STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

VILNIAUS UNIVERSITETO
STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS
SOCIALINĖ POLITIKA (valstybinis kodas – 621L40001)
VERTINIMO IŠVADOS

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EVALUATION REPORT
OF *SOCIAL POLICY (state code – 621L40001)*
STUDY PROGRAMME
At VILNIUS UNIVERSITY

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Išvados parengtos anglų kalba
Report language - English

Studijų programos pavadinimas	*Socialinė politika*
Valstybinis kodas	621L40001
Studijų sritis	socialiniai mokslai
Studijų kryptis	socialinė politika
Studijų programos rūšis	universitetinės
Studijų pakopa	antroji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	nuolatinės (1,5)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais	90
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	socialinės politikos magistras
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	1997 m. balandžio mėn.

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INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Title of the study programme	*Social Policy*
State code	621L40001
Study area	Social Sciences
Study field	Social Policy
Type of the study programme	University studies
Study cycle	Second cycle
Study mode (length in years)	Full-time (1,5)
Volume of the study programme in credits	90
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Master in Social Policy
Date of registration of the study programme	April 1997

CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the evaluation process

The evaluation of on-going study programmes is based on the **Methodology for Evaluation of Higher Education Study Programmes**, approved by Order No 1-01-162 of 20 December 2010 of the Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (hereafter – SKVC).

The evaluation is intended to help higher education institutions to make continuous improvement in their study programmes and to inform the public about the quality of studies.

The evaluation process consists of the main following stages: *1) self-evaluation and self-evaluation report prepared by Higher Education Institution (hereafter – HEI); 2) visit of the review team at the higher education institution; 3) production of the evaluation report by the review team and its publication; 4) follow-up activities.*

On the basis of the external evaluation report of the study programme SKVC takes a decision to accredit the study programme either for 6 years or for 3 years. If the programme evaluation is negative such a programme is not accredited.

The programme is **accredited for 6 years** if all evaluation areas are evaluated as "very good" (4 points) or "good" (3 points).

The programme is **accredited for 3 years** if none of the areas was evaluated as "unsatisfactory" (1 point) and at least one evaluation area was evaluated as "satisfactory" (2 points).

The programme **is not accredited** if at least one of evaluation areas was evaluated as "unsatisfactory" (1 point).

1.2. General

The Application documentation submitted by the HEI follows the outline recommended by SKVC. Along with the self-evaluation report (hereafter – SER) and annexes, the following additional documents have been provided by the HEI before, during and/or after the site-visit:

No.	Name of the document
1.	Final theses of the graduates in the past 2 years

1.3. Background of the HEI/Faculty/Study field/ Additional information

The MA Social Policy is hosted by the Department of Social Work in the Faculty of Philosophy an established department of Vilnius University. The programme was first offered as a separate field of study in 2010[1] and was the first programme in social policy at this level to be offered in Lithuania. This is the first time the programme has been evaluated. In addition to the MA Social Policy the department offers an undergraduate degree in social policy (introduced in 2012) and undergraduate and post graduate degrees in social work. Other subjects offered by the faculty include General Psychology, Clinical and Organisational Psychology, Educational Sciences, Philosophy, Logic and History of Philosophy and Sociology.

1.4. The Review Team

The review team was assembled in accordance with the Expert Selection Procedure, approved by Order No 1-55 of 19 March 2007 of the Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education, as amended on 11 November 2011. The Review Visit to HEI was conducted by the team on 24 September 2014.

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1. **Prof. dr. Turo Virtanen (team leader),** *Adjunct Professor at the Faculty of Social Sciences, Department of Political and Economic Studies, University of Helsinki, Finland.*

2. **Prof. dr. Pamela Abbott**, *Senior Researcher and Honorary Professor at the University of Aberdeen, Professor Emeritus at Glasgow, Caledonian University, United Kingdom.*

3. **Dr. Hanna Mamzer**, *Assistant Professor at the Sociology Department, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan, Poland.*

4. **Mr. Rimantas Dumčius**, *Director, Research & Policy Advice, at the Public Policy and Management Institute, Lithuania.*

5. **Mr. Eimantas Kisielius**, *student of International Business second cycle study programme at Kaunas University of Technology.*

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[1] It was originally introduced in 2009 as a specialisation on the MA Social Work

II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

2.1. Programme aims and learning outcomes

The programme has been designed to meet a labour market need, identified by the University, for administrators in central and local government and NGOs. The social partners agree that there is a labour market demand for such administrators with the competencies delivered by the programme. Most of the graduates from the programme have secured employment, although not all feel that a masters degree was a necessary qualification for the post they presently occupy. The view of social partners and graduates was that the core had been well thought out to prepare students for employment and that the placement was a real strength of the programme. The learning outcomes conform to those required for a masters level programme and the generic and specific learning outcomes are clearly stated. In general the programme is designed to enable the students to gain the learning outcomes and the assessment to ensure that students demonstrate that they have gained the competencies.

However, the programme is narrow in its focus in social policy and is best characterised as a programme in social policy administration. Only two of the non-practice orientated subjects (Comparative Welfare States and Social Policy of International Organisations) teach core social policy, with the other one covering social protection but with a heavy emphasis on labour law (Social Protection and Labour Law). The students and graduates were concerned that the programme contained too much social work theory in the taught core courses. The programme does, however, enable students to take option subjects in cognate disciplines but this is at the expense of enabling students to take specialist options in social policy.

2.2. Curriculum design

The programme conforms to the legal requirement in terms of length and proportion of credits allocated to the core subjects. The programme is taught over three semesters and 90 ECTS awarded. Seventy-two ECTS are awarded to elements of the programme identified as core and the remaining 18 ECTS to options. The standard length of a course is six ECTS, 160 hours of student learning effort, with 80 per cent of time allocated to students' independent study. The thesis is allocated 18 ECTS and there is a six-ECTS course for thesis preparation, giving 24 ECTS in total. The self-evaluation report claims that the Research Practice course (12 ECTS) also contributes to the dissertation. Of the core taught subjects, half the ECTS are allocated for more practically orientated courses. Students take three six-ECTS option courses (one per semester). These are selected from a choice of 10 courses which are offered on related social

science programmes and are taught with students taking these masters programmes. However, not all options were always available due to lack of student demand.

The programme has a logical structure and is not repetitive. The content of the subjects is consistent with the type and level of the programme and the content, learning outcomes, assessment requirements and criteria for grading are set out in each subject. The content of each subject and of the subjects in total should enable students to reach the programme learning outcomes. The programme takes a multidisciplinary approach to social policy and combines theoretical with more practically orientated subjects. As described in the SER the core courses prepare the graduates for understanding the international dimensions of social policy, research (building on Bachelor studies) and administration/management of organisations. The options are drawn from other social science disciplines, most notably sociology. The learning outcomes are appropriate for a masters level programme.

The programme has a strong practical focus with significant attention paid to policy analysis and the supervision of policy implementation. Just under half the ECTS are allocated to practically orientated subjects, research training and the conduct of research. The programme would, however, seems to be less well designed to prepare students for doctoral study.

However, the programme does not have the breadth and depth of teaching about social policy that is found on most programmes at this level and the learning outcomes do not place sufficient emphasis on students working at the cutting edge of knowledge. While accepting that social policy is an interdisciplinary field of study, there is a core body of knowledge with which it might be expected that a masters level student would have the opportunity to engage with at masters level. The programme lacks a core social policy course to enable students to gain a sound understanding of social problems and how welfare states address them and one in advance empirical research methods to build on undergraduate introductory courses and enable students to gain the skills necessary to carry out empirical research at masters level. While the programme is preparing students well for an identified niche in the labour market, social partners and the graduates from the programme felt that the demand was fairly limited and future graduates might have difficulty in finding appropriate employment.

Given that some core areas seem not to be adequately covered raises questions about the number of options students take and range of options offered. Not only may students be studying too many options there are no options that enable students to deepen and/or broaden their study of social policy per se. Students, for example, can study the sociology of crime and deviancy but have no opportunity to study the criminal justice system in detail. Furthermore, while 10 options are offered it is not clear that students taking this programme meet the prerequisite requirements

for all of them. In *Employment Theories and the Labour Market*, for example, prerequisites are *Economic Fundamentals* and *The Sociology of Work*, and *Sociological Rational Choice Theory* requires students to have completed a course in Sociology and an Introduction to Economics. Admission criteria needs to specify the requirement that students must have taken these prerequisites or warn students that the range of options they can choose from will be limited because of their lack of background knowledge.

The subject descriptors follow a standard format and provide information on the purpose of the course, the learning outcomes, assessment requirements and marking criteria, the content of the course with the hours of student learning effort (staff directed and independent learning) for each element, and reading lists (required and optional). There is little evidence of any use of e-learning or the use of any other innovative learning methods, with teaching generally being a combination of lectures and seminars.

The recommended reading suggests that most courses are relatively up-to-date and require students to engage with a range of literature, including classics. Staff told us that they update their reading lists regularly and ask the library to purchase newly recommended books and other learning materials. The library staff confirmed that books etc. requested by academic staff are purchased. Students confirmed that they are able to get hold of the recommended reading, with chapters of books being photocopied where necessary. The required and recommended reading lists include texts and articles in English (or literature translated into Lithuanian) as well as Lithuanian. However, in the SER encouraging students to read more material in English is seen as necessary, suggesting that students may not be reading as widely as they should and may not be engaging fully with key theoretical debates and practice developments in social policy. Scrutiny of a sample of student dissertations also suggests that students' reading of material in foreign languages is limited. On two of the option courses, *Contemporary Comparative Historical Sociology* and *Sociology Rational Choice Theory*, the compulsory reading is mainly texts written by the staff teaching the programme and this raises concerns about the extent to which students are able to engage with a range of perspectives. The optional Deviancy subject is the sociology of deviancy and does not give students an opportunity to study the topic from a social policy perspective. It also seems to focus on historical debates and not to give students an opportunity to engage with more contemporary theoretical and methodological issues and debates.

The core social policy subjects deliver the learning outcomes as specified by the programme team but it is of note that students have little opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of contemporary social problems in Lithuania, including for example, poverty and income

maintenance, family policy, health policy, the criminal justice system, education policy, or an understanding of the competing social and political strategies for solving these in their own country.

The students follow a core of practically orientated courses that enable them to learn skills in social policy research, policy analysis and the analysis of policy implementation. Students are supervised in developing the ability to plan an independent piece of research and carry it out (dissertation) and to analyse policy implementation (Research Practice – placement). The placement is strength of the programme enabling student to gain practical skills in evaluating policy implementation, a key learning outcomes of the programme. Social partners, graduates and students all agreed that the placement enabled students to gain competencies that were important for gaining graduate employment in social policy agencies. However, while the students carry out the analysis of policy implementation while on placement the procedures and exact academic requirements for the placement are not spelt out in the subject descriptor or elsewhere in the materials provided for the review team. The programme team told us that students choose the placement institution from the list prepared by the University or in an institution nominated by the student and approved by the University. In choosing their placement students are expected to take into account the topic of their final thesis; students collect data and do pilot research in the field of their placement institution. The students are supervised by the course leader with a supervisor within the institution.

There is no subject that teaches the main qualitative and quantitative empirical research methods and techniques of data analysis. Careful reading of the subject descriptors suggests that students graduating from this programme will not have the skills at masters level generally expected of a social policy graduates. Although the programme has a strong practice orientation the time allocated to the teaching of empirical research methods is less than might be expected on a masters programme. The students generally used qualitative methods in their thesis and there was little evidence that students had gained advanced skills in quantitative methods. The core research subject (Research of Social Welfare) is more concerned with understanding the methods used in the literature. The students and graduates to whom we spoke were not confident that they had the skills to carry out empirical research using quantitative methods of data analysis, including the necessary grasp of statistical techniques and sufficient practical experience of using SPSS or other similar software. Staff indicated that they would like to encourage more students to carry out analysis of European data sets for research for their dissertations but felt that students do not have the necessary skills to do so.

The review team are concerned about the work that students do for their dissertation. Students have to select their thesis topic, write the proposal and carry out the literature review in semester 1, before they have had an opportunity to engage with the subject matter of social policy. However, of more concern is the link between the Research Practice[2] course in the second semester and the final thesis. The link seems at best tenuous. While according to the programme team (but this is not specified in the subject descriptor) the students are expected to carry out research for their thesis, they are all supervised by one member of academic staff, rather than, as might be expected, their thesis supervisor. Furthermore, the learning outcomes of the Research Practice subject are mainly related to gaining competency in evaluating (researching) policy implementation; the titles of students' theses to date shows that few are related to social policy implementation. The graduates from the programme we spoke to referred to no links between the placement and the data collection for the final thesis although we spoke to them at length about the placement.

2.3. Teaching staff

The teaching staff are committed, enthusiastic and supportive of students. Their CVs show that they are engaged in research, professional and external actives. Students and graduates of the programme were complimentary about the staff. Staffing meets the legal requirements; of 11 staff teaching on the programme, 10 have PhDs and all are research active. Academic staff CVs show that they are generally carrying out research that is related to the subject areas in which they teach and presenting the findings at conferences and in publications. In the interviews with staff they confirmed that they are generally able to get support to attend conferences at which they have had papers accepted for presentation. They are also active in relevant professional organisations and associations, national and international, and have been active in advising the government. Four members of staff are or have been supervising doctoral students registered in Sociology. However, the paper setting out the Scientific Activities of Staff shows that they mainly attend social work and sociology conferences and meetings. A scrutiny of the staff CVs suggests that there is only one academic teaching on the programme, a relatively junior one, whose main area of academic expertise and interests lies in social policy.

The SER claims that turnover of staff is relatively low and that the department has been able to ensure continuity of appropriate staffing. This was confirmed by the staff, who indicated that

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[2] The title of the course is also problematic. The content suggests that it is more about researching practice than practicing research.

there had been only one change in the team delivering the programme. Graduates and current reported no concerns about the staff or the teaching of the programme since its inception in 2009. The teaching staff confirmed that they are subject to an annual review of their performance and that it is possible to be rewarded for outstanding performance. There are opportunities for staff to develop teaching and learning skills and the University provides workshops and courses as well as staff being able to take advantage of externally funded ones, including international ones. Some members of the programme team have taken advantage of these as well as external provision funded by ERASMUS. The SER indicates that five members of staff have had the opportunity to teach in higher education institutions outside Lithuania, but according to the Recent Scientific Activities of Staff only two have done so, one teaching Sociology and one Social Work. Two academics teaching on core subjects have taken courses on quantitative data analysis and one of these has also undertaken training in qualitative data analysis.

However, only two of the staff teaching core taught subjects are full professors and, based on recent publications, only two of the core subjects are taught by members of staff whose research and scholarly activities are directly relevant to the subject being taught. In the case of the option subjects only three out of 10 are taught by staff whose current research is directly relevant to the subject they are teaching on the programme. While staffing is adequate to deliver the programme there is reliance on a small team. Nearly 40 per cent of the taught core (18 out of 48 ECTS) is delivered by the same member of staff, who also teaches an option subject. Staff told us during the visit that although they are entitled to a research sabbatical every five years it is not possible for them to take one as there is no one to cover their teaching.

Staff and administration confirmed during the visit that staff are research active and are publishing the findings of their research in scholarly publications that are subject to peer review. The administration, however, expressed concerned that staff are not publishing sufficiently in international journals and the SER indicates that there is a need for staff to become involved in international research collaboration. Academic staff agreed that they should publish more in international journals but argued that these journals are not very interested in research that focuses on Lithuania and that they need support in preparing articles for them. Staff were also concerned about the lack of adequate time for research and the difficulty of accessing funding. However, the teaching load does not seem excessive, the staff-student ratio on the masters programme is very low (assuming teachers do not have to teach too much in other study programmes) and staff are research active. Library and other resources necessary to support research did not seem to be an issue.

2.4. Facilities and learning resources

Overall the facilities and learning resources meet the needs of the students and the faculty. The teaching rooms and lecture theatres used by the programme are adequate in size and quantity. The library is well resourced and there is adequate space for students to study. The academic staff, students and graduates said that students are able to get copies of the learning materials that they require. This includes access to electronic resources as well as paper-based ones (books and journals). There are facilities for students to obtain photocopies of chapters from text books as necessary. The library staff and academic staff indicated that books are ordered for the library on the request of academic staff. There are adequate computers for student use both in practical classes and for self-study. However, the students told us that most have their own laptops.

The University has a policy for supporting students living with physical/sensory disabilities but it has not yet been fully implemented and is mostly concerned with physical access and learning equipment. At present the facilities do not fully meet the needs of students living with disabilities, although most, but not all, buildings are accessible to students in wheelchairs. Students with other mobility difficulties may experience difficulty in accessing the library. There is some equipment for blind /partially sighted students but it is limited and there is no provision for students with hearing problems. The University does not yet have a system in place for making appropriate adaptations to learning and assessment for students living with physical and/ or learning disabilities. Students have to make individual arrangements with the academic staff who teach them for any necessary adaptations for participating in academic activities and/or for assessment. This is likely to result in inconsistency of treatment and potentially injustices.

Students could make use of a wider range of reading if they were taught systematically how to use search engines such as Google Scholar and library information systems to carry out literature searches and how to evaluate the quality of materials they might find on the internet. Students told us they do not feel confident about their ability to search for materials.

Academic staff have to share two offices that, from observation, are only just adequate to accommodate them. To compensate for the lack of office space the University provides the staff with their own laptop computer. Staff seemed reconciled to the situation and had an agreed timetable, shared with students, for personal tutoring. Students did not express any concerns about access to members of staff for individual tutorials. However, the lack of office space for staff contrasts sharply with the seeming underutilisation of the library space. When we visited there were few students in the library and our guide told us that when students are not in class they are working.

2.5. Study process and students performance assessment

The programme is open to any student that has completed a first degree but the weighting system for admissions favours students with degrees in social work and social pedagogy. There is competition for admissions but the numbers taking the programme are relatively low (an average of 11 students per cohort) because of the limited number of government scholarships available, raising questions about the economic viability of the programme. Four cohorts of students have completed the programme, with 28 per cent of those admitted failing to graduate. Eight of the 11 students withdrawing from the programme were state-funded.

Students and graduates said that they had chosen the programme based on their interests and career ambitions. The programme generally met their expectations, although students find it challenging, especially combining full-time study with paid employment. Academic staff are said to be enthusiastic and supportive and to adjust the delivery of the programme to meet the needs of students in employment. Lectures, for example, are delivered in the late afternoon and there is some flexibility as to when student have to do the placement. Academic staff also said that it was possible for students to extend the period over which they studied for the degree but students and graduates seemed to be unaware of this possibility. We found no evidence that staff are providing guidance to students on combining full-time study with paid employment, thereby ensuring that students understand the amount of time they need to commit to studying the programme.

The students and graduates confirmed that the requirements of the programme are made clear to them and that they are given adequate information about assessment. Written and oral feedback on completed assignments was said to be adequate and staff were prepared to provide additional information when requested. Students undertake a thesis and a placement where they study the implementation of social policy in an organisation. Staff make reference to their own research in teaching but opportunities to work with staff on their research or other opportunities to participate in research were said by students to be rare.

Most graduates from the programme have found suitable employment working for local and central government, NGOs and international organisations. Social partners agreed that graduates had the skills and competencies for employment as administrators/policy analysts in social/public policy organisations.

The programme admits students from a range of undergraduate programmes. Students and graduates felt that some students did not have an adequate background especially at the start of the programme and needed an introduction to the subject as well as to empirical research methods. Academic staff thought that taking students from a variety of BA programmes made it difficult to meet the needs of all the students and was a factor in the disappointing attainment of

students. The self-evaluation report (SER) acknowledges that there is a need for an introduction to social policy but it is not offered at present.

Scrutiny of the subject descriptors suggests that a conventional approach to student assessment is taken and that a number of learning outcomes may not be being adequately assessed. For example, students are expected to be able to communicate, orally and in writing, about social policy with non-experts, but the students are not assessed on this. Students are expected to be able to solve problems in new and novel situations and transfer learning from one area to another, but again they are not assessed on this.

There are opportunities for student mobility but most students do not take advantage of these. Staff and students indicated that this is mainly because students are generally in paid employment and/or have family responsibilities. According to academic staff visiting lecturers are infrequently invited to lecture on the programme because of lack of finance; the SER states that there have been three visiting lecturers in the last five years. However, students do get opportunities to attend lectures given by visiting international academics who come to the university. Students are expected to use books and journals published in English as well as in Lithuanian so that they engage with the international literature. The programme does not attract students from other countries as it is taught in Lithuanian.

2.6. Programme management

The programme is managed by the Social Work Department and has a Programme Committee with representatives of the staff teaching on the programme, a social partner and a student. The Committee meets at least twice a year and is responsible for monitoring the standards and quality of the programme and ensuring continuous improvement. Student feedback is collected using the University system overseen by the Study Quality Management, and the social partner representative comments on behalf of social partners. Social partners that offer placements also provide feedback on the quality of the students. However, there seems to be confusion over responsibility for the management of the programme between the Department of Social Work and the Programme Committee In discussion with staff there seemed to be confusion between what the respective responsibilities of the Programme Committee and the Social Work Department are especially with regard to any changes to the programme. However, they did agree any changes have to gain final approval from the Faculty Council.

The standardised feedback from the students via the on-line system does not provide detailed qualitative evaluation and students told us that many do not complete the surveys. The students felt that they were not able to comment adequately on the quality of the programme and that

there should be feedback questionnaires for each programme rather than a generic one. There is no collection of systematic feedback from social partners or graduates from the programme. From discussions with staff and students we found little evidence of changes being made to the programme as a result of student/social partner feedback and/or academic staff critically reflecting on the delivery of the programme. Although staff told us that there are opportunities for staff development for learning and teaching, few staff have taken advantage of them based on what they told us during the visit and a scrutiny of CVs. One member of staff has been on a course on teaching students with special needs, one on e-learning and one on innovative teaching methods but none of these teach core courses.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The programme team should consider establishing productive links with experienced teams teaching social policy masters programmes in other Europe universities, to enable them to ensure that their programme is internationally credible.

2. The programme team should review the programme to ensure that there is an appropriate balance between core social policy teaching, practice-orientated teaching and options from other cognate disciplines.

3. The curriculum and teaching for the thesis should be reviewed as a matter of urgency to ensure that all students receive adequate specialist supervision and that their learning effort adds up to 30 ECTS. This should be done without making modifications to *Research Practice* (placement) which the review team see as one of the strengths of the programme.

4. The programme team should review the curriculum to ensure that it is focused on social policy and not social work.

5. Consideration should be given to reviewing the curriculum to ensure that students reach a sound understanding of the subject matter of social policy and gain advanced skills in carrying out both qualitative and qualitative research.

6. All courses should be reviewed to ensure that they require students to engage with the most recent advances as well as classical debates in the subject area of the course, with students encouraged to engage with the international literature in social policy.

7. Either a compulsory preparatory course in social policy for students from other backgrounds should be offered or a course in the first semester should provide such an introduction.

8. The Faculty should consider providing more adequate office space for academic staff.

9. Consideration should be given to more academic staff teaching on the programme so that the staff can take research sabbaticals and to reduce the over-reliance on one member of staff.

10. Staff should consider how they can make use of European data sets for carrying out research, thus reducing the need for research funding and enabling them to carry out comparative research.

11. A research strategy should be developed and academic staff provided with support to enable them to publish in a range of outlets including international peer review journals.

12. Consideration should be given to offering a part-time pathway on the programme to ensure that students in paid employment are able to engage with the programme sufficiently.

13. Feedback on the programme should be regularly and systematically collected from graduates and social partners.

14. Students should be given an opportunity to provide qualitative feedback on the programme. Such feedback should give students an opportunity to comment on the programme as a whole as well as on individual courses.

15. Consideration should be given to more engagement with Alumni.

IV. SUMMARY

Social Policy is a second cycle study programme in the field of Social Policy, implemented at the Faculty of Philosophy of Vilnius University. This is the first external evaluation of the programme.

The main positive elements of the programme are:

1. The programme has been designed to meet an identified labour market need and the programme design, aims and learning outcomes prepares students for this niche.

2. The programme has a strong focus on practice and students undertake a practical placement.

3. The programme enables students to engage with some contemporary debates in social policy from an interdisciplinary perspective.

4. The programme enables students to gain an understanding of comparative social policy in Europe and globally.

5. The academic staff are committed, enthusiastic, and supportive of students, research active and professionally engaged.

6. Academic staff are able to attend national and international conferences and are active in professional associations.

7. The performance of staff is regularly reviewed and staff can be rewarded for good performance.

8. The learning resources are adequate to meet the needs of the programme, with students able to access the learning materials they require, and they are provided with good support, including feedback on their work, by the teaching staff.

9. The University has a policy for supporting students living with physical disabilities and the accommodation is mostly wheelchair-accessible.

10. The delivery of the programme is scheduled to meet the needs of students that are combining study with employment.

11. Graduates from the programme are able to find appropriate employment and social partners confirm that they have the required skills and competencies.

12. The Programme Committee includes in its membership a student and a social partner and feedback from students is collected via the University computer-based system.

The main negative elements of the programme are:

1. The programme is narrow in its focus and does not adequately cover core areas of social policy enabling students to gain a critical understanding social policy issues in contemporary society.

2. The programme does not enable the student to gain the level of practical skills in qualitative and quantitative social science research methods that might be expected at this level.

3. The programme is too heavily informed by social work and students have inadequate opportunity to deepen their understanding of core topics/issues in social policy, with option courses being drawn from other disciplines.

4. The process, aims and objectives of the placement are inadequately spelt out.

5. Academic staff are not taking up opportunities for development especially in teaching and learning, or staff exchange, and most are not publishing in international peer-reviewed outlets.

6. The delivery of the programme relies on a small number of staff and there is too great a reliance on one member of staff to deliver a significant proportion of the core.

7. Too few of the staff identify with social policy as their core discipline.

8. The office accommodation provided for academic staff is inadequate.

9. Inadequate systematic provision is made for supporting students with learning disabilities including formalised systems for making appropriate adjustments to learning and teaching methods and assessments for them as well as for students living with physical/sensory disabilities.

10. Twenty-eight per cent of students admitted in the first four cohorts have failed to complete the programme.

11. Students generally do not take up the opportunity of student mobility because they are in paid employment or have family responsibilities.
12. Feedback on the programme is not collected systematically from graduates or social partners and qualitative feedback is not collected from students.

V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *Social Policy* (state code – 621L40001) at Vilnius University is given **a positive** evaluation.

Study programme assessment in points by evaluation areas.

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation of an area in points*
1.	Programme aims and learning outcomes	2
2.	Curriculum design	2
3.	Teaching staff	3
4.	Facilities and learning resources	3
5.	Study process and students' performance assessment	3
6.	Programme management	2
	Total:	**15**

*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.

Grupės vadovas: Team leader:	Prof. dr. Turo Virtanen
Grupės nariai: Team members:	Prof. dr. Pamela Abbott
	Dr. Hanna Mamzer
	Mr. Rimantas Dumčius
	Mr. Eimantas Kisielius

VILNIAUS UNIVERSITETO PIRMOS PAKOPOS STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS
SOCIALINĖ POLITIKA **(VALSTYBINIS KODAS – 621L40001) 2014-11-05**
EKSPERTINIO VERTINIMO IŠVADŲ NR. SV4-517 IŠRAŠAS

<...>

VI. APIBENDRINAMASIS ĮVERTINIMAS

Vilniaus universiteto studijų programa *Socialinė politika* (valstybinis kodas – 621L40001) vertinama **teigiamai**.

Eil. Nr.	Vertinimo sritis	Srities įvertinimas, balais*
1.	Programos tikslai ir numatomi studijų rezultatai	2
2.	Programos sandara	2
3.	Personalas	3
4.	Materialieji ištekliai	3
5.	Studijų eiga ir jos vertinimas	3
6.	Programos vadyba	2
	Iš viso:	**15**

* 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)

<...>

V. SANTRAUKA

Socialinė politika yra antrosios pakopos studijų programa, įgyvendinama Vilniaus universiteto Filosofijos fakultete. Tai yra pirmasis šios programos išorės vertinimas.

Pagrindinės teigiamos programos savybės:

1. Ši programa sukurta nustatytiems darbo rinkos poreikiams tenkinti; programos sandara, tikslai ir numatomi studijų rezultatai padeda rengti studentus šiai nišai.

2. Didelis dėmesys šioje programoje skiriamas praktiniam rengimui, praktikos atlikimas yra studijų programos dalis.

3. Pagal šią programą studentai rengiami dalyvauti šiuolaikiniuose debatuose socialinės politikos tema iš tarpdisciplininės perspektyvos.

4. Šios programos studentai yra mokomi suprasti Europos ir pasaulio lyginamąją socialinę politiką.

5. Dėstytojai yra atsidavę, energingi; jie padeda studentams, aktyviai dalyvauja moksliniuose tyrimuose ir profesinėje veikloje.

6. Dėstytojai turi galimybę dalyvauti šalies ir tarptautinėse konferencijose, aktyviai dalyvauja profesinėse asociacijose.

7. Dėstytojų kvalifikacija nuolat tikrinama; už gerus veiklos rezultatus dėstytojams gali būti atlyginta.

8. Metodinių išteklių pakanka šios programos poreikiams tenkinti. Studentams yra prieinama metodinė medžiaga, be to jie gauna pakankamą pagalbą, įskaitant dėstytojų suteikiamą grįžtamąjį ryšį apie jų studijų rezultatus.

9. Universitetas vykdo fiziškai neįgalių studentų rėmimo politiką, beveik visa fizinė aplinka pritaikyta invalidų vežimėliams.

10. Programos dėstymo tvarkaraštis sudarytas taip, kad atitiktų dirbančių ir besimokančių studentų poreikius.

11. Šios programos absolventai sugeba susirasti tinkamą darbą, o socialiniai partneriai patvirtina, kad buvusieji studentai turi reikiamus įgūdžius ir gebėjimus.

12. Į Programos komitetą įeina vienas studentas ir vienas socialinis partneris. Studentų grįžtamasis ryšys pateikiamas naudojant Universiteto kompiuterinę sistemą.

Pagrindiniai neigiami šios programos elementai:

13. Programa yra siaura, nepakankamai apimanti pagrindines socialinės politikos sritis, kad studentai galėtų kritiškai vertinti socialinės politikos problemas šiuolaikinėje visuomenėje.

14. Programa nesuteikia studentams tokių praktinių įgūdžių taikyti kokybinius ir kiekybinius socialinių mokslų tyrimo metodus, kokių būtų galima tikėtis iš šios studijų pakopos programos studentų.

15. Programoje pateikiama pernelyg daug informacijos apie socialinį darbą, tad studentai neturi pakankamai galimybių gilinti pagrindinių socialinės politikos temų / dalykų žinias, o pasirinkamieji dalykai yra iš kitų disciplinų.

16. Nepakankamai suformuluotas praktikos procesas, tikslai ir uždaviniai.

17. Dėstytojai nepasinaudoja galimybe tobulintis, ypač pedagogikos srityje, dalyvauti darbuotojų mainų programose, daugelis neskelbia publikacijų tarptautiniuose recenzuojamuose leidiniuose.

18. Šią programą dėsto per mažai dėstytojų, vienam darbuotojui skirtas pernelyg didelis pagrindinio dalyko krūvis.

19. Pernelyg mažai dėstytojų, kuriems socialinė politika yra pagrindinė jų disciplina.

20. Dėstytojams skirta per mažai patalpų.

21. Nenustatyta tinkama studentų su mokymosi negalia, taip pat ir fizinių ir (arba) sensorinių sutrikimų turinčių studentų rėmimo sistema, įskaitant oficialią atitinkamo mokymo ir mokymosi metodų pritaikymo ir vertinimo tvarką.

22. 28 proc. studentų, priimtų per pirmuosius ketverius metus, nebaigė šios programos studijų.

23. Studentai dažniausiai nepasinaudoja studentų judumo galimybe, nes dirba pagal darbo sutartį arba turi šeiminių įsipareigojimų.

24. Įgyvendinant šią programą, nėra sistemingai renkama absolventų ar socialinių partnerių grįžtamoji informacija, o iš studentų negaunamas kokybinis grįžtamasis ryšys.

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III. REKOMENDACIJOS

1. Programos grupė turėtų užmegzti vaisingus ryšius su kituose Europos universitetuose socialinės politikos magistrantūros programas dėstančių patyrusių dėstytojų kolektyvais, kad gebėtų užtikrinti savo programos tarptautinį patikimumą.

2. Programos grupė turėtų persvarstyti šią programą ir užtikrinti pagrindinių socialinės politikos dalykų, praktinio mokymo ir kitų giminingų pasirenkamųjų dalykų pusiausvyrą.

3. Reikėtų skubiai persvarstyti su baigiamuoju darbu susijusią programos dalį ir dėstymą, siekiant užtikrinti, kad visiems studentams tinkamai vadovautų specialistas ir kad bendras studento krūvis baigiamajam darbui rengti, rašyti ir apsiginti būtų ne mažesnis nei 30 ECTS kreditų. Tai reikėtų padaryti nekeičiant *Mokslinio tyrimo praktikos* (praktikos), kuri, ekspertų grupės nuomone, yra viena iš programos stiprybių.

4. Programos grupė turėtų persvarstyti studijų turinį, užtikrindama, kad jis būtų orientuotas į socialinę politiką, o ne į socialinį darbą.

5. Studijų turinį reikėtų persvarstyti siekiant užtikrinti, kad studentai giliai suvoktų socialinės politikos objektą ir įgytų aukštesnio lygio gebėjimų atlikti kokybinius ir kiekybinius tyrimus.

6. Reikėtų persvarstyti visus dalykus ir užtikrinti, kad jie verčia studentus domėtis naujausiais pasiekimais ir klasikiniais debatais to dalyko temomis, skatina studentus domėtis tarptautine literatūra socialinės politikos temomis.

7. Kitokį išsilavinimą turintiems studentams reikėtų pasiūlyti privalomą parengiamąjį socialinės politikos kursą (dalyką) arba toks įvadas turėtų būti pateiktas pirmąjį semestrą atskiru dalyku.

8. Fakultetas turėtų skirti daugiau kabinetų dėstytojams.

9. Reikėtų padidinti šios programos dėstytojų skaičių, kad jie galėtų išeiti mokslinių atostogų, ir sumažinti per didelę priklausomybę nuo vieno darbuotojo.

10. Darbuotojai turėtų apsvarstyti, kaip pasinaudoti Europos duomenų rinkiniais atliekant mokslinius tyrimus, kad sumažintų tyrimų finansavimo būtinybę ir kad turėtų galimybę atlikti lyginamuosius tyrimus.

11. Reikėtų parengti mokslinių tyrimų strategiją, o akademiniam personalui padėti skelbti publikacijas įvairiuose šaltiniuose, įskaitant tarptautinius recenzuojamus žurnalus.

12. Reikėtų apsvarstyti galimybę taikyti ištęstines šios programos studijas, kad apmokamą darbą dirbantys studentai galėtų pakankamai įsitraukti į šią programą.

13. Absolventų ir socialinių partnerių grįžtamoji informacija apie programą turėtų būti renkama nuolat ir sistemingai.

14. Studentams turėtų būti suteikta galimybė teikti kokybinį grįžtamąjį ryšį apie programą. Šio ryšio dėka studentai galėtų teikti savo pastabas apie programą apskritai ir apie atskirus dalykus.

15. Reikėtų apsvarstyti galimybę daugiau bendrauti su alumnais.

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Paslaugos teikėjas patvirtina, jog yra susipažinęs su Lietuvos Respublikos baudžiamojo kodekso 235 straipsnio, numatančio atsakomybę už melagingą ar žinomai neteisingai atliktą vertimą, reikalavimais.

Vertėjos rekvizitai (vardas, pavardė, parašas)