION

Short description of evaluated institution

The Faculty of Economics is a constituent component of Split University since its establishment in 1974. However, the study of business on higher educational level was founded already in 1960 (as Professional School of Economics). Until 1974 there was a series of institutional and organisational changes in the study of economics in Split – opening of the Split branch of Faculty of Studies in Economics in Zagreb (1971) and Faculty of Studies in Organisation and Finance in Split as part of the Faculty of Studies in Economics in Zagreb (1973). In 1974 Faculty of Studies in Organisation and Finance and Institute for Maritime, Touristic and Coastal Economics merged into Faculty of Economics in Split.

The activity of the faculty is the organisation and realisation of the university study programmes (undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate) in the field of economics and other similar fields of social sciences, lifelong learning as well as scientific and professional activity. In the academic year 2009/2010 the faculty had the following portfolio of university and professional study programmes:

University study programme:

- Three undergraduate study programmes: Economics (majors: National and international economics, Money and finance, Regional economics), Business Studies (majors: Financial management, IT management, Marketing, Management, Entrepreneurship, Accounting and Audit) and Tourism (majors: Management in Tourism, Hotel Management) 6 semesters,
- Three graduate study programmes: Economics (three majors, in line with undergraduate majors), Business Studies (five majors, in line with undergraduate majors except for Entrepreneurship), and Tourism and Hospitality Industry, 4 semesters
- Postgraduate study programmes
 - o Specialist study programme (majors: Economics and Business), 2 semesters
 - o Doctoral study programme (Economics and Business), 6 semesters

Professional study programme:

- Two professional study programmes: Small Enterprise Management – dislocated study in Opuzen (to be shut down), Tourism Operations, 6 semesters
- Professional specialist study programme Management, with three majors: Project Management, Tax Management, Accounting, 2 semesters

According to self-evaluation, in 2009 /2010 there were 1594 first-year students at all levels of study, as follows:

- o 513 full-time students at the university undergraduate level
- o 370 full-time students at the university graduate level
- o 42 part-time students at the postgraduate specialist level
- o 27 part-time students at the postgraduate doctoral level
- o 383 full-time students and 42 part-time students at the professional undergraduate level
- o 104 full-time students and 113 part-time students at the professional graduate level.

The faculty also carries out learning programmes which are part of the Centre for Lifelong Learning and Adult Education. These programmes primarily prepare their own students for differential exams, seminars for the faculty researchers and for Business English Certificate exams (in line with the British Council guidelines), while programmes for lifelong educational market are minority.

According to the self-evaluation, there were 123 employees, with 84 involved in teaching and scientific activities: 11 full professors with tenure, 7 full professors, 11 associate professors, 7 assistant professors, 8 senior lecturers, 1 lecturers and 39 senior assistants, assistants and junior researchers (academic year 2009/2010).

All faculty activities are organised at one location since 2002, when the faculty moved into building designed to their needs.

Description of methodology

The expert panel based its review on the self-evaluation of the Faculty of Economics and Business of the University of Split written in 2010, as well as on the on-site visit on the 24th and 25th March 2011. During the on-site visit, the expert panel held meetings with:

- Management of the institution
- The group that worked on the self-evaluation and representatives of the Committee for Quality
- Assistants and junior researchers
- Students
- Vice-dean for teaching, head of the Centre for Postgraduate Studies as well as heads of study programmes
- Heads of chairs
- Vice-dean for development and new products, head of Centre for Research and Development, head of Centre for Lifelong Education, and heads of scientific projects

The panel also visited the faculty facilities and classrooms. The tour also included a visit to classes, with members of the panel having short discussions with attending students.

During their preparations for the visit, members of the expert panel used the self-evaluation report, which is structured in a very informative way, and allows for an open and critical reflection of the problems this HEI encounters, and an overview of activities the institution carries out in individual areas stated in the self-evaluation, as was confirmed during interviews with stakeholders. Various documents such as ordinances, minutes from ISO quality audits, minutes about web page design or additional information (for example, unemployment of graduate economists) was immediately available upon request. An overview of additional documents is listed in *Attachment 1*.

The visit was carried out in line with the schedule (*Attachment 2*) which enabled a high degree of efficiency for the expert panel because the meetings were held according to plan, and internal meetings of the panel during the visit facilitated additional explanations or documentation. The Final criteria grades (*Attachment 3*) are the results of discussion among the members of the panel and were made after adjustment of individual grades without significant divergence

DETAILED ANALYSIS BASED ON RE-ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

Based on all analysed information, the panel graded each standard and criteria from 1 to 5, with 1 meaning that the criteria was not implemented, 3 that it was partly implemented and 5 that it was fully implemented. The Panel considers the criteria graded from 1-3, to present weaknesses requiring intervention to improve quality. Below are the presented findings from which the joint grade of individual criteria was determined. Recommendations within each standard are primarily given for criteria graded with 1 and 2, and in some cases also for criteria graded with 3.

1. Management of higher education institution and quality assurance

This HEI states that its mission is „to produce experts in the area of economics, both theoretically and in practice at all levels of study, appropriate to contemporary labour market needs”. Its mission is also to raise the overall level and quality of higher education, competencies and knowledge, and employability within the field of economics in the Republic of Croatia. It also aims to encourage and develop scientific research and professional work and programmes for lifelong learning and professional development in an approach to economics and society which is based on knowledge. (Self-evaluation, page 17).

The text related to vision (Self-evaluation, pages 17 and 18) states what the institution IS NOW („... prestigious and internationally recognised institution... autonomous in the creation and implementation of its own developmental business policy...“) but not what it aims to achieve. Such widely stated mission and unclear vision are inadequate guidelines for strategic orientation. However, the existing activities in the field of business and tourism point out to the business orientation of the institution.

Webpage of the institution www.efst.hr doesn't explicitly state mission and vision, except that the part related to quality management mentions:

To achieve adequate level of “quality culture” and recognizability as a respected Croatian higher education institution open to market competition with other European faculties.

Strategic development of the faculty is based on the document „Elements of strategy for development of the Faculty of Economics in Split“ from 2002, which was also the basis for the dean's programme and the dean's reports. The institution was dedicated to the implementation of long-term goals during two different terms and the strategic goals from 2002 were implemented in the deans' programmes, which has significantly helped achieve them. The Strategic document of the faculty development for the period 2011-2015 is being drafted: basic guidelines are already defined and there is an ongoing discussion, but further work on it stopped because of the expected new legislation in the field of higher education, science and university. Based on existing strategic documents, the faculty identified the following strategic goals: continued improvement of teaching, advancement of science, strengthening international cooperation, internationalisation of teaching and research, promoting partnership with the industry and society as a whole by expanding portfolio of educational and scientific services, improving position and work conditions of students and their organisations, improving organisation and quality of faculty business and maintaining a high degree of employee motivation. Strategic discussions involve management, teachers and students (students make up 15% of the Faculty Council, 25% of the Committee for quality assurance, they participate in committees for postgraduate studies), but not

representatives of the industry (although there are ad hoc consultations with individual businessmen).

This institution has a formalised organisational structure based on centres (for undergraduate studies, for graduate studies, for postgraduate studies, for professional studies, for scientific research and development, for lifelong learning and adult education), chairs and administrative units (dean's office, accounting department, technical services, IT services, services for undergraduate, graduate and professional studies – students' office, services for postgraduate studies, library). However, links between the centres and chairs are unclear, especially since three out of six centres are not operating (undergraduate, graduate and professional studies). Also unclear are the roles of the Centre for Scientific Research and Development, and Department of Scientific Research. The management of the faculty is aware of the organisational problems and plans to implement necessary changes. The faculty has relevant legal documents which reflect basic business activities of the faculty and are publicly available on the faculty web site.

Study programmes carried out by the HEI are in line with the Bologna concept, in a 3+2+3 format, which encourages the mobility of students from a majority of other HEIs to the graduate studies of Split Faculty of Economics, and vice versa.

The faculty monitors the unemployment structure in Splitsko-dalmatinska county, with respect to their educational levels, but also with respect to their majors and where graduates are employed, based on the statistics from the Split unemployment bureau. Acting on this information, the management has been decreasing the enrolment quotas since 2008, so that it expects to decrease the unemployed graduates of the Faculty of Economics in Split by cutting down the enrolment quota by 25% in academic year 2010/2011. Still, it is not clear in what way this institution uses the information to define portfolio of educational programmes and to form cooperation with the industry. The faculty has no detailed analyses of the needs of the labour market, primarily due to lack of finances for such activities.

System of quality assurance and its constant improvement was established in December 2007 with the introduction of standard HRN EN ISO 9001:2002. Ever since, there have been annual audits of the efficiency and improvement of the quality management system carried out by the certification institutions. Since 2010 the faculty has been preparing for integration of the ISO 9001-2008 standards with requirements stated in the document Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). The faculty has formed the Committee for Quality Assurance and a dedicated quality manager. Students are not involved in the internal audits, but they are involved in the work of Committee for Quality Assurance. Assistants and teachers presented conflicting opinions about the usefulness of quality review with ISO standards. Student satisfaction is measured by student questionnaire, with results available at the faculty web page. The management discusses results with poorly rated teachers.

The faculty applies the code of ethics of the University of Split, and the code of ethics for students was being developed at the time of visit.

Within this segment of review, the panel gives the following recommendations relevant for the criteria:

1.4 (grade 3)

The institution should intensify activities related to implementation of the ESG because it contributes to integrated university culture of excellence, but also strengthens credibility towards external stakeholders in strategic development of the faculty. It is also an important condition for international accreditation.

1.6 (grade 3)

The institution should create formal mechanisms for ethical behaviour and apply them consistently and transparently as part of the culture of ethics and excellence.

1.1 (grade 4)

Although the faculty nurtures the culture of involvement of various stakeholders in strategic planning of the future, we recommend it to establish mechanism for regular consultations with representatives of the labour market and local government in the region, especially since majority of students comes from that area.

2. Study programmes

The Faculty of Economics in Split has a recognisable portfolio of study programmes focused on national and international economy, regional economy, finances, business and tourism, but some study programmes from the field of economy are also carried out at the University Centre for Professional Studies. Although the faculty monitors employability and unemployment of the economists according to data provided by the Croatian Employment Service, there is still no mechanism for monitoring needs of the industry and public sector in order to review usefulness of the existing portfolio and introduce new study programmes. The portfolio is rather constant, and occasional changes are more a reflection of staff potential of the faculty and initiatives coming from research interests of individual teachers, as well as cooperation with partner foreign HEIs (for example, Ancona). There is a consensus in the HEI on the need to restructure existing study programmes, especially by cancelling majors at undergraduate studies (because the labour market hasn't recognised bachelors) with a higher degree of specialisation at the master's level, by using four characteristics (restructuring, rationalisation, relaxation, relieving – moving the workload focus to higher years of study, relieving lower educational levels).

Study programmes are not interdisciplinary, although there are discussions with the Faculty of Law and Faculty of Philosophy about organisation of joint programmes.

Decision on the number of ECTS for individual courses was made exclusively on the basis of experience of teachers and sometimes former students, now employed at the faculty, and on the viewpoint that direct teaching makes up for 25% of total workload. Some course imbalances were noted during annual analyses of study success, but no changes were made so far.

Enrolment quotas are based more on the estimation of the high school students' interest than on the systematic research of the needs of the labour market (although some research was carried out in the form of student seminars as part of one course). Completion of the new building removed quota restrictions in regard to space, so the enrolment quotas have increased for several years in a row after moving into new building. However, in the past two years the faculty has been decreasing enrolment quotas mainly due to information about the number of unemployed economists listed in the Croatian Employment Service – Split office.

Learning outcomes are neither defined at the level of study programme nor courses, which prohibits any serious analysis of achievements/success of the teaching process, as well as analysis of relations with the labour market needs. Quality of teaching is monitored by combining perceptive indicators (student questionnaire) and indicators of pass rate and grade distribution by subject. However, without the knowledge of student assessment criteria

and expected learning outcomes, it is almost impossible to compare those indicators. Results of the monitoring of teaching quality are used for the dean's discussions with individual teachers. Results of student questionnaire are available to teachers on the intranet, the Faculty Council is notified about the ranking of teachers, and report about teachers with worst grades is delivered to the rector.

Although the faculty has a large database on social and demographic characteristics of student population, there are no in-depth analyses linking study success and selected characteristics (apart from data on previous education, but on the level of descriptive statistics).

Teachers, assistants and management stated they take into account modernisation of subjects with the introduction of new content and IT services (for example, statistics and accounting), but again, without identified learning outcomes it is difficult to estimate the efficiency of changes in the content and methods of delivering individual courses / programmes.

Possibilities of students to enrich their knowledge from practical experience are far from ideal, a fact emphasized both by teachers and students. Especially important is the problem of organising internships, including the tourism studies, even though the faculty is located in a very touristical region.

Split FEB has adopted Ordinance on academic recognition of foreign higher education qualifications and periods of study.

Within this segment of review, the panel gives the following recommendations relevant for the criteria:

2.4 (grade 2)

The faculty should immediately start designing learning outcomes for all courses and all programmes, after which an in-depth analysis of student assessment is required. It should be a basis for discussion about uniformity / differences in student assessment by applying same standards and conceptual approach.

2.5 (grade 2)

With the goal of possible change of ECTS structure of some study programmes, the faculty should analyse ECTS structure for every course, based on linking teacher analysis with student experience of a course.

2.9 (grade 2)

The faculty should invest into creating various opportunities for students to enrich their studies by applying knowledge and skills in the context of concrete practical problems (internships in companies, voluntary work, community service, etc.)

3. Students

The number of enrolled students is decreasing, which contributes to better study conditions considering the teacher-student ratio as well as other resources relevant for the quality of study. At the same time, this decrease raises the issue of financial sustainability, taking into account decreased financing by the Ministry of Science, Education and Sport.

The panel talked to the student organisation representatives and three foreign students who came to Split as part of the project. Students said they were satisfied with the level of involvement in decision-making, student organisation activities, quality of computer equipment, library as well as student standards at the faculty (one student had an interesting comment stating that the restaurant food could be more varied since they have lamb followed by chicken...) and support from their mentors, which can be seen from the grades of student-related criteria. The quality of student standard was confirmed by foreign students interviewed by the panel, who came to Split due to various projects, and who warned about the lack of literature in English in the library. However, students singled out as a special problem lack of information about assessment criteria, about expected competencies and possibilities of employment. Also, students think that there are too much students at some courses in relation to the number of teachers, that there is some redundancy in courses, that some content is not up to date and that there is not enough practical application.

The Students that the panel talked to emphasized the general lack of student interest for their studies, and they argued that most of those who enrol to study economics they don't see it as a priority and a career choice but because they couldn't enrol somewhere else. They therefore, proposed forming teaching groups on the basis of the grade average in order to establish a more uniform student motivation. Also, the students bitterly commented that the labour market doesn't valorise success in their studies which further demotivates them to take their studies seriously.

Another negative development is that the cheating at the exams has become a socially acceptable behaviour, so students that the panel met suggested the application of the code of ethics.

Students are supported in their extracurricular activities, although they state themselves there were not a lot of initiatives on their part. Except for student organisation, there is AIESEC and vocal ensemble (klapa).

Management stated that this HEI is aware of the need for good alumni and employment statistics and there are plans for alumni to become partner who would help define strategic development (with information about employability of students) as well as help in operational activities (for example as visiting teachers, internships).

Within this segment of review, the panel gives the following recommendations relevant for the criteria:

3.1 (grade 2)

The faculty should assure more complete information packages for students with more information on the possibilities of further education and employment.

3.3 (grade 2); 3.2 (grade 3)

The faculty should use available information about the quality of enrolled students to analyse study success and to see to what extent are enrolment criteria linked with learning outcomes and necessary competencies in future career.

3.7 (grade 2)

The faculty should immediately establish mechanisms to monitor employability of its graduates and organise continued contact with alumni which will lead to better management of enrolment policy as well as policy of study programme development.

3.6. (grade 3)

The faculty should discuss differences in the criteria for assessment of student knowledge and establish mechanism for interaction between teachers and students in order to improve the learning process.

4. Teachers

Both teachers and management are aware that the number of full-time teachers is inadequate vis-a-vis the number of enrolled students, but also emphasize measures which are taken to improve that ratio. They stress that, apart from a significant number of assistants and junior researchers (39) compared to the number of teachers (43), the possibility of advancement of assistants into teachers isn't only up to their own capabilities but also to new teaching positions, which falls under the authority of the Ministry of Science, Education and Sport. According to information provided by the Agency for Science and Higher Education, on 18 March 2011 the Faculty of Economics and Business in Split had 58,44 students per teacher and per associate. The standard of 30 students per teacher prescribes that the faculty should have 75,13 teachers, which could be done in the next several years considering employed assistants and junior researchers, among whom 12 have PhDs. Apart from the systematic care for increase in the number of teachers, the faculty plans to decrease teaching workload by revising study programmes and possibly eliminating professional study programmes. They expect that these measures will result in the above-mentioned standard ratio of students and teachers, and will also create opportunities for stronger involvement of teachers in research.

The faculty supports outgoing mobility of young people to doctoral/master studies in foreign universities. Assistants expressed their satisfaction with opportunities for education and professional development (financial support for participation at international scientific meetings, publication in CC journals), but were worried about their chances of remaining at the faculty because of the lack of new teaching positions.

Age structure of the faculty reflects the problem of advancement of assistants into assistant professors (work positions) since the average age of assistants (29,8 years) and junior researchers (32,2 years), with 12 PhDs, testifies that they have to wait for the job openings.

International experience of the young generation encourages changes in teaching content, as well as teaching methods which were illustrated by examples from assistants and teachers from all chairs. High degree of international mobility of assistants and junior researchers is an important contribution to opening the faculty to different experience, but internal mobility of the teachers – within Croatia – would also be welcome.

During their interviews with assistants and teachers, the members of the panel saw a high degree of loyalty to the faculty. It is important to note that almost 40% of employed assistants and teachers came as graduates of other universities, with many of them coming from the Faculty of Business and Economics in Zagreb. They think that this faculty is organised excellently (core business process, information flow towards students, strategic planning of the faculty development) when compared to the Faculty of Business and Economics in Zagreb.

There are significant differences in the workload of teachers, depending on the study programme, which also points out to the need for analysis of the workload of teachers on the level of study programmes and not just institution as a whole. There are no formalised policies to regulate the workload of teachers. Although the management must approve teaching arrangements outside this HEI, the mechanism for monitoring other segments of external involvement of teachers (consultancies, professional projects) is still under preparation, including reviews whether this involvement affect obligations of teachers in their home institution.

Within this segment of review, the panel gives the following recommendations relevant for the criteria:

4.4 (grade 2)

The faculty should create a policy of teaching staff development with the plan of activities in order to use the existing potential considering significant number of assistants and junior researchers to establish long-term sustainable and optimal ratio of students and teachers necessary for a more successful study process.

4.5 (grade 3)

The faculty should implement analysis of the competencies of available teachers considering long-term strategic expectations of the institution, in order to ascertain to what extent does the current structure of teachers (considering their research and teaching focus) comply with the mission and vision.

4.7 (grade 3)

The faculty should establish policy of setting up balanced and just structure of activity (teaching – including student counselling, research, professional activities), having in mind the need to create conditions for „extracting“ teachers and associates from everyday obligation in order to assure professional development.

5. Scientific and professional activity

Scientific activity is carried out mostly via projects financed by the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, but is significantly limited not just due to available financial resources but also due to fact that teaching activity has a priority because of the insufficient number of teachers. In the portfolio of research projects there are not many international projects, a point which was especially raised by junior researchers. Professional activity is mostly focused on projects which are carried out in cooperation with the industry and local self-government. However, due to economic crisis, the number of such project has greatly decreased in the last two years.

Publication activity is better represented by junior teachers, although participation at an international conference organised by this HEI since 1995 is a very important platform for presentation of own research.

Within this segment of review, the panel gives the following recommendations relevant for the criteria:

5.3 (grade 2)

The faculty should further develop capacities for cooperation with other scientific institutions in Croatia as part of its research and professional activity. Lack of international projects requires stronger involvement in creating international consortia (with possible activation of such type of cooperation within the framework of already signed bilateral cooperation agreements). We recommend stronger visibility in applications for EU funded projects.

5.1 (grade 3)

Based on its policy for development of scientific and professional activity, the faculty should define criteria for priorities in research and professional projects, in line with the priorities set by the long-term development orientation of the institution (i.e. to what extent is research and teaching activity intertwined and to what extent does it contribute to realisation of the defined mission and vision of the HEI).

5.2 (grade 3)

The faculty should define criteria for the distribution of working hours of employees on teaching, research and mentorship, taking into account recommendations in the section Teachers. This will make for better insight into limitations in carrying out teaching and research portfolio of the HEI as well as necessary interventions at the strategic level and employment policy.

5.4 (grade 3)

The faculty should create a policy of development of scientific and professional activity as a coherent component of the developmental strategy of the whole institution, in line with its mission and vision. This will eliminate fragmentation and insufficient connection between research efforts of its employees and enable recognition of this activity considering its contribution to profiling and reputation of the HEI, and not just individual researchers/teachers.

6. Mobility and international cooperation

The mobility of students within the Croatian higher educational environment is enabled with the recognition of ECTS, but the international dimension of incoming student mobility is limited due to the fact that this HEI carries no study programmes or modules in English. Outgoing student mobility is mostly related to ERASMUS.

Outgoing mobility of teachers towards foreign higher education institutions is significant: as much as 23 teachers spent a year or more at scientific development, usually for master's or doctoral theses. International mobility of teachers/researchers is sometimes limited due to organisational problems of high teaching workload, but is usually solved by internal re-allocations of workload.

Especially important for the international visibility is the organisation of bi-annual international meeting „Challenges of Europe“ since 1995 and publication of the Management – Journal of Contemporary Management Issues since 1998. International dimension of HEI activities is also reflected in participation of teachers/researchers at international conferences, which is supported by the institution.

Although the Faculty of Economics in Split has signed 12 bilateral cooperation agreements with several HEIs including Slovenia, Poland, Italy and Austria, its activities didn't show a visible contribution of those agreements to internationalisation of neither teaching nor research activity.

This HEI is a member of CEESNET (Central and South-East European PhD Network) and IUN (International University Network).

Within this segment of review, the panel gives the following recommendations relevant for the criteria:

6.5 (grade 3)

The faculty should start carrying out teaching in English, at first only for several subjects because it has both human resources (junior teachers educated at foreign HEIs) and attractive geographical location which can additionally attract foreign students.

6.6 (grade 3)

The faculty should launch stronger initiatives for development of cooperation within EU programme for lifelong learning, by using existing bilateral agreements with HEIs in the European Union.

6.7 (grade 3)

The faculty should use existing bilateral agreements more effectively for development of joint projects, not only scientific but also teaching.

7. Resources: administrative services, space, equipment and finances

According to the self-evaluation and the statement of the management, the institution has adequate resources for teaching and scientific activity, which was confirmed during the interviews with representatives of administrative services, teachers and students. Apart from information about students, the institution also collects and analyses indicators on employment of its students. Still, the needs of the labour market are still not adequately investigated.

Space is exceptional: the new building was built in 2002 (and renovated in 2005), there are 11,000 m² for teaching and research (according to information from the self-evaluation). There are lecture halls of various sizes (the biggest one has 310 seats, other rooms range from 18 to 242 seats), they are equipped with computers, internet connections, LED projectors, portable video equipment (also TVs, video recorders, overhead projectors, as necessary). The largest amphitheatre has multimedia equipment.

Although the management is satisfied with the library, the number of seats in the reading room is still inadequate in relation to the number of enrolled students. This problem is partly compensated with the library working hours (07.00-22.00). The library has full IT equipment and users have online access to the catalogue and search. A HEI should have 20% of obligatory literature available to students in the library, but the self-evaluation states the problem of insufficient availability of the required literature. The head of the library especially emphasized that 10-20 copies of obligatory students per undergraduate course (even less on graduate course) cannot satisfy the students' needs. Apart from databases financed by the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, the largest portion of the library fund (books, journals, online databases IEEE Member Digital Library and J-STOR – collection Business I) was purchased with own funds.

Own income (tuition fees, projects) amounted to 57% (2008) and 53% (2009) in total income, which is probably unsustainable should there be a change in documents regulating financing of higher education (especially taking into account that tuition fees make up for majority of

own income). The management anticipated these problems and launched austerity measures, but also stated that decrease of own income will endanger existing standard of educational and scientific activity.

Within this segment of review, the panel gives the following recommendations relevant for the criteria:

7.5 (grade 2)

The faculty should invest in better equipment of library (number of copies of obligatory literature) as well as in availability of seats and quality of reading space.

7.7 (grade 3)

The faculty should analyse its financial stability through expected changes in ways studies are financed (tuition fees) and identify their portfolio of study programmes and research accordingly. The institution should also look for additional, new sources of income with life-long learning and professional activity (projects and consultancies).

FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXPERT PANEL

Following evaluation, the panel states the following advantages (strengths) and disadvantages (weaknesses) of the Faculty of Economics of the University of Split that serve as the basis for recommendations with the ultimate goal of improving the quality of this higher educational institution.

ADVANTAGES (strengths)

- Honesty, self-criticism and high degree of consensus in identifying problems facing the institution among all stakeholders involved in interviews during site visit, which further confirmed impression from the self-evaluation
- Consistency of developmental strategy during the several deans' terms of office
- Strong regional visibility, not just in southern Croatia but also in part of Bosnia and Herzegovina
- The institution uses its privileged Mediterranean location for stronger regional scientific and educational profiling in the area of tourism and regional development
- Location – possible additional element in attracting foreign students, capital, good infrastructural ties with other parts of Croatia and international links
- Significant group of dedicated junior researchers interested in the future of the institution
- International recognisability with scientific conference „Challenges of Europe“
- Good organisation, collegiate atmosphere and democratic approach to problem-solving, with strong student involvement

- Initiatives to develop cooperation with the business sector and public/local government (Triple Helix concept)
- Student standard (restaurant)

DISADVANTAGES (weaknesses)

- Lack of internationalisation – there is a generation gap in creating stronger internationalisation (teaching in foreign languages, but there is a significant number of younger teachers who can carry such activities)
- Low mobility of teachers and junior researchers to and from other institutions in Croatia and abroad
- Inadequate student-teacher ratio should be further improved (new teaching positions, employing teachers from the industry.)
- A large number of students who never graduate endangers the efficiency of the faculty business, but also warns of the need for an improved selection and larger database of interested candidates by stronger promotion of the faculty among high school students
- Unclear effect of the change of structure of educational programmes (undergraduate and graduate level) with the concept of 4 R (restructuring, rationalisation, relaxation, relief)
- Lack of internships
- Inadequate library space and lack of obligatory literature per enrolled student, which is far below 20%

RECOMMENDATIONS

This institution has the largest concentration of experts in the field of economic science (business and regional development) in southern Croatia, 50 years of tradition and excellent location which should be the basis for further strategic plans. So far, development has been set by the assessment of the needs of tourist economy and the regional development of southern Croatia, but without in-depth investigation of the needs of the labour market. Therefore, the development of the institution was significantly influenced by demand, as in other Croatian HEIs. However, more demanding labour market, stronger competition among HEIs, expected changes in financing tertiary education also demand change in strategic plans of the Faculty of Economics in Split.

Therefore this institution is issued three key recommendations, together with a series of recommendations specific to individual segments of the re-accreditation criteria (only for sub criteria with grades 1 – not implemented, 2 – early stage of implementation and in some cases also for sub criteria graded with 3 – partly implemented):

1. To launch research into competencies which are required by the Croatian industry and public sector, having in mind accession into the European Union in 2013, if possible in cooperation with other Croatian faculties of economics

2. To focus on the creation of a faculty strategy for period 2013-2020, with a more precise mission/vision and a portfolio of activities in line with its mission and vision
3. To check efficiency of its intention to restructure undergraduate and graduate studies by generalising undergraduate study programmes and placing an emphasis on the graduate level. Such decision would only further decrease student mobility within Croatia and European Union, and it should be analysed together with other faculties of economics in Croatia.

Panel members:

Prof. Slavica Singer, PhD – Faculty of Economics of the J.J. Strossmayer University in Osijek (head of panel)

Prof. Othon Anastasakis, PhD, University of Oxford

Prof. Irwin Collier, PhD, Freie Universitaet Berlin

Prof. Ivan Mencer, PhD, Faculty of Economics of the University of Rijeka

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ANNEXES

Annex 1. Additionally used documents in re-accreditation

Report on work of the dean prof. Petar Filipić, 2002

Program of work and report of the dean prof. Zlatan Reić 2004-2008

Program of work 2008-2012 and report of the dean prof. Branko Grčić 2010

Draft of strategy for development of the Faculty of Economics in Split

Ordinance on study programmes and system of studies at the University of Split

Statute of the Faculty of Economics in Split

Ordinance on international organisation and job positions

Ordinance on postgraduate study programmes

Ordinance on student mobility

Ordinance on final work

Ordinance on graduate work and graduate exam

Ordinance on academic recognition of foreign higher education qualifications and periods of study

Ordinance of issuing certificate on academic and professional titles and academic degree

Ordinance on the manner of distribution of income earned on the market from individual activities

Ordinance on awards and acclaims

Decisions of the Faculty Council

Ordinance on student association and other students associations of the Faculty of
Economics in Split
ISO 9001:2001 Quality handbook of the Faculty of Economics in Split

Annex 2. Schedule of visit to the Faculty of Economics of the University of Split

Annex 3. Filled in form for the quality grade of a university constituent