



**RE-ACCREDITATION OF COLLEGE OF SAFETY**

**Date of the site visit:  
May 23, 2012**

**July 2012**

## **COMPOSITION OF THE EXPERT PANEL**

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# INTRODUCTION

## *Short description of the evaluated institution*

The College of Safety was founded by two legal entities. It inherited study programmes of the former Technical Academy for Work Safety in Zagreb, which was founded in 1963, and ended its work in 1986. This school carried out four-year (8 semesters) professional diploma study (with the acquired occupational title of graduated engineer in safety) and one-and-a-half-year (3 semesters) professional postgraduate study of safety (with the acquired occupational title of Master of Arts in safety). From 2005, a three-year professional study of safety has been carried out (180 ECTS points) and a specialist graduate professional study of safety (60 ECTS points) according to the 3+1 model.

Along with Zagreb, the study is also carried out in the town of Split (professional study from 2007 and specialist graduate professional study from 2009). There are two study programmes which are carried out, with specialisation in the end of the study. As a mean of logistics support to a study of safety, two new units were founded in 2007: the Centre for high-school education of adults and the Centre for Electronic education. For the organisation and carrying out of the professional and specialist study of safety in the field of work safety, fire protection and environment protect, the College of Safety was granted the Certificate for quality management according to EN ISO 9001 in 2002.

The study programmes at the College are interdisciplinary in the way that they partly arise from the field of technical sciences and the field of interdisciplinary technical science.

At the professional study of safety, in the period from 2005/2006 to 2010/2011 academic year, 2.882 students have been enrolled, out of which 437 finished the study up to date. The average pass rate in this period is 88 %, and the average grade at the study is 3.2. In the last three years, at the Specialist professional study, 555 students enrolled, out of which 200 students or more than 36 % finished the study.

## ***The Work of the Expert Panel***

For its work the panel drew upon the self-evaluation report, prepared by the College of Safety, Zagreb. They carried out a site visit on 23rd May 2012. During the visit they saw the premises and physical resources and held meetings with the following groups:

- Management (manager, dean, vice-dean for education, secretary, headmasters of education centers, head of studies, coordinator for mobility and international relations)
- The Self-Evaluation Group;
- The QA Committee
- Teachers
- Teaching Assistants
- Students
- Heads of Study Programmes (professional and specialist graduate professional study of safety)
- Coordinator for mobility and international cooperation

They also examined the facilities and the classrooms, visited a few classes, in one of which they held a brief question and answer session with the students.

# DETAILED ANALYSIS BASED ON STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR RE-ACCREDITATION

## ***1) Management of the Higher Education Institution and Quality Assurance***

- 1.1. The section of the mission statement that sets out the institution's mission is relatively brief but it nevertheless clearly identifies the institution as one of higher education, professional and scientific research in business safety for the Republic of Croatia (upon the teachers' initiative, the procedure on issuing Ordinance on Scientific and Professional activities was started). The mission emphasises the institution's role as a higher education teaching institution with distinctive high quality programmes as well as life-long learning. The institution recognises its distinctiveness as being the best such faculty, focusing on business safety in Croatia and it draws a high proportion of its students from other regions of the country. The institution carries out appropriate strategic planning in developing its position and defining its vision, goals and strategy in line with its mission and they have a strategy for 2011-2015 and a report for the first year. However, the engagement with its stakeholders in this process is well developed and clearly formalised. It is recommended therefore that the institution continues with active involvement of all its shareholders.
- 1.2. The institution has developed effective organizational structures and processes and has formalized them in its legal documents. Currently the institution has relevant legal documents that set out formally its organisational structure.
- 1.3. The study programmes offered by the institution are aligned with its mission of providing higher and professional education related to safety. The study programmes are also appropriately aligned with the Bologna reform.
- 1.4. Study programmes are aligned with the Baseline of the Croatian Qualification Network.

- 1.5. The institution has involved all types of internal activities and it has positioned itself towards external stakeholders. It efficiently implements quality assurance systems and it continuously enhances quality of its study programmes.
- 1.6. The institution has implemented formal mechanisms for the monitoring and improvement of the quality of its teaching and the feedback from the monitoring is fully provided to the students or members of faculty. It is recommended that a formal system of regular feedback of quality monitoring, especially from the student survey, is to be constantly monitored together with staff and students.
- 1.7. In line with its mission, the institution has established formal rules for the highest level of ethical behaviour in its teaching and research activity, but so far it is too early to form a view as to how effectively they are operating.
- 1.8. The staff and the students are not fully acquainted with the rules for ethical behaviour, so there is still room for additional improvement, to put these rules in the electronic version, to have the student council be more involved in checking the students' claims.

## ***2) Study Programmes***

- 2.1. The enrolment quotas are determined by the needs of the business safety and work protection market needs and by the employment opportunities. Also, the enrolment quotas are justified by the need of society. At present the information about these needs and opportunities is monitored on a monthly basis, so the institution believes that its enrolment quotas are meeting real market potential.
- 2.2. The enrolment quotas are in line with the institutional resources for quality teaching and the analysis of pass rate. The team learned that the institution is working constantly on planning the enrolment quotas in a real labour market's needs. This would support quality teaching and be in line with pass rates. Also, institution has established regulations for review and recognition of prior learning and qualifications.

- 2.3. Student learning outcomes at the level of a study programme are set by the teachers and are clearly communicated to the students. ***Since students are not aware of the possibilities abroad, recommendation is to students should be informed about the learning outcomes that can be used in the European Union.***
- 2.4. The teachers have some choice in the ways in which the students' learning is assessed and make sure that this relates appropriately to the learning outcomes and represents the full range of learning being assessed. Teachers at a study programme ensure that the assessment of student learning, regardless of its modality, is aligned with the stated learning outcomes.
- 2.5. Appropriate arrangements are in place to calculate the allocation of ECTS credits so that it reflects the work load of the students. The students generally understand the arrangements for the allocation of credits.
- 2.6. The content and quality of each study programme conforms to the internationally recognised standards in a way that the qualifications can be internationally recognised. Once they complete their programmes, the students are provided with a certificate accompanied by a diploma supplement document. The panel checked several final theses and we didn't find any abstract in English, ***so recommendation is to introduce learning outcomes that are more comparable with the EU.***
- 2.7. Teachers select teaching strategies that are appropriate to the nature of the material being learned, responsive to various students learning styles and encouraging students to be autonomous, responsible learners. A range of different teaching methods is used and all learning materials are available on-line. The approach to e-learning is well supported by a well-developed platform although the approach to e-learning needs further development.
- 2.8. The library is part of the Faculty of Naval Engineering. They implement e-learning system (Moodle) and they have video surveillance. But there is only Power Point and

materials as part of e-learning, so institution is preparing for the next step.  
**Recommendation: continue with that step.**

- 2.9. Students have some opportunities to experience practical applications on campus in the form of a practice kitchen for hospitality students and in internships. However, the number of internships available is relatively limited. ***It is recommended that the institution develops and expands its links with domestic and international industry to provide better opportunities for student practice. They could get a better result if they had a stronger connection with the community, with student mobility offering more internships.***
- 2.10. The institution has defined and adopted formal processes for the proposal, approval and implementation of new study programmes and has appropriate arrangements in place for the development, innovation and improvements of programmes. Students can propose improvements, but the most influential body regarding the teaching plans are the government and the law which are influencing different programs. There is some stakeholder involvement in these processes but this is relatively limited and not formalised. ***We recommend strengthening stakeholder involvement in programme approval and development. Also, students should be allowed to deliver more suggestions to the student council and with closer international cooperation the programs will be more recognized.***

### **3. Students**

- 3.1. The information packages (web pages, brochures, etc.) available to potential students clearly inform them about the level of the programmes, qualifications and academic titles as well as possibilities for further education and employment. Application for enrolment is made via the Croatian Agency for Science and Higher Education which publishes their study programmes and a call for enrolment is made in the press and on the web pages of the institution. The web pages and printed material provide information about the programmes, modules, courses of study and academic titles.

- 3.2. Based on the *state matura*, the admissions criteria and procedures are publicly stated and consistently applied. Their effectiveness in predicting student success is regularly reviewed. The performance of students in terms of pass rates on the professional programmes, a higher proportion of who come from vocational schools, is lower than those from the undergraduate studies who are more likely to come from grammar schools.
- 3.3. The competences of applicants evaluated upon admission are partly implemented and aligned with the demands and expectations in the future career if the graduates. The majority of students are working somewhere (army, police). Among other comments, chemistry professor some teachers from non-core subjects said they had to start courses from the basics due to low level of students' foreknowledge. ***Recommendation: establish some pre-courses.***
- 3.4. The institution offers counselling and mentorship to the students, including a personal tutor system but this is not fully recognised by the students. Students have counselling and mentorship but only in the final year so institution needs to improve field of mentorship activities. ***It is recommended that the institution gives more attention to explaining its support system to the students and encouraging them to use it to their advantage and to start mentorship at the earlier stage.***
- 3.5. The institution supports the students in early stage of implementation, offering only English for technicians and soccer. They don't have a special room for students. They have some internal mentorship. ***Recommendation: establish some space for students, for extracurricular activities and support them by giving teacher's support and more information on activities.***
- 3.6. The institution partly cares and raises the level of the student standard. ***Recommendation is to continue with started activities regarding student standard, according to what they implemented at the dislocated space in Split.***

- 3.7. The institution fully supports the work of the Student Council and students are satisfied with the outcome (students' rights, participation in problem solving, etc.). With student membership of the deliberative committees of the institution, appropriate opportunities are provided for the students to participate in decision making processes and in the resolution of matters affecting their experience.
- 3.8. The institution publishes its methods and procedures for student assessments and uses various method for students monitoring, having this issues fully implemented.
- 3.9. The institution partly keeps statistics on the employability of its graduates. Although the institution gains information about employment of graduates from connections with professional associations and surveys, the amount of information that the institution has about the employability of its graduates is relatively limited. ***They started recently with this activity and our recommendation is keep the record about the alumni individually in e-data base.***
- 3.10. The institution is in early stage of implementing contacts with alumni. They recently established alumni association so ***recommendation is to inform students about what alumni are, and make networking between present students and the alumni.***
- 3.11. The institution fully ensures that students have appropriate opportunities to participate in its decision-making processes and into the resolution of matters affecting their experience.
- 3.12. Public is not fully informed about what they do and lots of companies don't understand what their students have to do and are educated for. ***Our recommendation is to continue with contacts with the association of entrepreneurs and managers, to upgrade the level of public understanding.***
- 3.13. Students can fully express their opinion and proposals for improvement. Students agree that their proposals are accepted by the school officials and teachers.

- 3.14. Students are not fully informed about the measures implemented on the basis of their suggestions and opinions, so they don't get full feedback. **Recommendation is to broaden the feedback to students..**

#### **4. Teachers**

- 4.1. The number and qualifications of the teachers are adequate (26 out of 36 employees are teaching staff) and in line with strategic goals of the institution.
- 4.2. The institution carries out a good policy for the growth and development of human resources. Notably it encourages and supports staff to gain international experiences and to attend conferences linked to their areas of teaching and research. It has also supported staff exchanges with a number of international universities, but there is still room for improvement. The institution doesn't have a position strictly devoted to the human resources management. **Recommendation is to have at least one person or a department fully dedicated to staff development.**
- 4.3. Given the number of students recruited each year the institution employs sufficient full-time teachers (as well as part-time teachers) to meet the needs of the teaching programmes and maintain quality.
- 4.4. The ratio between students and full-time teachers is optimal and it maintains prescribed requirements of 30:1 ratio **Recommendation is to keep the set ratio.**
- 4.5. The institution has well-developed policies for its teaching staff. The actions include staff development for teaching staff to attend international conferences. Recommendation is to be more internationally active, not in the region but outside to ensure their assistants more options for learning and improvement. Support for non-teaching staff mainly amounts to briefing sessions by teaching staff. **It is recommended that greater attention is given to ensuring that non-teaching staff have opportunities to keep up to date with key developments in their field of work. It is also recommended that plans for internationalisation are continued.**

- 4.6. The institution's procedures for promotion and other advancement by the teachers are appropriately developed, understood and accepted. They are implemented in a fair and consistent manner and there are opportunities to appeal.
- 4.7. The policies governing the assignment of teachers' workload provide for a fair and equitable distribution of effort and include teaching, mentorship and student consultations.
- 4.8. The institution is alert to the needs of teachers to devote time to their teaching duties and that this is not compromised by commitments external to the institution. Such external commitments are only agreed on an exceptional basis.

## ***5. Scientific and Professional Activity***

- 5.1. The institution has fully implemented policies in place for existing and planned research activities. These appropriately set priorities in keeping with the mission and strategic plan. It is clearly important for the institution's strategic plan to be in line with that its mission and established procedures for conducting research plans.
- 5.2. The institution has fully implemented appropriate mechanisms to ensure the efficient operation of its professional and research activities.
- 5.3. In planning and implementing its research agenda the institution is developing good links both in Croatia and abroad (they cooperate with Novi Sad, with the Croatian Safety Engineers Association, etc.) It is necessary to continue and develop cooperation with partners abroad, both with individual institutions and with groupings. ***The institution is recommended to continue in its efforts to realise its plans for national and international cooperation.***
- 5.4. While the importance of research is clearly in evidence in the institution's mission and there is a broad awareness among the academic staff of the importance of research, ***it is***

*recommended that the institution makes efforts to encourage teachers to publish quality papers in international (e.g. English language) academic journals.*

## **6. International Cooperation and Mobility**

- 6.1. The institution is in early stage of facilitating and promoting mobility of students from other higher education institutions. It has arrangements for acknowledging ECTS credits gained by incoming students but actually the inward mobility of students from other Croatian higher education institutions is very limited. This low level of inward mobility partly reflects the fact that it is not highly promoted and there may be other factors that mitigate against transfer. ***The institution should encourage and facilitate inward mobility including offering more provision in English language and attracting more regular foreign guest lecturers, continue with Erasmus, with activities that they started and go towards the European direction.***
- 6.2. The students do not have any opportunities to take some proportion of their studies abroad. Institution should start with it, contact institutions abroad and provide additional support in foreign language for students interested in this opportunity. ***The institution has to set up a number of bilateral agreements. It is recommended that the institution starts to develop the opportunities which could lead to more students benefiting from international experience.***
- 6.3. The extent of international cooperation and mobility of teachers is in early stage of implementation. The institute provides support and encouragement for this, but so far only one teacher said that he did some lectures in Tuzla (Bosnia), some were in Slovenia and Serbia, but not further exchanges. ***We recommend giving particular attention to this issue.***
- 6.4. The institution is a member of ENETOSH network - European network for Education and Training in Occupational Safety and Health. ***The institution should continue with this activity, broadening contacts established through professional networking.***

- 6.5. The opportunities for attracting students from abroad at present are fairly limited because only very limited parts of the programmes, confined to electives, are delivered in English or in a language other than Croatian. The quality of the resources, including student accommodation, also acts as a constraint on attracting international students. ***The institution should offer a greater proportion of its programmes in English in order to attract international students.***
- 6.6. The College of Safety is not actively involved in the EU Lifelong Learning Programme. ***The institution should define and explore opportunities for cooperation in the EU LLL programme.***
- 6.7. The institution had developed initial number of other forms of international cooperation by, for example, welcoming guest foreign lecturers, visits by foreign student groups, etc., however it is insufficient to make the initiative of cooperation appear defined and compact. ***The institution should define the programs with even more extensive forms of international cooperation and have students and teachers involved on all levels..***

## **7. Resources, Administration, Space, Equipment and Finance**

- 7.1. Many of the resources for enrolled students are good. These include the IT resources and the virtual learning environment which provides access to course information. Classrooms and practical work rooms have appropriate equipment. Some of the spaces are limited in size for the number of students. ***The institution should improve the quality and the amount of the study spaces including classrooms and including resources, e.g. install space for the individual and group studying.***
- 7.2. The institution has partly developed rules which regulate the development of non-teaching staff and provide training opportunities in line with the mission of the institution. ***Our recommendation is to continue working to improve working with the non-teaching staff.***
- 7.3. The institution is mostly keeping with its research and teaching agenda by ensuring that laboratory equipment usage protocols comply with recognized international standards

and technical support. This includes IT equipment as well as technical equipment e.g. develop labs for specific needs such as fire protection. Personal protection is good.

- 7.4. The equipment and technical equipment is provided in a manner that is appropriate to its use by students and staff. One of the rooms containing IT equipment is accessible by students on a bookable basis.
- 7.5. The institution collects analyses and uses information about its activities although this could be available and used in a more systematic way to support programmes of improvement. Notably the system for feedback of information to students from the student satisfaction surveys is not well developed. ***It is recommended that information is obtained and used more systematically.***
- 7.6. The library is equipped with up-to-date teaching and learning material and there is an active purchasing programme for the library resources. However, the library space does not meet the students' requirements and it has very limited study area. ***The institution is recommended to review the space allocation to the library and the library budget to ensure that it has adequate supplies of books. It is also recommended to update the library and the labs with the books and the equipment that are up-to-date with technological developments.***
- 7.7. The current ratio of academic to non-academic staff represents an appropriate balance. However, given the existing number of students it means that there is a need for additional engagement by academic staff, in order not to limit their time available for research activities.
- 7.8. Financial stability of the institution is harmonised with its mission and enables all students to graduate from their programmes. Sources of finance and all conditions related to financing are transparent and do not limit institutional autonomy when making decisions about teaching, professional activity and research.

7.9. Institution's own funds are used to improve the quality of teaching in line with its mission and other formal documents.

# **FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE EXPERT PANEL FOR THE ACCREDITATION COUNCIL**

## ***ADVANTAGES (STRONG POINTS)***

### **Resources for Learning**

The learning resources at the College of Safety, Zagreb are good. Teaching staff is good in creating good relations to students and enable them to receive more information needed to understand the topics. Notable among the resources is the availability and access to information technology and the virtual learning environment. The library itself provides a good base in the range of its up-to-date stocks of learning resources although the amount of study space and the supply of multiple texts pose some difficulties.

### **Buildings**

The buildings are well equipped and provide very good environment for learning. The use of lecture spaces is good. Also the overall state of the classrooms shows that they are intensively used and they give good comfort to students while they participate to lectures.

### **Organisational Structure**

The organisational structure of the College of Safety is well fragmented. There are three chairs, four cabinets and two independent departments. There are several accompanying services in each department that contribute to quality enhancement.

### **Support for Academic Staff**

The institution has provided support for the growth and development of academic staff in obtaining international experience, attending conferences linked to their teaching and research, and it has been supporting international staff exchanges. However, an initiative is required both by teachers and students and additional contacts with similar institutions abroad are required, in order to encourage teachers and students mobility further.

## ***DISADVANTAGES (WEAK POINTS)***

### **Support for Students**

The institution provides poor support to the students in their extra-curricular activities. Only football and English for technician is included. In developing such activities institution should support the Student Board.

### **Support for Young Researchers**

The support for young researchers is good, but could be better. This extends from the provision of physical resources to activities to help young researchers in preparing papers. The researchers should also benefit from regular monitoring of their progress and to support for attending conferences, including at international locations. The results of this level of support are demonstrated in comments from the students.

### **International Links**

The institution has just discovered potential in developing international links with a range of institutions and other organisations in Europe and beyond. This includes membership of relevant international bodies as well as staff and student exchange and involvement in international activities such as conferences and meetings.

### **Student-Staff Ratios**

The ratio between students and full-time teachers is optimal and it maintains prescribed requirements, however the requirements towards the teaching staff limit their involvement in professional research activities, and therefore influence on their capacities for encouraging professional and scientific activities by students.

### **Keeping up with up-to-date technologies**

The field of safety is under permanently influenced by the technological development that the institution keeps up with and enables the students to become partly familiar with the up-to-date changes within the profession. However, the possibilities and capacities of technical equipment require constant expansion and development, as well as need for constant upgrading of the library and lab with literature and equipment that is up-to-date with modern safety technology.

# **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF QUALITY**

## **1) Management of the Higher Education Institution and Quality Assurance**

- It is recommended that the institution continues with involvement of its stakeholders. (paragraph 1.1)
- There is still room for additional improvement - the Student Council should be checking the students' claims closer. (paragraph 1.8.)

## **2) Study Programmes**

- It is recommended that the institution ensure that the learning outcomes included in the programme documents focus on the outcomes expected from the students and that they indicate more clearly the levels of outcome. Students should be more informed about the learning outcomes that can be used in the European Union (paragraph 2.3)
- It is recommended that students should be introduced to learning outcomes that are more comparable with those in the EU. (paragraph 2.6)
- It is recommended that stakeholder involvement in programme approval and development is strengthened. (paragraph 2.10)

## **3) Students**

- Due to lack of students' foreknowledge, necessary for successful participation in lectures, it is recommended to organise preparatory lectures (paragraph 3.3)
- It is recommended that the institution improve the standard of the non-academic services offered to the students, including some pre-courses. (paragraph 3.4)
- It is recommended to ensure space for students' extracurricular activities as well as providing of additional support to students by teachers and by providing information on activities (paragraph 3.5.)
- It is recommended to continue with the started activities related to the students' standard, in accordance with the students' needs (paragraph 3.6).

- It is recommended to run more detailed statistics on alumni – individually, in electronic data base (paragraph 3.9)
- It is recommended that the institution informs the students on the alumni and that it strengthens the networking between present students and alumni, for example, by involving the alumni in work with students through internships, projects, etc. (paragraph 3.10)
- The institution is recommended to continue with contacts with the entrepreneurs' and managers' association, in order to have the public informed even better on activities and possibilities by the College of Safety (paragraph 3.12.)
- In order to have the students informed better about the implemented measures based on their suggestions and opinions, it is recommended to provide better feedback of information to students (paragraph 3.14).

#### **4) Teachers**

- It is recommended to name at least one person or to establish a department which will be fully dedicated to staff development – human resources management. (paragraph 4.2)
- It is recommended that the institution maintains the required ratio of 30:1, along with devising the strategic goal (employment or naming the teaching staff, for example) in case of an increase of a number of students, in order to keep the required students-teacher ratio within the set limits. (paragraph 4.4)

#### **5) Scientific and Professional Activity**

- The institution is recommended to continue in its efforts to realise its plans for national and international cooperation. (paragraph 5.3)
- It is recommended that the institution further encourages teachers to publish quality papers in international (e.g. in English language) scientific/professional journals. (paragraph 5.4)

## **6) International Cooperation and Mobility**

- The institution is recommended to encourage and facilitate inward mobility including offering more provision in English language and attracting more regular foreign guest lecturers. The institution should also continue with the Erasmus programme, with the activities that have already been started and continue in the direction towards Europe. (6.1)
- It is recommended that the institution continues to develop the opportunities for more students to benefit from international experience. (paragraph 6.2)
- The institution is recommended to place the emphasis of its activities in the upcoming period on enhancing the level of quantity and quality of international cooperation and mobility by teachers, which is now in its initial phase of implementation. Although there are individual experiences of lectures abroad, upon the entrance into the European Union the institution will obtain new opportunities for international cooperation and it is therefore recommended to pay particular attention to this problem. (paragraph 6.3)
- The College of Safety is a member of ENETOSH network - European network for Education and Training in Occupational Safety and Health. The College should continue with this activity, expanding the contacts established through professional networking. (paragraph 6.4)
- It is recommended that the institution moves towards offering a greater proportion of its programmes in English and takes steps to improve the resources offered to international students. It is also necessary to consider student exchange as an important aspect of Croatia's membership in the European Union. It is necessary to introduce courses in English (paragraph 6.5)
- It is recommended that the institution explores opportunities for cooperation in the EU LLL programme. (paragraph 6.6)
- The institution is recommended to continue to develop and extend its international links. (paragraph 6.7)

## **7) Resources, Administration, Space, Equipment and Finance**

- The institution is recommended to improve the quality and the amount of the study spaces including classrooms and accompanying resources. (paragraph 7.1)
- The institution has partly developed policies for non-teaching staff in accordance with the mission of the institution and it is recommended to continue with plans for development of non-teaching staff. (paragraph 7.2)
- It is recommended that the institution enables continuous upgrading of laboratory equipment and protocols for its usage, meeting the accepted international standards, appropriate equipment and technical support. (paragraph 7.3)
- It is recommended that the institution keeps expanding the possibilities and capacities of technical equipment that are available to students and staff. (paragraph 7.4).
- The institution is recommended to revise the allocation of the library space as well as the funds intended for the library, with a recommendation for permanent upgrades of the library and lab with books and equipment that is up-to-date with technological developments. (paragraph 7.7)
- The institution is recommended to keep the optimal ratio of academic and non-teaching staff as its permanent task, in order not to, considering the present number of students, experience limitations related to the time that the academic staff is given for research and other projects. (paragraph 7.7)