



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

Vilniaus universiteto
EUROPOS EKONOMINĖS STUDIJOS PROGRAMOS
(621L10006)
VERTINIMO IŠVADOS

EVALUATION REPORT
OF *EUROPEAN ECONOMIC STUDIES*
STUDY PROGRAMME (621L10006)
At Vilnius University

Grupės vadovas:
Team leader:

Prof. dr. Mieczyslaw Socha

Grupės nariai:
Team members:

Dr. Michael Emery

Prof. dr. Maija Šenfelde

Prof. dr. Vytautas Juščius

Andrius Zalitis

Išvados parengtos anglų kalba
Report language - English

DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	<i>Europos ekonominės studijos</i>
Valstybinis kodas	621L10006
Studijų sritis	socialiniai mokslai
Studijų kryptis	ekonomika
Studijų programos rūšis	universitetinės studijos
Studijų pakopa	antroji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	nuolatinė (2, nuo 2012 m.– 1,5)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais	120 (nuo 2012 m. – 90)
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	Ekonomikos magistras
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	2002

INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Title of the study programme	<i>European Economic Studies</i>
State code	621L10006
Study area	Social Science
Study field	Economics
Kind of the study programme	University studies
Cycle of studies	Second
Study mode (length in years)	Full time (2, since 2012 1,5)
Scope of the study programme in credits	120 (since 2012 – 90)
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Master in Economics
Date of registration of the study	2002

Studijų kokybės vertinimo centras
The Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education

CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION	4
II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS	4
1. Programme aims and learning outcomes	4
2. Curriculum design	5
3. Teaching staff.....	6
4. Facilities and learning resources	7
5. Study process and students' performance assessment	8
6. Programme management.....	9
III. RECOMMENDATIONS	10
IV. SUMMARY	11
V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT.....	14

I. INTRODUCTION

The University of Vilnius (VU) is one of the oldest universities in Eastern and Central Europe, founded in 1579. It has some 23,00 students, over 1300 teaching staff and almost 500 researchers. This programme evaluation undertaken by SKVC of European Economic Studies (EES) is a master programme offered by the Faculty of Economics (hereafter the Faculty), a faculty established in 1940. This Faculty now comprises nine departments with in total 159 staff including 88 teachers and researchers. Some 60 of them are full-time. Within the Faculty are offered three bachelor and 15 master programmes, plus doctoral studies for over 4200 students including 960 master study students. In contrast, there are just some 43 students studying this EES programme which was first registered in 2002. The programme recently reduced its length of studies from September 2012 from two years to 1.5 years thus the two cohorts studying are on two different timescales.

This evaluation is undertaken by a team of international experts. It comprises Professor dr. Mieczyslaw Socha (Poland) as team leader and as team members Dr Michael Emery (United Kingdom), Professor dr. Maija Šenfelde (Latvia), Professor dr. Vytautas Juščius (Lithuania), and Mr Andrius Zalitis (Lithuania). The evaluation is based on the self-evaluation report (SER) provided in advance by VU and other relevant documents. The site visit to the Faculty in Vilnius was on Tuesday 4 December 2012. Thereafter, further discussions took place and this report produced. The expert team would wish to thank VU and Faculty staff for their kind cooperation in the evaluation of the EES programme.

The SER is a readable document produced within SKVC guidelines. It usefully contains a seemingly honest appraisal of strengths, weaknesses and action for improvement plans at the end of each area. Tables are clearly presented, though data on student numbers needs updating for 2011-12, and some evaluations of responses to questionnaires are not included.

II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

1. Programme aims and learning outcomes

The EES programme aims, objectives, and intended learning outcomes (LOs) are defined in the SER and are publicly available on the VU website, in the AIKOS system, and in the relevant Faculty of Economics documents and publications. The website is somewhat brief in its publication of LOs; only some are stated and then not always fully. The main aim is lengthy and complex; a reduction or a split into sub-aims might add clarity. In short, the main aim as stated in the SER is to prepare highly qualified holistically minded specialists having the necessary knowledge about the European Union...'. It also comprises the need to know about the policies, the processes, and the latest research on EU integration and abilities to analyse the processes, think critically, and make economic decisions on the current integration processes. This extensive aim is further expanded in a long series of 11 'tasks'; these could well be considered as sub-aims and relate to the main aim. These sub-aims focus on such areas as historical and legal features of the EU, current developments, research methods and collecting information, investment, and undertaking individual and team work. There then follows a series of LOs, labelled 'expected outcomes' usefully subdivided into knowledge, research, special abilities, social abilities, and personal abilities. These all correlate with the main aim and sub-aims. They appear to focus on analysis rather than managerial skills. Overall, this is an extensive pattern; it would add clarity and readability if brevity was considered when the next revision takes place.

Although the SER refutes this, the demands of the labour markets have been surveyed recently for master graduates in economics in Lithuania, Denmark, and USA. It is the opinion of the Lithuanian Labour Exchange that there is on-going demand for such master graduates. Additionally, this EES programme satisfies professional requirements with its economics graduates specifically equipped to work, for example, in EU agencies, government departments, consultant organisations, and EU development projects. Even in the current recession, ever increasing activity is recorded regarding the EU and specialist master graduates are a valued source of labour. In spite of this optimism, the number of entrants has declined from 35 in 2007 to just 19 in 2011 and the number of applicants has likewise fallen from 192 to 108 respectively. During the two year programme the cohort drop-out/non-completion rate is significant ranging from 36% to currently 23%; thus, it is improving but still worrying. It is important that the Faculty monitors its recruitment policies, the applications, and the number of entrants annually and takes effective action when failings occur. It has evaluated the reasons for the drop-outs and this is essential if this programme is to be sustained long-term. This programme may be unique in Lithuania with its dominant focus on the EU, but there are other master in economics programmes to offer competition in Vilnius itself, in nearby Kaunas, and across Lithuania and the Baltic states. This is also confirmed in the Faculty's Development Plan 2008-12.

The intended LOs in the SER are attained over the two full-time study years for a total of 120 credits (from September 2012 1.5 years). This length of study, even at 1.5 years, is quite long in comparison with some other similar programmes in some countries; these can be just one year total study including the thesis or one year class study plus three months for producing the thesis. Students on this programme pay fees thus the length of the programme is important to them financially. However, the two years gives ample time for the students to attain all necessary LOs and to graduate successfully. In comparison with similar programmes, the challenging intended LOs indicate a similar level of master programme. These are tabulated in SER and correlated to the compulsory and elective subjects of the curriculum. As aforementioned, analysis dominates rather than management skills but that is appropriate for the specific job market though it does reduce the graduate's options in employment and might be reconsidered by FEM. It is good that the LOs are reviewed regularly by a number of relevant bodies including the Study Programme Committee and a representative of the employers. But it would be wise, and as also recommended in the SER, if there was wider representation from employers including state agencies and alumni to regularly advise on aims, 'tasks' and LOs to ensure their currency and appropriateness to the marketplace. All meetings should have an agenda and be minuted; formal record keeping is essential.

The programme's aims and LOs, as noted already, are consistent with the type and level of studies and level of qualification on offer by the Faculty. The title of the programme is 'European Economic Studies'. In general, the programme name, the aims, the LOs, the curriculum, and the qualification are compatible with each other and coherent. It would be appropriate if the qualification 'Master in Economics' was stated as 'Master in Economics (European Economic Studies)'; this would be more accurate and helpful to students, graduates, and employers. It would have been appropriate if references to the Lithuanian National Qualifications Framework had been made in the SER. The aims and LOs allow the students to progress along a two year (1.5 years from September 2012 for new intake) continuum of learning and development. Overall, this EES master is part of the Faculty's portfolio of programmes but currently recruitment is tenuous. It is recommended that this economics programme is kept under review and quick action taken by FEM should any failings occur.

2. Curriculum design

As noted above, this EES programme meets legal requirements. On the basis of the SER, the programme was lengthy at 2 years duration and now 1.5 years for 90 credits is more appropriate though still longer than some other European programmes. The subjects involve 70% for individual study and 30% taught classes and in each semester not more than 5 subjects are studied. Subjects are assessed by examination. Research work selected in semester 1 is undertaken across the next three semesters. Final thesis preparation and presentation (giving 30 credits) occurs in semester 4. The design is logical. From September 2012, the shortened programme over 1.5 years operates. It seems feasible as the thesis writing will now start in semester 1 and be completed in semester 3. This redesigned programme is more intensive but in terms of student finances and labour market demands, may be more successful. Careful and continuing checks are needed to ensure success for the new timescale.

On the basis of the SER and annexes, the study subjects are spread across the programme evenly and the dominant theme of the EU is apparent from many titles and content of the majority of subjects. This is also true of the electives. However, some of the titles are quite general and it is recommended that a more specific approach is introduced, particularly with regard to current issues in the Eurozone, the banking demise, economic illegalities, budgetary problems, labour transfers, and social issues including multiculturalism. Such specialisms are appropriate for this type and level of studies, and are often present in other taught master programmes in economics, even those with less EU content.

The subjects and content are matched and mapped against the intended LOs in a matrix. This is helpful for the attainment of the LOs. The wording of the LOs is sometimes vague, expansive and all embracing eg 'We will be aware of current EU economic integration research and its results'. This LO is so challenging and time consuming it could be a basis for an entire semester or even programme. In such cases, it is recommended that more precision and narrowing is needed. This applies also to some subject content where too many topics are included and student work consequently is in danger of 'shallowness' in order to fulfil the subject. Some of the referenced materials in some subjects are dated, being well over 10 years old; there is sometimes a lack of very recent titles of latest books and articles in scientific journals. Consequently, the programme content does not always reflect current EU processes and achievements. This should be checked and addressed by teaching staff and employers. This adds difficulty for the students' attainment of LOs such as that indicated above on EU integration. Although the scope of the programme is generally sufficient to ensure the attainment of the LOs this fact does need constant review, particularly as the programme is now more intense for the new student enrolment. Additionally, the link between the subject LOs and the programme LOs is not within the SER and this should also be addressed when the next all-encompassing programme evaluation takes place.

3. Teaching staff

The combined staff comprises 16 university teachers involved in this master programme, including four professors and 11 associate professors and doctors, and one assistant. Thus the legal requirement of 80% of teachers on master programmes having at least the PhD qualification is well met. It is good to see that 13 of the teachers are mainly employed at VU, hopefully ensuring their first commitment is to this programme. The qualifications, research activities, and role of visiting teacher at foreign universities by some staff are sufficient to ensure the appropriateness of the learning process for the students to attain the LOs. Additionally, the number of teachers is adequate to ensure the LOs. Teachers have produced useful and supportive methodological teaching aids. In most cases, the teaching is related to the teacher's proactive research activity and main area of interest thereby producing effective up-to-date learning in class and effective guidance on student research work. There is regular research undertaken by

staff and this is published in journals but more publications in international high quality refereed journals is suggested for consideration. Additionally, most research activity is individual but further consideration should be given to joining international research consortia.

Some five more teachers only supervise research and theses; these do not give lectures. This enhances the number of staff able to supervise. In 2011-12 there were 43 students in total making for the 16 teachers an average of 2.7 students per teacher ensuring effectively sized groups for most classes and to support research activities. Further consideration by the Faculty might be given to encouraging more group research activity with the students leading to joint publications in refereed journals or even just for VU research papers.

Staff turnover is low. This is evidenced, in part, by the age profile of the teachers with nine being past 56 years and the youngest teacher being 35 years. The advantage is guaranteed continuity for a while; the disadvantage is a lack of younger vibrant teachers. The staff recruitment policy could be more effective in this respect. The continuing professional development (CPD) is based on a keenness by staff to attend pedagogical seminars and short training sessions and particularly in undertaking good quality research, broadly related to EU matters and the title of this programme. It is unfortunate that staff do not take part in sabbaticals; maybe this might be reconsidered in future. Some staff international mobility occurs and few respected professors from abroad take part but more of both should be encouraged. English is often used as the language of instruction, indeed staff are said in the SER to have good language proficiency, but maybe it could be much more widely entrenched in future to increase the internationalisation of this programme as Lithuania is an active EU member and English is the official business language.

4. Facilities and learning resources

Overall, facilities and learning resources are very good to support this programme. The premises for studies are adequate both in size and quality. Rooms have been modernised and contain multimedia teaching equipment. Programme classes mainly take place in four rooms with a range of seating between 70 and 120, thus there are good conditions for this programme. Additionally, the EES students have access to EF Sports and Fitness complex in their leisure time.

The Computer Room is available too, as is wifi (Eduroam). The Faculty has 410 computers including 104 laptops with 590,000 litas spent in 2011. At the end of 2011, the net book value of the IT equipment was 861 815.06 litas indicating a very significant amount of capital expenditure in recent years. The equipment needs constant updating, as is normal, and this is done. It is suggested that further consideration be given to using more of the virtual learning environment (VLE) in teaching and learning; possibly VU may purchase the 'Incubator' when sufficient funds allow. It is also suggested that the planned cooperation with hardware and software manufacturers is now undertaken.

The EES programme operates in the evening specifically for working people, thus the EES students can combine studies and work. This system satisfies the current students. Consequently, professional practice is not required as the students have sufficient workplace experience. This was confirmed by the students during the site visit.

The Faculty allocated 380,000 litas for books and journals in 2011, thus the Faculty is aware of its responsibility to constantly update literature stock. The library (Sauletekis Information Centre (SIC)) has 104 student places and eight staff places. There are appropriate reading rooms for students' quiet study. In 2011, the SIC stock was supplemented by 3274

copies of 455 titles of scientific and educational literature; this includes the literature required for this EES programme. There are 24 computers for student use with access to electronic databases eg EBSCO, Proquest. The EF has also acquired the highly relevant ,Global Market Information Database‘ and EF also subscribes to the ,Lithuanian Research Library Consortium LRL‘ base. Importantly, only licensed software is stocked by EF and VU. From the site visit, it was clear that the nature of the bookstock, journals, and databses for EES programme fully supports students‘ studies and research activities; past theses are also readily accessible to assist students as to depth, content, and style required. The library should investigate opening for 24/7 as many university libraries in Europe are now operating 24/7 and are much used by students throughout the time.

5. Study process and students‘ performace assessment

Admissions are carried out reflecting VU and Faculty rules and are common to all master economics programmes. Places are offered on a competitive basis to bachelor undergraduate students majoring in economics, mangement and business administration but undergraduates from other areas must have 30 credits from the core undergraduate economics-related classes. Since 2009, the competitive score is formed on the basis of the undergraduate‘s main results of studies of the Diploma Supplement data; no longer is there an entrance exam results. This process has clarity and transparency; it should foster the selection of good motivated students but, as noted beforehand, enrolment is somewhat mediocre (just 19 in 2011) and the drop-out rate is a significant one for each cohort of students, but it is improving year-by-year recently to three students in 2011-12 reduced from 10 in 2010-11. The number of applicants has fallen, as noted already. Thus, it is recommended that the recruitment procedures, the number of applicants, the enrolments, and the drop-outs are closely monitored and prompt actions taken when any failings occur if this EES programme is to be sustainable in the future.

It is good that the students not only research a thesis but also smaller independent tasks. This ensures that the research is an integral part of the EES programme. This is even more so from 2012 when the timescale of the studies was reduced to 1.5 years and thesis research is instituted from semester 1. However, it is clear from a lack of research data that students are not always proactive in their research activities, in research publications, and in research projects and therefore a culture of research in the programme needs to be reinforced. The analysis by the Faculty described in SER confirms this fact and the Faculty now is endeavouring to address this issue. It should be noted that the Year 2 students are less than content about their final semester; they implicated to the expert team that there is insufficient work to be undertaken, even when the final thesis is included.

The programme should be absolutely international; it focuses on the EU. The amount and level of English used in the programme is variable across the EES programme but it should be a strong feature as English is the dominant international language and official business language of the EU. It is clear from the SER and the site visit that there is insufficient student international mobility. It is difficult, of course, with students who work as well as study but it must be encouraged and it needs to become a two-way process with foreign students exchanging on a regular basis. The Department of International Programmes and Relations should have a more active and helpful input.

It appears that these evening students are well supported to attaining their LOs and their theses. There are coordinators and supervisors. Subject teachers regularly provide back-up for the students. There is counselling offered and careers advice, though most are in employment during their time of studying. Unethical behavior is dealt with in a series of documents defining

such areas as plagiarism, fraudulent assistance, bribery. But as aforementioned, there needs to be more student-teacher cooperation; this can also foster more research activity.

The assessment system of students' performance follows VU and Faculty regulations. The regulations are publicly listed, though they tend to be somewhat general and all embracing for all programmes rather than just to the EES programme. The method of assessment is listed with subject and thesis/research paper details; these vary somewhat and can be vague and moveable at times as the subject teacher has some discretion over form of assessment. A positive aspect is the Thesis Defence Committee and also the requirement of defending a student's term papers and these features should continue. Attendance also can play a part in assessment where some subjects like 'Business in the EU States' requires a 70% attendance and some subjects do not. This subject also gives 5% for asking questions in class; somewhat unusual for a master class; other subjects do not. This variety, of course, may be following the guidelines stated in the SER whereby, a variety of assessment methods should reflect the diversity of students' knowledge'. But even so, it is the expert team's advice that the Faculty should consider reviewing this programme's assessments and take action to reduce the inconsistency. Some astute students, otherwise, might move to those subjects where assessment is 'easier'.

As noted, most of the students are working and over half are working in relevant fields such as in state agencies and in multinational business. Data provided indicates that this EES programmes graduates are very employable, most in relevant positions, but, of course, most were already employed upon enrolment. In 2012, only one of 20 responding to a questionnaire did not work. Thus overall the employment possibilities and the role in the jobs meet expectations of both students and Faculty. The focus of employment is in managerial roles as opposed to the analytical content of this EES programme. If this is sustained over time, then it is recommended that the programme content be reviewed and more focus is given to management subjects. Overall, the employment for the graduates needs more detailed monitoring, as also indicated in the SER, to check that it relates to the graduates' studies.

6. Programme management

The Dean of the Faculty is ultimately responsible for all activities within the Faculty including this EES programme. Organisation of didactic areas is the responsibility of the Dean's office. Vice-Deans work under specific guidelines to the Dean. For Example, the Vice-Dean of Master Studies is directly responsible for the development of this programme, external links, employer links, research activity and quality. There are nine departments within the Faculty. The Faculty's Council is the top authority and coordinates all Faculty work together with the Dean. The Rectorate, the University Senate and the Directorate of Academic Affairs approves strategic decisions. The Dean and three Vice-Deans provide the Faculty's administration. There are three committees and two commissions including the Study Committee and the Ethics Commission. The General Affairs Division is responsible for relationships with students. But the Programme Committee supervises the implementation of the study programme and its LOs. It comprises mainly departmental members thus it can have biased outcomes. There is a plethora of decision-making bodies within the Faculty; this is not easy to follow. Some clarity and brevity in the bureaucracy and its structure and procedures might be beneficial for ease of improving this EES programme and facilitating any required actions for the 21st century.

In a review of teacher impressions, it is interesting to read in the SER that most involved in the self-evaluation of this programme have no comments on management and administration. Yet in reading the SER, there is more detail about the plethora of management activity than about the essential quality of teaching and learning. This should be reviewed. The one interesting comment made is that with nine departments involved in programme implementation more

cooperation is needed. This point should be reviewed as should the comment by some actual teachers of this programme that some students are ill-equipped for the programme, lacking in basic economics and financial knowledge, and other students are not motivated for the study. Additionally, there are low returns on the Quality Management Centre's student surveys which rates this programme highly and this process also needs reviewing to ensure more returns and more accuracy in future. However, usefully the improved 2011 return indicates the need for more work-related skills including teamwork. Graduates are also surveyed and a database developed and to some degree there is an Alumni Association. As already mentioned, details about actual careers is weak and needs reinforcing. Social partners/employers appear to support the programme development and there is some response to survey questionnaires.

The internal Faculty Quality Management System was developed from 2006. It is largely based on student surveys and these, as noted, may be rather inaccurate as few students reply. As noted also, there are employer surveys to some extent using a Company Feedback Form. Thus, stakeholders are involved. There is an annual Quality Assurance Day. At university-wide level, VU has a 'Strategic Action Plan 2007-13' with a section on 'Improvements of Study Quality and Internationalisation'. There is the VU Quality Management Centre. FEM has a 'Development Plan for 2008-12'. In this it usefully details an 'Improvement of study quality' that identifies tasks for improvement, the means of improvement, and the results of improvement on study quality. For example, tasks include improving teaching methodology and the results include updating the the teaching processes continuously; maybe more specificity is required here. The expert team suggests that the actual results are minuted and discussed at formal committee stage and related to the individual programmes. It is agreed that the reduction in programme length to 1.5 years is likely to make a sharper impact on the need to check and improve quality continuously.

It should be observed that in Western Europe and America that there is now a feeling that the current focus on LOs (so evident in this SER) has been rather too much and there is now a 'backlash' developing internationally. There is, possibly, the intention to return to more of a focus on process and the quality of teaching and learning. The FEM may wish to give future thought to this possible coming movement in education.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1. The main aim of this EES master programme, though relevant, is somewhat lengthy. There are then 11 associated 'tasks' or sub-aims followed by a series of sub-divided LOs. It would be beneficial for clarity, readability and understanding if more conciseness was considered for this extensive structure. Additionally, it is clear that more input from a wider group of employers and alumni is appropriate to advise on the aims and LOs in regard to current market conditions in Lithuania and the EU. The title of this programme 'Master in Economics' could be more accurate and helpful to society, students and employers if it was titled more specifically as 'Master in Economics (European Economic Studies)'. This would be more compatible to the qualification, LOs and subject contents.

3.2 Some subject titles are quite general and it is recommended that a more specific approach is considered directly related to current EU issues such as budgetary problems, the Eurozone banks, and labour transfers. The LOs are difficult to attain if the subjects are too general and not specific to the EU, as in the programmes title. Sometimes some subject curricula are too 'full' and difficult for the student to cover all aspects without producing sketchy and shallow work. This needs reviewing as does some reference material that is now dated.

3.3 Teaching staff are engaged in a range of research activities. The expert team suggests that maybe more publications might be placed in the highest international refereed journals and more research with international consortia be undertaken.

3.4. The SIC library is fully supportive of the EES master students' studies and research activities. However, in other university libraries in Western Europe and America, some are now open 24/7 and this is much appreciated by the students. VU should investigate this fact and try to increase opening hours when funding allows. Possibly, an 'Incubator' might be purchased and placed within a separate room for teaching and learning including group work when funds allow.

3.5. Only a comparatively few students enrol for this EES master programme. Recruitment procedures, applications, enrolments, and drop-outs all need careful monitoring and action taken where failings occur if this programme is to be sustainable in the future. The students should be further encouraged to be proactive in their research activities as it can be improved upon and a culture of research is embedded in the programme and FEM. Mobility is always an issue where students also work; however, this programme focuses on the EU and international mobility should be encouraged, even for short periods to EU organisations in Brussels or to foreign universities. Assessment methods used in EES are wide ranging with some inconsistencies and this needs consideration by the Faculty.

3.6. There is a plethora of inter-twining committees at VU and FEM levels related to programme management and maintaining quality. Clarity and brevity in the structures and procedures would be beneficial to facilitating EES programme improvements and enhancing a quality culture. Responses to employer and student surveys are low and the process needs improvement. This would provide further detail about graduate careers that would assist with future relevant curriculum development. The results from FEM's 'Development Plan for 2008-12' now need to be discussed more formally, minuted at committee level, acted upon, and the results monitored.

IV. SUMMARY

The expert team, after discussions with the students, graduates/alumni, employers/social partners, teaching staff, and administration find that the expectations for this master programme are met. In summary then for each area:

1. The aims, objectives, and LOs are well defined and publicly available on the VU website, in the AIKOS system, and in relevant Faculty of Economics documents and publications. The main aim is lengthy; it is followed by 11 associated 'tasks' or sub-aims, then a series of sub-divided LOs. It would be appropriate for more brevity and clarity were considered to aid easy understanding of the current extensive structure. There is on-going demand for the graduates of this programme; it is clear that the aims of this programme are, in part, based on the needs of the labour market and professional requirements. However, it would be wise if the Faculty sought advice from a wider group of employers including state agencies and alumni in regard to market conditions in Lithuania and particularly the EU to ensure the currency of this master programme. In comparison with similar master programmes in Lithuania and in Europe the aims and LOs are of the same level of challenge thereby indicating the appropriate master level of this programme. These LOs are tabulated clearly in SER and correlate to the compulsory and elective subjects in the curriculum. Again it would be wise to use a wider group of external advisers to regularly check the appropriateness of all LOs. The title of this programme 'Master in Economics' could be more accurate and helpful to society, students and employers if it was to be

titled more specifically as ,Master in Economics (European Economic Studies) thereby explaining the focus of the programme and making it more compatible with the stated LOs and the content.

2. The EES master programme meets legal requirements. The subjects involve 70% for individual study and 30% for taught classes. In the past, the programme was for two years; appropriately, this has been reduced to 1.5 years to cover the curriculum. Thus the programme from 2012 is more intensive but sharper. It should be successful. There is a full range of subjects related to the programme title evenly spread over the programme; however, some titles are fairly general. A more specific approach to subject titles should be considered that relates more directly to current EU issues such as budgetary matters, the Eurozone banking structure, and labour transfers. Subjects and content are usefully mapped against respective LOs on a matrix making it easy to understand by students and staff. The wording of some LOs needs to be checked as it is sometimes all embracing and somewhat vague. A few of the subjects contain a very full content making it difficult for appropriate in-depth master studying on all topics and making it more difficult for the student to attain the set LOs for the subject and the programme. Some subject referenced material is now dated and needs reviewing .

3. There are 16 university teachers involved in this programme including four professors and 11 associate professors and doctors, and one assistant. The legal requirements are well met and it is good to see that 13 are mainly employed at VU, hopefully ensuring that their first commitment is to this programme. The qualifications, research activities, the pedagogical training, and role of visiting teacher abroad are sufficient to ensure the appropriateness of the learning process for the students to attain the LOs. The teaching enhances analytical skills including problem-solving and decision making abilities in the students and the ability to simplify while still retaining relevance. Research activity supports the teaching. Research is regularly published but more publications in international high quality refereed journals is suggested. Staff turnover is low; the advantage is guaranteed continuity for the students; the disadvantage is a lack of young vibrant teachers. Some staff international mobility occurs but more might be beneficial for this European-focused programme; sabbaticals should be further considered by the teaching staff.

4. Overall, the facilities and learning resources are very good to support this programme. The premises are adequate both in the range of sizes and quality. Rooms have been modernised and contain multimedia teaching equipment. The amount of IT equipment is impressive with continuous funding for improvements. The VLE is used in teaching and learning but, when funding allows, the purchase of an ,Incubator‘ should be considered. As all students are working; professional practice is not considered necessary because all have on-going working experience that can form the basis of research work. There is a good overall stock in the SIC library to strongly support this EES programme comprising books, journals, research papers and a range of modern databases; only licensed software is stocked. Today in other European university libraries the opening hours are 24/7 and these libraries are well used. Some thought should be given to this by VU.

5. Admission requirements are legally operated. Student applications and enrolments have fallen somewhat. It is advisable that measures are taken to improve the situation if this programme is to be sustainable in future years. The students are committed to regular research activities that includes the final thesis and also smaller independent tasks. The work produced is at an appropriate master level, learning outcomes are achieved, but even more research is encouraged to embed a proactive research culture for the programme. Student work is assessed according to regulations and this is undertaken professionally; however, teachers are allowed some discretion and there is consequent wide variability and some inconsistency in the methods

used for assessment including the inclusion or not of attendance. Some reflection is needed here by the Faculty. The teaching operates in the evening allowing students to work during the daytime. This seems an effective system but it does restrict any international mobility for the students that would be beneficial in this European-focused programme. According to limited information available on graduate employment, this programme meets the provider's expectations.

6. There is a range of committees, action plans, and development plans that directly and indirectly can be related to the management and quality of this EES master programme. But there is a plethora of these decision-making bodies and some conciseness and clarity would be beneficial to assisting EES programme management procedures and enhancing a quality culture. As part of curriculum development and quality management, regular surveys are undertaken of students, graduates, and employers. These are all helpful but unfortunately returns are low. It would be helpful if a larger number of graduate returns were received in order to provide accurate information on careers and any doctoral studies and the information used for further relevant curriculum development. More involvement by employers on a regular and formal basis might also be beneficial. It is agreed that the reduction in the programme to 1.5 years is entirely appropriate and should encourage a sharper approach to future developments and quality, making this programme more successful in the future.

Briefly, some areas of good practice in this EES master programme include:

- Reduction in the length of this master programme to 1.5 years making it more intensive and focused and making the programme more attractive to future students.
- The teaching is related to the teacher's research interests thereby providing current information, enhancing students' analytical skills and enthusing most students.
- Overall facilities and learning resources strongly supporting students' studies and research activity; there is a continuously updated stock of suitable databases relevant to students on this EES programme.
- The evening-only timetable enables students to work full-time during the day and to utilise their workplaces as sources for their master research activities and at the same time being of benefit to the employer with information and advice from their researches.
- Currently, there is good employability of the graduates in appropriate businesses in Vilnius and Lithuania, thereby meeting the provider's and students' expectations.

V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *European Economic Studies* (state code 621L10006) at Vilnius University is given **positive** evaluation.

Study programme assessment in points by evaluation areas.

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation Area in Points*
1.	Programme aims and learning outcomes	3
2.	Curriculum design	3
3.	Teaching staff	4
4.	Facilities and learning resources	4
5.	Study process and students' performance assessment	3
6.	Programme management	3
	Total:	20

*1 (unsatisfactory) - there are essential shortcomings that must be eliminated;

2 (satisfactory) - meets the established minimum requirements, needs improvement;

3 (good) - the field develops systematically, has distinctive features;

4 (very good) - the field is exceptionally good.

The expert team, on the basis of the full evaluation and the grade profile above, suggests that the SKVC Studies Committee grant 6 years accreditation to this European Economics Studies master programme at Vilnius University.

Grupės vadovas:
Team leader:

Prof. dr. Mieczyslaw Socha

Grupės nariai:
Team members:

Dr. Michael Emery

Assoc. prof. dr. Maija Šenfelde

Prof. dr. Vytautas Juščius

Andrius Zalitis

**VILNIAUS UNIVERSITETO ANTROSIOS PAKOPOS STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS
EUROPOS EKONOMINĖS STUDIJOS (VALSTYBINIS KODAS – 621L10006) 2013-02-06
EKSPERTINIO VERTINIMO IŠVADŲ NR. SV4-38 IŠRAŠAS**

<...>

V. APIBENDRINAMASIS ĮVERTINIMAS

Vilniaus universiteto studijų programa *Europos ekonominės studijos* (valstybinis kodas – 621L10006) vertinama **teigiamai**.

Eil. Nr.	Vertinimo sritis	Srities įvertinimas, balais*
1.	Programos tikslai ir numatomi studijų rezultatai	3
2.	Programos sandara	3
3.	Personalas	4
4.	Materialieji ištekliai	4
5.	Studijų eiga ir jos vertinimas	3
6.	Programos vadyba	3
	Iš viso:	20

* 1 - Nepatenkinamai (yra esminių trūkumų, kuriuos būtina pašalinti)

2 - Patenkinamai (tenkina minimalius reikalavimus, reikia tobulinti)

3 - Gerai (sistemiškai plėtojama sritis, turi savitų bruožų)

4 - Labai gerai (sritis yra išskirtinė)

<...>

IV. SANTRAUKA

Ekspertų grupė, surengusi diskusijas su studentais, absolventais / buvusiais auklėtiniais, darbdaviais / socialiniais partneriais, akademinio ir administracinio personalu, nustatė, kad su šia magistrantūros programa siejami lūkesčiai pasiteisino. Apibendrinant apie kiekvieną sritį reikėtų pasakyti:

1. Tikslai, uždaviniai ir numatomi studijų rezultatai tinkamai apibrėžti ir viešai paskelbti Vilniaus universiteto (VU) interneto svetainėje, AIKOS sistemoje ir atitinkamuose Ekonomikos fakulteto dokumentuose bei leidiniuose. Pagrindinio tikslo formuluotė per ilga; be tikslo, pateikiama 11 susijusių uždavinių arba dalinių tikslų, kurie išskaidyti į numatomų studijų rezultatų grupes. Jeigu tai padėtų lengviau suprasti dabartinę plačią struktūrą, derėtų juos išdėstyti glausčiau ir aiškiau. Šios programos absolventų poreikis nemažėja; aiškiai matyti, kad programos tikslai iš dalies yra pagrįsti darbo rinkos paklausa ir profesiniais reikalavimais. Tačiau būtų protinga, jeigu fakultetas konsultuotųsi su platesne darbdavių grupe, apimančia valstybines įstaigas ir buvusius auklėtinius, atsižvelgdamas į Lietuvos ir ypač ES rinkos sąlygas, kad būtų užtikrinta šios magistrantūros programos paklausa. Palyginti su panašiomis Lietuvoje ir Europoje siūlomomis magistrantūros programomis, programos tikslai ir numatomi studijų rezultatai yra tokio pat sudėtingumo lygio, taigi pagal šią programą suteikiamas tinkamo lygio magistro

laispnis. Šie numatomi studijų rezultatai aiškiai išdėstyti savianalizės suvestinėje pateiktose lentelėse ir susieti su privalomais bei pasirenkamais studijų programos dalykais. Vėlgi būtų protinga pasitelkti platesnę išorės konsultantų grupę, kuri reguliariai tikrintų visų numatomų studijų rezultatų tinkamumą. Pagal šią programą suteikiamas kvalifikacinis laispnis „ekonomikos magistras“ galėtų būti suformuluotas tiksliau; visuomenei, studentams bei darbdaviams būtų naudingiau, jeigu jis būtų konkrečiau įvardytas nei dabar, taip paaiškinant, kas yra programos akcentas, ir labiau ją suderinant su numatomais studijų rezultatais bei turiniu.

2. *Europos ekonominių studijų (EES) magistro studijų programa* atitinka teisės aktuose nustatytus reikalavimus. Studijuojant dalykus, 70 proc. sudaro savarankiškas mokymasis, 30 proc. – mokymas auditorijose. Anksčiau šios programos trukmė buvo dveji metai; ši trukmė buvo deramai sumažinta iki 1,5 metų, įtraukiant visą studijų turinį. Taigi nuo 2012 m. ši programa yra intensyvesnė, bet kartu ir konkretesnė. Ji turėtų susilaukti sėkmės. Pagal šią programą mokoma visų reikiamų dalykų, kurie tolygiai išdėstyti per programos laikotarpį; tačiau kai kurių dalykų pavadinimai gana bendro pobūdžio. Turėtų būti apsvarstyta galimybė patikslinti dalykų pavadinimus, juos labiau tiesiogiai susiejant su einamaisiais ES klausimais, pvz., biudžeto klausimais, euro zonos bankų sistema, darbo jėgos perkėlimu. Dalykai ir turinys lentelės pavidalu patogiai išdėstyti pagal atitinkamus numatomus studijų rezultatus, kad studentai ir darbuotojai galėtų juos lengvai suprasti. Reikėtų peržiūrėti kai kurių numatomų studijų rezultatų formuluotes, nes kartais jos pernelyg abstrakčios ir nelabai aiškios. Keleto dalykų turinys labai išsamus, todėl per magistro studijas sunku pakankamai nuodugnai mokytis visų dalykų ir dar sunkiau – studentui pasiekti visus numatomus studijų rezultatus, susijusius su tuo dalyku ir programa. Dalis pagal dalyką nurodytos medžiagos jau yra pasenusi ir turėtų būti peržiūrėta.

3. Šioje programoje dalyvauja 16 universiteto dėstytojų – keturi profesoriai, 11 docentų ir daktarų bei vienas asistentas. Teisės aktuose nustatytų reikalavimų laikomasi tinkamai; džiugu pastebėti, kad 13 dėstytojų pagrindinis darbas yra Vilniaus universitete, nes, tikėtina, taip bus užtikrintas pirmenybės teikimas šiai programai. Kvalifikacijos, mokslinių tyrimų veikla, pedagogų rengimas ir kviestinių užsienio dėstytojų vaidmuo yra pakankami, kad studentams, kurie siekia numatomų studijų rezultatų, būtų užtikrintas deramas studijų procesas. Studijuojant lavinami analitiniai įgūdžiai, įskaitant studentų gebėjimą spręsti problemas ir priimti sprendimus, taip pat gebėjimą supaprastinti išsaugant esmę. Studijų procesas remiamas mokslinių tyrimų veikla. Moksliniai tyrimai skelbiami reguliariai, tačiau siūlytume daugiau straipsnių skelbti aukšto lygio recenzuojamuose leidiniuose. Darbuotojų kaita maža; tai naudinga tuo, kad studentams užtikrinamas tęstinumas; neigiamas aspektas tas, kad trūksta jaunų energingų dėstytojų. Pastebėtas šioks toks tarptautinis darbuotojų judumas, tačiau pagal šią europinės orientacijos programą būtų naudinga užtikrinti didesnę judumą; akademinis personalas turėtų geriau apsvarstyti galimybę pasinaudoti metinėmis atostogomis.

4. Apskritai šiai programai skirti materialieji ištekliai yra labai geri. Patalpos tinkamos tiek dydžio, tiek kokybės požiūriais. Auditorijos atnaujintos, jose yra garsinė ir vaizdinė mokymo įranga. Stebina IT įrangos gausa, be to, nuolat skiriama lėšų tobulinimui. Dėstant ir studijuojant naudojama virtualioji mokymo įranga, tačiau, jeigu būtų lėšų, reikėtų apsvarstyti „inkubatoriaus“ įsigijimo galimybę. Kadangi visi studentai dirba, praktinės stažuotės nėra būtinos, nes visi nuolat kaupia darbo patirtį, kuri galėtų būti mokslinių tiriamųjų darbų pagrindas. SIC biblioteka iš esmės gerai aprūpinta ir labai padeda įgyvendinti šią EES programą; bibliotekoje yra knygų, žurnalų, mokslinių darbų ir įvairių duomenų bazių; diegiama tik licencinė programinė įranga. Šiais laikais kitų Europos universitetų bibliotekos dirba ištisą parą be išėjinių dienų ir studentai aktyviai tuo naudojasi. Universitetas turėtų pamąstyti apie tai.

5. Priėmimo reikalavimai atitinka teisės aktų reikalavimus. Studentų paraiškų ir priimamų studentų skaičiai šiek tiek sumažėjo. Norint, kad programa ateityje ilgai gyvuotų, patartina imtis padėties gerinimo priemonių. Studentai užsiima reguliaria mokslinių tyrimų veikla, apimančia baigiamųjų darbų rašymą, taip pat smulkesnių savarankiškų užduočių atlikimą. Darbai atliekami deramu magistrantūros lygiu, užtikrinamas numatomų studijų rezultatų pasiekimas, tačiau, siekiant į programą integruoti aktyvių mokslinių tyrimų principą, reikėtų vykdyti daugiau mokslinių tyrimų. Studentų darbas vertinamas pagal taisykles, profesionaliai, tačiau dėstytojams suteikiama šiek tiek laisvės, todėl vyrauja didelė įvairovė ir šio toks nenuoseklumas, susiję su taikomais vertinimo metodais, įskaitant lankomumo aspekto (ne)paismą. Fakultetas turėtų apie tai pagalvoti. Paskaitos vyksta vakarais, todėl dieną studentai gali dirbti. Atrodytų, kad tai veiksminga sistema, tačiau pagal ją ribojamas studentų tarptautinis judumas, kuris būtų naudingas šiai europinės orientacijos programai. Atsižvelgiant į turimą negausią informaciją apie absolventų įsidarbinimą, ši programa atitinka mokymo paslaugų teikėjo lūkesčius.

6. Veikia įvairūs komitetai, parengta įvairių veiklos ir tobulinimo planų, kuriuos tiesiogiai ar netiesiogiai galima susieti su šios programos vadyba ir kokybe. Tačiau šių sprendimus priimančių institutų yra per daug; daugiau paprastumo ir aiškumo padėtų vykdyti programos vadybos procedūras ir pakelti kokybės kultūros lygį. Studijų programos rengimo ir kokybės vadybos srityse reguliariai atliekamos studentų, absolventų ir darbdavių apklausos. Jos yra naudingos, deia, atsiliėpimų gaunama nedaug. Būtų naudinga gauti daugiau absolventų atsiliėpimų ir taip surinkti tikslios informacijos apie profesinę veiklą ir doktorantūros studijas, kurią būtų galima panaudoti toliau atitinkamai rengiant studijų programą. Taip pat būtų naudinga labiau įtraukti darbdavius, darant tai reguliariau ir oficialiau. Pritariame, kad programos trukmės sumažinimas iki 1,5 metų yra visiškai tinkamas ir turėtų paskatinti formuoti aiškesnį požiūrį į būsimus pokyčius ir kokybę bei taip didinti šios programos sėkmę ateityje.

Trumpas EES magistrantūros programos gerosios patirties įgyvendinimo sričių sąrašas:

- šios magistrantūros programos sutrumpinimas iki 1,5 metų, taip ją padarant intensyvesnę, tiksliau orientuotą ir patrauklesnę būsimiems studentams;
- dėstymas susietas su dėstytoją dominančiais moksliniais tyrimais, todėl gaunama einamosios informacijos, tobulinami studentų analitiniai įgūdžiai ir sužadinas daugelio studentų entuziazmas;
- apskritai materialieji ištekliai suteikia studentams tvirtą pagrindą studijuoti ir užsiimti mokslinių tyrimų veikla; sudaryta galimybė naudotis nuolat atnaujinamomis atitinkamomis duomenų bazėmis, kurios studentams yra reikalingos pagal šią EES programą;
- kadangi paskaitos vyksta tik vakarais, studentai gali visą dieną dirbti ir savo darbo vietas panaudoti kaip medžiagą savo magistrantūros moksliniams tyrimams, kartu suteikdami darbdaviui naudingos informacijos ir patarimų, susijusių su jų moksliniais tyrimais;
- dabartinės absolventų įsidarbinimo atitinkamose Vilniaus ir Lietuvos įmonėse galimybės yra geros, o tai atitinka mokymo paslaugų teikėjo ir studentų lūkesčius.

III. REKOMENDACIJOS

1. Pagrindinis šios *Europos ekonominių studijų* magistrantūros programos tikslas yra tinkamas, tačiau jo formuluotė šiek tiek per ilga. Tada pateikiama 11 susijusių uždavinių arba dalinių tikslų, kurie skaidomi į dalinių numatomų studijų rezultatų grupes. Didesnio aiškumo, patogesnio skaitymo ir geresnio supratimo tikslais būtų naudinga apsvarstyti galimybę šią didelę

struktūrą pateikti glausčiau. Be to, aiškiai matyti, kad derėtų pasitelkti platesnę darbdavių ir buvusių auklėtinių grupę ir su ja daugiau konsultuotis dėl programos tikslų ir numatomų studijų rezultatų, atsižvelgiant į dabartines Lietuvos ir ES rinkos sąlygas. Pagal šią programą suteikiamas kvalifikacinis laipsnis „ekonomikos magistras“ galėtų būti įvardytas tiksliau; visuomenei, studentams bei darbdaviams būtų naudingiau, jeigu kvalifikacija būtų nurodyta konkrečiau nei dabar. Tai labiau atitiktų kvalifikacinį laipsnį, numatomus studijų rezultatus ir dalyko turinį.

2. Kai kurių dalykų pavadinimai gana bendro pobūdžio; rekomenduojama apsvarstyti didesnio konkretumo galimybę, dalykus tiesiogiai susiejant su einamaisiais ES klausimais, pvz., biudžeto problemomis, euro zonos bankais ir darbo jėgos perkėlimu. Numatomi studijų rezultatai bus sunkiai pasiekiami, jeigu dalykai bus pernelyg bendro pobūdžio, konkrečiai nesusieti su ES, kaip nurodyta programos pavadinime. Kai kurių dalykų programos yra pernelyg išsamios, todėl studentams sunku aprėpti visus aspektus, kartu išvengiant padirko ir paviršutiniško darbo. Svarstant šį klausimą, būtina peržiūrėti ir kai kurią jau pasenusią medžiagą.

3. Akademinis personalas dalyvauja įvairioje mokslinių tyrimų veikloje. Ekspertų grupės nuomone, galbūt būtų galima daugiau darbų skelbti geriausiuose tarptautiniuose recenzuojamuose leidiniuose ir atlikti daugiau mokslinių tyrimų kartu su tarptautiniais konsorciumais.

4. SIC biblioteka yra labai geras pagrindas studentų studijoms ir mokslinių tyrimų veiklai. Tačiau kai kurios kitos Vakarų Europos ir Amerikos bibliotekos jau dirba visą parą be išėginių dienų, ir studentai tai labai vertina. Universitetas turėtų išnagrinėti šį faktą ir pamėginti pailginti darbo laiką, jeigu bus lėšų. Galbūt, jeigu bus lėšų, būtų galima įsigyti ir atskiroje patalpoje įdiegti dėstymui ir studijavimui skirtą „inkubatorių“, kartu įsteigiant darbo grupę.

5. Į šią magistrantūros programą priimama palyginti nedaug studentų. Kad programa ateityje ilgai gyvuotų, turėtų būti atidžiai stebimos atrankos procedūros, paraiškų teikimas, studentų priėmimas ir nubyrėjimas, o pastebėjus trūkumų, turėtų būti imamasi veiksmų. Studentai turėtų būti labiau skatinami aktyviai dalyvauti mokslinių tyrimų veikloje, nes ją dar galima tobulinti, o mokslinių tyrimų veikla – įtraukta į programą ir fakulteto veiklą. Kai studentai dar ir dirba, visada kyla judumo klausimas; tačiau ši programa orientuota į ES, todėl turėtų būti skatinamas tarptautinis judumas, nors ir trumpam nuvykstant į Briuselyje įsikūrusias ES organizacijas arba užsienio universitetus. EES taikomi vertinimo metodai yra labai įvairūs, yra tam tikro nenuoseklumo, todėl fakultetas turėtų tai apsvarstyti.

6. Universiteto ir fakulteto lygmenimis veikia pernelyg daug vienodas funkcijas atliekančių komitetų, susijusių su programos vadyba ir kokybės užtikrinimu. Siekiant patobulinti programą ir pakelti kokybės užtikrinimo kultūrą, būtų naudinga aiškiau ir glausčiau apibrėžti struktūras ir procedūras. Menkai atsižvelgiama į darbdavių ir studentų apklausas, todėl šį procesą būtina tobulinti. Taip būtų galima tiksliau išsiaiškinti absolventų karjeros galimybes, o tai padėtų deramai parengti būsimas studijų programas. Dabar turėtų būti oficialiau aptarti fakulteto 2008–2012 m. veiklos tobulinimo plano įgyvendinimo rezultatai, parengti atitinkamų komitetų posėdžių protokolai, turėtų būti imamasi atitinkamų veiksmų ir stebimi rezultatai.

<...>

Paslaugos teikėja patvirtina, jog yra susipažinusi su Lietuvos Respublikos baudžiamojo kodekso¹ 235 straipsnio, numatančio atsakomybę už melagingą ar žinomai neteisingai atliktą vertimą, reikalavimais.

Vertėjos rekvizitai (vardas, pavardė,
parašas)

¹ Žin., 2002, Nr.37-1341