



**REPORT
of the Expert Panel
on the
RE-ACCREDITATION OF
The Catholic University of Croatia**

**Date of the site visit:
28th and 29th April 2015**

April, 2015

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INTRODUCTION

This report on the re-accreditation of the Catholic University of Croatia was written by the Expert Panel appointed by the Agency for Science and Higher Education, on the basis of the self-evaluation of the institution, the supporting documentation and a visit to the institution.

The re-accreditation procedure performed by the Agency for Science and Higher Education (ASHE), a public body listed in EQAR (*European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education*) and a full member of ENQA (*European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education*), is obligatory once in five years for all higher education institutions working in the Republic of Croatia, in line with the Act on Quality Assurance in Higher Education.

The Expert Panel is appointed by the ASHE Accreditation Council, an independent expert body, to perform an independent peer-review-based evaluation of the institution and their study programmes.

The report contains:

- a brief analysis of the institutional advantages and disadvantages,
- a list of good practices found at the institution,
- recommendations for institutional improvement and measures to be implemented in the following period (and checked within a follow-up procedure), and
- detailed analysis of the compliance to the Standards and Criteria for Re-Accreditation.

The members of the expert panel were:

- Prof. Andrea Gaggioli, Ph.D. Psych, Dipartimento di Psicologia, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Italian Republic (chair)
- Prof. Kurt Villads Jensen, Department of History, University of Stockholm, Kingdom of Sweden
- Prof. Dr. Katrin Boeckh, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München/Abteilung Geschichte Ost- und Südosteuropas; Institut für Ost- und Südosteuropaforschung Regensburg, Federal Republic of Germany
- Prof. Gergely Rosta, Ph.D., Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster, Exzellenzcluster Religion und Politik, Federal Republic of Germany
- Ivona Vratarić, student, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb, Republic of Croatia.

In the analysis of the documentation, site visit and writing of the report the Panel was supported by:

- Iva Žabarović, coordinator, Agency for Science and Higher Education
- Viktorija Juriša, support to the coordinator, Agency for Science and Higher Education
- Lida Lamza, interpreter at the site visit and report translator, Agency for Science and Higher Education.

During the visit to the Institution the Expert Panel held meetings with the representatives of the following groups:

- The Management
- The Working Group that compiled the Self-Evaluation report and representatives of the Board for Quality Assurance
- Students, i.e., a self-selected set of students present at the interview
- Teaching assistants and postdoctoral fellows
- Full-time teachers
- Leaders of research projects and Vice-Rector for Science.

The Expert Panel also had a tour of the Student Services, Secretariat, IT Classroom, Library, University Chaplaincy, Laboratory for Psychological Research and classrooms at the Catholic University of Croatia, where they held a brief question and answer session with the students who were present.

Upon the completion of the re-accreditation procedure, the Accreditation Council renders its opinion on the basis of this Re-accreditation Report, the Assessment of Quality of the higher education institution and the Report of Fulfilment of Quantitative Criteria acquired from the Agency's information system.

Once the Accreditation Council renders its opinion, the Agency issues an Accreditation Recommendation by which the Agency recommends to the Minister of Science, Education and Sports to:

1. **issue a confirmation on compliance** with the requirements for performing higher education activities or parts of activities (renew the licence),
2. **deny the license** for performing the higher education activities or parts of activities to the higher education institution, or
3. **issue a letter of recommendation** for the period up to three (3) years in which period the higher education institution should make the necessary improvements. The letter of recommendation may include suspension of student enrolment for the defined period.

The Accreditation Recommendation also includes an Assessment of Quality of the higher education institution as well as recommendations for quality development.

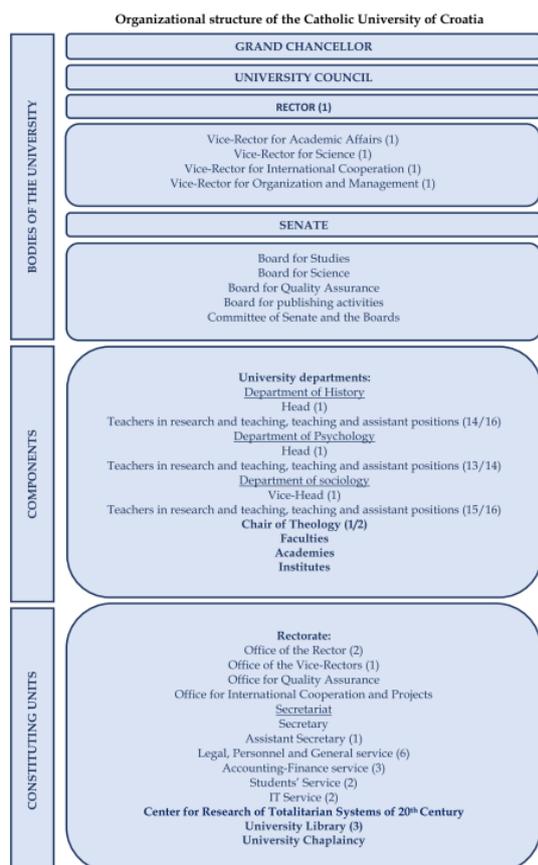
SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE EVALUATED INSTITUTION

NAME OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION: Catholic University of Croatia

ADDRESS: Ilica 242, 10000 Zagreb

NAME OF THE HEAD OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION: Professor Željko Tanjić, PhD

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE:



LIST OF STUDY PROGRAMMES:

Undergraduate university studies:

- History
- Psychology
- Sociology

Graduate university studies:

- History, Specialization: Antiquity and Medieval History

Contemporary History

- Psychology
- Sociology, Specialization: Management and Public Polices

NUMBER OF STUDENTS:

- 438 full-time students

NUMBER OF TEACHERS:

- full-time: 19
- part time: 12
- external associates: 20

NUMBER OF SCIENTISTS: 19

TOTAL BUDGET (in kunas): 22 102 741

MSES FUNDING (percentage): 39.8%

OWN FUNDING (percentage): 11.80%

INCOME FROM THE FOUNDER FOR THE COSTS OF LOAN REPAYMENTS (percentage): 41.30%

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION:

The idea of starting a Catholic university in Croatia exists as long as the independent Croatian state. The Republic of Croatia became independent after the collapse of Yugoslavia in 1991 which instantly, within cultural, ecclesiastic and intellectual circles in Croatia, led to the thought of initiating a Catholic university. But the war for Croatia's independence, post-war reconstruction and difficult post-war economic and social condition postponed that idea until the middle of the new millennium's first decade.

The Catholic University of Croatia is one of the youngest Croatian universities which was established by the Decree on the Establishment of Catholic University of Croatia No. 1273/2006. (hereinafter: Decree on the Establishment) of Cardinal Josip Bozanić, Archbishop and Metropolitan of Zagreb on June 3, 2006. Since The Catholic University of Croatia is a young university, its' development and main events will be divided in two stages: establishment (2004 - 2010) and the beginning of the activities of the University (2010 until today) indicated in the following sequence of crucial events:

- On the XXIX. Plenary Session of the Croatian Conference of Bishops in Zadar, October 12, 2004 a resolution establishing a Catholic university in Zagreb was adopted, and the Archdiocese of Zagreb was entrusted with the mission of effectuating this initiative, under the patronage of The Croatian Conference of Catholic Bishops.
- H.E. Cardinal Josip Bozanić, Archbishop of Zagreb founded a Commission for establishing the Catholic university in Zagreb on January 6, 2005 with a task to design and

prepare the establishment of Catholic University in Zagreb, and on January 7 of the same year, he appointed five Commission members. The Commission completed its assignment on June 3, 2006 when the Archbishop of Zagreb established The Catholic University of Croatia by the Decree on the Establishment and Instruction on the Establishment of Catholic University of Croatia No. 1273-2/2006 (further in the text: Instruction on the Establishment), and the Commission for founding the Catholic University in Zagreb became the Commission of The Catholic University of Croatia which was given the task to prepare the studies for the beginning of University's operation.

- The Catholic University of Croatia was founded by the Decree on the Establishment on June 3, 2006 and Ivan Šaško, PhD, Full Professor, a professor at the Catholic Faculty of Theology, University of Zagreb, is appointed to the position of Acting Rector.
- In 2008 University received accreditation for conducting studies of psychology, history and sociology from the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, with the condition of uniform employment during five years.
- Classes in the undergraduate university study program of history started in the 2010/2011 academic year.
- In September 2011 changes in the University management occurred. The founder appointed Željko Tanjić, PhD, Full Professor, as the new Acting Rector, in place of msgr. Ivan Šaško, PhD, who in the meantime became an auxiliary bishop of Zagreb.
- In 2011, the procedure for receiving accreditation for conducting the study of nursing was initiated. The approval for holding the study program is currently underway, and the program needs to be adjusted to the new amendments of law.
- Classes in the undergraduate university studies of psychology and sociology started in the 2012/2013 academic year.
- Classes in the graduate university study of history started in the 2013/2014 academic year.
- The Ministry of science, education and sports issued full accreditations for conducting studies to the University in March 2013.
- In 2014 first Bachelors at the undergraduate university study of history were promoted.
- In 2014 the study of Communicology was initiated, which is in the process of accreditation.
- In July 2014 The University received accreditation to conduct research activities in the field of humanities and social sciences.

CONCLUSIONS OF THE EXPERT PANEL

ADVANTAGES OF THE INSTITUTION

1) Management of the University

- a) The Catholic University of Croatia has a strong identity, which is well-reflected by its foundational values and principles. The way in which the strategic plan was developed is in line with the mission of the institution, which aims at forming young people, fostering the development of excellence in teaching and science, as well as preserving and transferring knowledge for the welfare of the society.
- b) The management, academic and administrative staff at all levels demonstrate high level of competence, commitment and motivation, which are well commensurate to the ambitious goals of the institution.

2) Study programmes

- a) The interdisciplinarity of the study programmes is an asset and well designed to achieve one of the main goals of the University, to create a comprehensive approach to education combining acquirement of knowledge with the formation of personality.
- b) The study programmes are well balanced between mandatory elements and free courses that students can combine in different study programmes.

3) Students

- a) As the number of the students is still growing and they are developing together, teachers and students have a more personal contact and students feel more comfortable to ask questions and help.
- b) Students feel free to complain and their suggestions are taken into account.

4) Teachers

- a) A large part of the teaching staff of the Catholic University of Croatia is made up of young, promising scholars with a huge potential for a young and developing HEI.
- b) The ratio of teachers employed full time to the number of students is quite favourable, allowing for a more personal relationship between teachers and students.

5) Scientific and Professional Activity

- a) The interdisciplinarity of the Catholic University of Croatia combining social science and humanities is certainly among one of its strong points. Interdisciplinarity is one of the basic values of the university, it is academically challenging, and it has demonstrated the ability of attracting devoted and enthusiastic staff and students.
- b) A large proportion of the researchers have received their education or part of their education abroad, and the research staff - also the younger members - are already very well connected internationally.

6) International Cooperation and Mobility

- a) The Catholic University of Croatia distinctively encourages and facilitates students and professors to go on research trips abroad and provides logistic help for them. It also provides a growing space for accommodation for incoming guests.

- b) The Catholic University of Croatia has had the establishment of international networks and contacts as a decisive point from the outset at the agenda, and acknowledges it as a basic principle to exchange knowledge and research results.
- c) The participation of Catholic University of Croatia staff in international conferences and the respective scientific output is remarkable.

7) Resources: Administration, Space, Equipment and Finances

- a) The majority of the facilities including classrooms, laboratories, computer rooms and study places are sufficient and well equipped, providing appropriate learning resources to the enrolled students.
- b) The current financial situation of the Catholic University of Croatia is satisfying and sustainable.

DISADVANTAGES OF THE INSTITUTION

1) Management of the University

- a) The Catholic University of Croatia has very ambitious expansion goals. However, there is a need for defining and implementing a strategy to increase the involvement of stakeholders of the society (e.g., economic players, professional organizations) in the definition and accomplishment of its medium and long-term strategic objectives.
- b) A well-defined public engagement strategy linked to research and teaching, that specifies (i) the activities related to dissemination and co-creation of knowledge in collaboration with communities and interest groups outside the university, and (ii) the amount of efforts, resources and incentives to support these activities, needs also to be developed.
- c) The Catholic University of Croatia has not yet defined effective and efficient mechanisms for promoting, monitoring and improving research quality. Although the panel acknowledges that the accreditation for conducting scientific activity has been received only recently by the institution, there is a need to develop a more comprehensive and integrated research quality plan.

2) Study programmes

- a) The formal structures for involving stakeholders in the development of study programmes are not yet fully developed. It would be important for better adjusting study programmes to the need of the labour market, and for creating networks and connections that will facilitate the students' finding employment after finishing the education.
- b) More teaching in English is necessary to attract foreign students.

3) Students

- a) Students don't have a canteen on the campus where they can use their student card, so they have to spend more money on food and more time and a longer distance to reach another students' canteen, in order to avoid the not-so-healthy food from bakeries.
- b) The Catholic University of Croatia needs to have more developed action plans regarding the offices for psychological and career counselling.

4) Teachers

- a) A significant part of the teachers is employed part time, which is mainly due to the fact that the Catholic University of Croatia is still in an initial phase of development.

- b) The number of full and associate professors employed full time is low with regard to the size of the whole University.
- c) The Catholic University of Croatia has no elaborated policies to provide support for the improvement of teaching competencies and professional skills.
- d) A long-term plan of the development of human resources that is in line with the goals of the Development Strategy of the Catholic University of Croatia until 2020 has not been established yet.

5) Scientific and Professional Activity

- a) The Catholic University of Croatia, established only recently, acknowledges the great importance of recognizing and supporting research. The initializing steps to establish formal structures – the support for mobility of researchers, a competition for research within the university, the establishment of special research centres – still have to end up in an overall research strategy.
- b) The Catholic University of Croatia has not yet decided upon one or more institutional research profile. This is paramount for further developing the university and for continuing to attract high profile researchers.

6) International Cooperation and Mobility

- a) Erasmus+ is still in the first stage of its existence. While the English webpage is still under construction, it is difficult to identify the Catholic University of Croatia as a potential partner for cooperation for foreign institutions.
- b) Although a number of foreign scientists had given lectures and presentations in the Catholic University of Croatia, there is no wider strategy to attract foreign students and teachers.

7) Resources: Administration, Space, Equipment and Finances

- a) The ratio of the non-teaching staff to the teaching employees is low. This results in an insufficient administrative support for the teachers and a relatively large amount of administrative activities for them. The distribution of the administrative activities is not necessarily even among the teachers.
- b) The Library resources are only partially adequate and should be improved.
- c) The Catholic University of Croatia claims, that the current classification of the University as a private one is not in line with the Agreement between the Republic of Croatia and the Holy See, which has a negative impact on the application for publicly funded tenders, and eventually on the entire financial situation and planning of the University.

FEATURES OF GOOD PRACTICE

1. The study programs of the Catholic University of Croatia are fully in line with institutional mission and goals. The quality assurance of teaching activities is well implemented with relevant stakeholders and includes state-of-the art procedures for monitoring and improving teaching quality.
2. The Catholic University of Croatia enables and facilitates mobility of students from other higher education institutions. The procedures, rules and prerequisites are clearly documented on the webpage. Thus, the Catholic University of Croatia enriches the

scientific plurality in Zagreb and in Croatia, offering new approaches to important questions on society, human life and ethics.

3. Course goals and the criteria for assessment are clearly explained to students, and the feedback is extensive and helpful for the students.
4. The Catholic University of Croatia supports and encourages its students to engage in extracurricular activities and offers them help for it.
5. The Catholic University of Croatia is involved in ERASMUS+ program so that students have many of opportunities to go and study abroad. Students from other countries can come to study at this University.
6. Teachers are explicitly encouraged and supported by the Catholic University of Croatia to apply for international scholarships, take part in international conferences and research projects and publish in international scientific journals.
7. The Catholic University of Croatia uses funds from the Founder and from donations to raise the quality of teaching and research equipment, ensuring the possibility to conduct individual research activities by the students, too.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

1. Management of the Higher Education Institution and Quality Assurance

- It is recommended to define and implement a stakeholder engagement strategy to involve stakeholders of the society (e.g., companies and other economic players, funding bodies, professional organizations, etc.) in the definition and accomplishment of medium and long-term objectives of the institution. The stakeholder engagement strategy should:
 - identify relevant society stakeholders (from the private and public sectors, local and international); describe what are the potential benefits expected from the involvement of stakeholders according to the specific objectives included in the Development Strategy of the institution.
 - provide periodic plans to reach and involve these stakeholders; specify which resources, activities and initiatives (e.g. meetings, workshops, conferences, roundtables, cooperation agreements, etc.) will be put in place to support this interaction;
 - identify appropriate procedures to monitor stakeholder engagement (i.e. meeting minutes, survey results' analyses, reports informing stakeholders on outcomes of the procedures, etc.).
- It is recommended to define a public engagement strategy linked to research and teaching, which specifies:
 - planned activities for disseminating and co-creating of knowledge in collaboration with communities and interest groups outside the University;
 - a description of resources and incentives that will be put in place to support these activities;
 - appropriate procedures to monitor the outcomes of public engagement activities.

- It is recommended to define a comprehensive and integrated research quality plan that specifies effective and efficient mechanisms for promoting, monitoring and improving research quality. This should include:
 - a description of procedures for monitoring and analysing scientific productivity/excellence;
 - annual training plans;
 - annual plans for participating in conferences/workshops/seminars;
 - annual publication plans (with set objectives) for each researcher (also including annual meetings with management group/Rector).

2. Study Programmes

- Involve stakeholders in the development and monitoring study programmes, as mentioned in Part 1. "Management structures".
- Establish some formal procedures to ensure comparability concerning the level of marks between the Catholic University of Croatia and other HEI in Croatia, e.g. by including external examiners for a percentage of the exams.

3. Students

- The Catholic University of Croatia should as soon as possible open a students' canteen or at least enable students to use their student card in the restaurant that already exists at the University.
- The Catholic University of Croatia should establish offices for psychological and career guidance for students. To be more distinguished from state universities and therefore more attractive for students, University should provide more practical work for every study programme.

4. Teachers

- It is recommended to increase the ratio of full time teachers to external associates as well as the number of full professors and associate professors employed full time within the scientific staff.
- It is recommended to elaborate a well-defined Human Development Plan that takes into account both the sustainability of the current study programmes and the needs of the new study programmes planned by the Development Strategy of the Catholic University of Croatia.
- It is recommended to establish policies for the professional development and the improvement of teaching skills of the scientific-teaching staff.

5. Scientific and Professional Activity

- There is a necessity for formulating a research strategy and for defining goals and monitoring research projects, as mentioned under Section 1. (Management Structures).

6. International Cooperation and Mobility

- The establishment of an international office could bundle the efforts for logistic help for incoming and outgoing students and teachers.
- The English translation of the homepages would greatly support the presentation of the Croatian Catholic University abroad and offer new possibilities for international cooperation.
- Permanently offered courses in English and other foreign languages would enforce the attractiveness of the Croatian Catholic University for students from abroad.

7. Resources: Administration, Space, Equipment and Finances

- It is recommended to increase the number of non-teaching staff in order to provide more administrative support to the scientific employees, especially with regard to the application for and participation in international research projects.
- The Catholic University of Croatia has a quite modern equipment of laboratory and computer rooms. This is mainly due to the fact that the whole facilities of the University have been set up recently. We recommend keeping this equipment up-to-date in the future, too, which means regular inspections of those equipment, and financial investment into their modernization.
- It is recommended to allocate funds to broadening the access to electronic databases and online readings in the library.

DETAILED ANALYSIS OF INSTITUTIONAL COMPLIANCE TO THE STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR RE-ACCREDITATION

1. Management of the Higher Education Institution and Quality Assurance

1.1. A strategic plan is in place, which includes the necessary elements and appropriate monitoring mechanisms. However, there is a need to increase the involvement of stakeholders from the public and private sectors for the future development and implementation of the strategic plan.

1.2. The Catholic University of Croatia has an adequate organizational structure, documented in relevant legislative documents. The size and number of organizational units is appropriate to the current status of implementation. However, the management structure is only partially adequate because of the relatively small number of managers allocated to key organizational units.

1.3. Not applicable.

1.4. All study programs are fully in line with institutional mission.

1.5. The quality assurance procedures are described by the documents Regulations on Quality Assurance System and Manual on Quality Assurance System. An Office for Quality Assurance has been established and it is fully operational.

1.6. The Catholic University of Croatia has established procedures for monitoring and improving teaching quality. There is evidence of involvement of students and other relevant stakeholders in such procedures.

1.7. The Catholic University of Croatia has not yet defined and implemented effective and efficient mechanisms for promoting, monitoring and improving research quality (although the panel acknowledges that the accreditation for conducting scientific activity has been received only recently by the institution).

1.8. Ethical standards are stipulated in the Ethical Code of Catholic University of Croatia.

2. Study Programmes

2.1. Study programmes are monitored through evaluation surveys, dialogue with students, and statistics concerning participation and grades. Courses are mandatory or elective, which secures a common, uniform content of the study programmes, but also allows for researchers to teach in

their own fields of speciality and deliver truly research-based education. The avowed interdisciplinary profile of the Catholic University of Croatia is expressed also in common courses across department borders.

Study programmes must be approved by the University Senate which has no representatives from external stakeholders. The University council could formulate general guiding lines for study programmes, but nobody has yet been appointed to the council.

Recommendation: That Catholic University of Croatia include external stakeholders in the monitoring of study programmes.

2.2. With the present employment situation in Croatia within the fields of study of Catholic University of Croatia, the enrolment quotas seem justified.

2.3. The present staff covers adequately the need for teaching, and all teachers that the expert panel met were enthusiastic and devoted. A great advantage for Catholic University of Croatia with the present enrolment quotas is that classes are small compared to other universities, and that students get much supervision and feedback which is reflected in the high percentage of students who finish the education within stipulated time.

However, the percentage of permanent, full time staff is small compared to part-time teachers. If Catholic University of Croatia expands with more of the study programmes envisaged in the self-report, more staff must appointed to permanent positions.

Also, more teachers mentioned the burden of administrative tasks. If more students enrol in the future, it will be necessary to expand the administrative staff.

2.4. Learning outcomes are described on Catholic University of Croatia's homepage and accessible to students well before term begins, and presented and discussed with students at the inception of the course.

2.5. Assessment takes into account the attendance of classes, written essays during the course, and final exams. Learning outcomes seem to be clear to both students and teachers, and assessment fully appropriate.

For a new university, it is important not to get the reputation that it is easier to get a high mark there than at an old institution. Assessments are comparable between Catholic University of Croatia and other Croatian universities, which is secured by the fact that a great part of the staff also teaches at the Zagreb University. If however the permanent full time staff at Catholic University of Croatia grows significantly in the coming years, it is recommended to establish some formal procedures to ensure comparability, e.g. by including external examiners for a percentage of the exams.

2.6. Allocation of ECTS credits seems realistic.

2.7. Content of study programs is on level with comparable institutions internationally.

2.8. Teaching methods seem to be varied and appropriate. Some students expressed the opinion that they had to write too many too-short essays instead of fewer, but more profound ones. This was, however, not a general concern among the students.

2.9. Teaching material and supplementary resources are available to students, and new literature is acquired by the library when needed for courses. However, the library is still in need of expanding its holding for covering fully the need for teaching material.

2.10. In some studies, internship and similar is common and integrated, but apparently to a lesser degree within history. Some students suggested more contacts to e.g. archives and museums.

3. Students

3.1. The Catholic University of Croatia has relevant and transparent admission criteria. Criteria and procedures of enrolment are in line with other state universities models and they already made some analyses of correlation between student's success and admission criteria. Although students from vocational schools have lower grade point average at the end of the first year compared to students from gymnasiums, teachers do their best to catch up this distinction. Drop-out rate is acceptable.

3.2. Students have a lot of support from their University to involve in very different extracurricular activities and they find it satisfactorily.

3.3. The Catholic University of Croatia has not yet established offices for psychological and career counselling for students, which has to be done as soon as possible. However, positive is that students have their own teacher and older students mentors, and teachers are willing to answer questions about career and professional development.

3.4. There are internal documents that regulate the knowledge and skills assessment, and students are informed about course assessment and methods of establishing the final grade in a timely manner. Teachers provide numerical, but also other forms of feedback to students on their work. Students have a possibility to complain about their grades and reject them and they use those rights.

3.5. Because of the fact that the Catholic University of Croatia is very young and does not have a lot of students that already finished their education there, the institution did not yet established alumni clubs and does not have a statistic data of their alumni students. However, there are some students which finished bachelor degree program in history and did not continue to study at this university, but there are no information about them. The Catholic University of Croatia should make a concrete plan and actions to establish ways to stay in contact with its former

students and collect statistic data on their employment in order to increase study programme's quality.

3.6. The Catholic University of Croatia has its own web site and other ways to inform public about its study programmes, learning outcomes and employment opportunities. Published information is correct and up to date.

3.7. Students confirmed that they have an opportunity and are encouraged to express their opinions and give suggestions for improvement, they use it and find it implemented in positive changes and problem-solving processes.

3.8. Feedback on their collected opinions and suggestions is provided to students and used for concrete improvements, but it should be published so that everyone can see the possible consequences of a good interaction between students and teachers.

4. Teachers

4.1. Number and qualifications of the scientific-teaching staff are in line with strategic goals of the institution and adequately cover core disciplines. The Catholic University of Croatia should increase the number of qualified full-time teachers, especially with regard to the number of full professors and associate professors to ensure the quality and continuity of teaching and learning on all study programmes.

4.2. The Catholic University of Croatia carries out the policy of growth and development of human resources; however, a long-term plan of the development of human resources that is in line with the goals of the Development Strategy of the Catholic University of Croatia until 2020 has not been established.

4.3. The Catholic University of Croatia takes fully into account the number of full-time teachers, maintaining an optimal ratio between students and full-time teachers.

4.4. The Catholic University of Croatia has no well-developed policies for scientific-teaching staff that ensure their professional development yet. Professional support is provided on an ad-hoc basis.

4.5. Policies governing the assignment of teachers' workload provide for a fair and equitable distribution of effort, including teaching, research, mentorship and student consultations. A reduction of the teaching workload with the aim of increasing working time allocated to research activities would be welcome.

4.6. The Catholic University of Croatia ensures that teaching and research activities of the employed teaching staff are not affected by their external commitments. This is done by the

means of individual permissions for an external commitment, issued by the rector. However, a detailed tabulation of the external workload of the employees was not provided in the self-evaluation report. A systematic record of the external workload of the employees is recommended.

5. Scientific and Professional Activity

5.1. The Catholic University of Croatia does not have a clearly expressed strategic research agenda, and no performance indicators have been defined. There are good and even excellent individual projects on the individual researchers' level, but not on institutional level. The research profile was described in the self-evaluation and during interviews with the expert panel as interdisciplinary, and as building upon the values of the university.

It is recommended that the Catholic University of Croatia defines a limited number of research areas that the institution wants to prioritize, either as a continuation of existing strong research milieus, or as a specific profile of the institution. Societal relevance of humanities, faith and reason and the human factor in hard science were some of the themes that were mentioned during interviews.

It is also recommended that research projects clearly define aims and deliverables that make it possible to evaluate their performance, in order to monitor the project, but also to accumulate knowledge about best practise for the benefit of other projects.

5.2. The Catholic University of Croatia has already established contacts to a broad net of other research institutions and networks, but these should be supplemented and augmented in accordance with the future formulation of a research agenda on the institutional level.

5.3. The research agenda is not clearly defined. However, for the research pursued at present at the University, the number of researchers is sufficient.

5.4. Some of the researchers have contributed significantly to their field internationally. It is not directly the merit of Catholic University of Croatia because they have done so before they came to the university or while also attached to other research institutions, but on the other hand it shows that the Catholic University of Croatia has succeeded in creating an attractive milieu that appeal to high profile researchers, which is a good sign for future development of research.

It is recommended that the Catholic University of Croatia also strives to attract more researchers from outside Croatia, to work at the university for shorter or longer periods.

5.5. Recognition of excellence exists, but informal. There are plans of formalizing it, but these have not yet been implemented.

It is recommended that the Catholic University of Croatia clearly defines criteria for evaluating scientific excellence and establish a procedure for recognizing it.

5.6. At the present stage of the University development, the number of peer reviewed articles is satisfactory.

It is recommended that Catholic University of Croatia establish procedures to support their researchers in publishing, e.g. seminars discussing drafts of articles and similar, but also support for language revision.

5.7. The Catholic University of Croatia has the potentiality for being involved in more projects than is the case at present.

It is recommended that the Catholic University of Croatia continues to build up and strengthen its research, e.g. by collegial and administrative support to writing applications, by inviting staff to sign up as evaluators at international funding bodies, etc.

5.8. The transfer of knowledge outside the Catholic University of Croatia is happening through a number of initiatives, on personal and institutional level. It could, however, be intensified and include more outside institutions than at present.

It is recommended that Catholic University of Croatia establish a representation of external stakeholders in the university's managing structure, e.g. in the Council.

5.9. The expert panel has not received any information that the Catholic University of Croatia were involved in activities that created additional earnings, such as academic counselling, selling of know-how or similar.

5.10. The Catholic University of Croatia has plans for establishing a doctoral study program, but they have not yet been realised.

It is recommended that the Catholic University of Croatia continues to develop plans for establishing a doctoral program, and also explores the possibilities of doing it in collaboration with other institutions, in Croatia or outside.

6. International Cooperation and Mobility

6.1. The Croatian Catholic University enables the mobility of students from other universities by clearly defining the prerequisites to do so. The necessary information on the procedures of (national) mobility and transfer from other universities is regulated by the "Regulations on Study Programs and Studying". Students from other universities can also enrol in single courses of the Catholic University of Croatia.

6.2. In the short period of existence, not many students could take advantage of Erasmus+, joined by the Catholic University of Croatia in 2014. But upon request, students claim to be encouraged to study abroad, they receive information on destinations which may also be not depending on existing agreements with other universities. Learning agreements make sure that the courses they finish abroad are being recognized by the Croatian Catholic University. Alas, an Office for International Cooperation is still lacking.

6.3. The Croatian Catholic University encourages teachers and researchers to go abroad for a shorter term. Travel expenditures are also covered by the University. The University is flexible enough to allow the teaching hours to be transferred to a semester later. However, there are no formal procedures on the evaluation of the international experience of the teachers and on the teaching outcomes abroad.

6.4. The Catholic University of Croatia is part of several international networks and is striving to go for more. The researchers not only participate in a high number of international conferences, but also organize international conferences in Zagreb. The foundation of an international and peer reviewed journal as a platform for disseminating own research is ongoing. However, it is difficult for the Catholic University of Croatia at the moment to be identified as a potential partner by an institution abroad, as the webpage does not provide enough information in English so far.

6.5. The accommodation of the so far incoming students was provided by the Catholic University of Croatia. Only some courses and presentations at the Catholic University of Croatia were held in English so far. The introduction of courses in English and in other foreign languages needs to be further developed. Here again, the English translation of the homepage would be a helpful tool.

6.6. Although there is a considerable number of short term visits from foreign scientists and lecturers at the Catholic University of Croatia, remarkably not only from Western countries but also from Eastern Europe, an institutionalized exchange system of lecturers is not yet installed, and information on the webpage is lacking.

6.7. The Catholic University of Croatia has established a series of agreements with other prestigious universities in Europe and enhances research by co-organizing international conferences. The number and the quality of publications as a result of collaboration with other scientific institutions is rather high (see table 5.5 in the self-evaluation report). Alas, joint programmes with other universities do not exist so far, and the Catholic University of Croatia is not a member of an international association (while individual staff members are). There is no systematic plan for the strategic internationalisation of the University and no international office.

7. Resources: Administration, Space, Equipment and Finances

7.1. The Catholic University of Croatia provides appropriate learning resources for all enrolled students. These resources include classrooms, Laboratory for psychological research, library resources, computers with adequate software, individual and group study spaces. The facilities and the equipment are up to the modern standards.

7.2. The ratio of teaching and non-teaching staff is inadequate. The number of qualified administrative staff should be increased, especially with the aim of supporting the applications for and the participation in international research projects.

7.3. The Catholic University of Croatia has short-term policies that ensure professional development of non-teaching staff. A comprehensive and systematic plan of professional development has not been established yet, perhaps due to the low number of administrative employees.

7.4. The equipment and relevant usage protocols of the psychological laboratory and the computer room comply with recognized international standards. However, the laboratory facilities and rooms could be increased in the future, especially when the graduate study program on psychology will be also fully carried out.

7.5. The Catholic University of Croatia secures modern computer equipment, technology, software and technical support for teaching and research activities, which is largely utilized in accordance with its mission.

7.6. The usability and availability of the library, as well as the equipment therein, ensure adequate support to student learning. The number of available books as well as the access to electronic databases and online readings in the library should be broadened in the future.

7.7. As far as it can be judged from the self-evaluation report, the financial sustainability of the Catholic University of Croatia is ensured in accordance with its mission, enabling all students to successfully complete their study programmes. The total balance of income and expenditure was positive in the last two calendar years. Sources of funding are transparent and do not limit the institutional autonomy. As for the ambitious plans of expansion, laid down in the Development Strategy, no written evidence for its financial justification was provided.

7.8. According to the Self-evaluation report, the Catholic University of Croatia has no income from own activities. The funds, coming from the Founder as well as from donations and renting activities are used to expand the space used for teaching and research activities, and to raise the quality of teaching and scientific activity.