



**REPORT
of the Expert Panel
on the
RE-ACCREDITATION OF
Faculty of Law, University of Zagreb**

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INTRODUCTION

This report on the re-accreditation of the Faculty of Law, University of Zagreb 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 and supporting documentation and a visit to the institution.

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 ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education) full member, 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 programs.

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. Anne Meuwese, Tilburg Law School; The Netherlands (chair)
- Prof. Elisa Baroncini, Università di Bologna, Italy
- Prof. András Jakab, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Hungary
- Prof. Mare Leino, Talinn University, Estonia
- Armando Demark, student, Faculty of Law, University in Rijeka, Croatia

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

- Irena Petrušić, coordinator
- Lida Lamza, translator

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;

- The students,
- The Vice-Dean for Teaching and Students' Affairs, programme co-ordinators and teachers;
- The Vice-Dean for Scientific Activity
- The Vice-Dean for Finances;
- Teachers
- Heads of Research projects;
- Administrative staff;
- Teaching assistants and junior researchers.

The Expert Panel also had a tour of the library, IT rooms, student register desk, and the classrooms at Faculty of Law, where they held a brief question and answer session with the students who were present.

Upon completion of re-accreditation procedure, the Accreditation Council renders its opinion on the basis of the Re-accreditation Report, an Assessment of Quality of the higher education institution and the Report of Fulfilment of Quantitative Criteria which is acquired by 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** to the higher education institution, which confirms that the higher education institution meets the requirements for performing the higher education activities or parts of activities, in case the Accreditation Recommendation is positive,
2. **deny a license** for performing the higher education activities or parts of activities to the higher education institution, in case the Accreditation Recommendation is negative, or
3. **issue a letter of recommendation** for the period up to three (3) years in which period the higher education institution should remove its deficiencies. For the higher education institution the letter of recommendation may include the 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: Faculty of Law, University of Zagreb

ADDRESS: Trg maršala Tita 14, Zagreb

NAME OF THE HEAD OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION: Professor Hrvoje Sikirić, PhD

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE:

- 9 institutes (study units)
- 29 chairs

LIST OF STUDY PROGRAMMES:

Undergraduate (3):

1. Social Work
2. Public Administration (professional bachelor level)
3. Tax Administration (professional bachelor level)

Graduate (4):

1. Law (5 yr integrated study programme)
2. Social Work
3. Social Policy
4. Public Administration (professional master level)

Postgraduate (1 year advanced master degree) (12):

1. Fiscal system and Fiscal Policy
2. Civil and Family Law Studies
3. Public Law and Public Administration
4. Company Law and Commercial Law
5. Public International Law and Private International Law
6. Penal Law Studies
7. European Law
8. Social Policy
9. Psychosocial Approach in Social Work
10. Supervision in Psychosocial Work
11. Public Administration
12. Electronic Communications Market

Regulation

Doctoral programme (2):

1. Legal Sciences
2. Social Work and Social Policy

NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 8910

NUMBER OF TEACHERS: 455

TOTAL BUDGET (in kunas): 88,799,540.00 kn

MSES FUNDING: 48%

OWN FUNDING: 52%

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION:

The University of Zagreb Faculty of Law, founded on 4 November 1776, is one of the oldest constituents of the University of Zagreb and is the only constituent whose activities have continued uninterruptedly. It is also the largest faculty of law in the Republic of Croatia.

The Faculty of Law organises and conducts university-level study programmes in the scientific field of Law (i.e., integrated undergraduate and graduate study programme in Law), the scientific field of Social Issues (i.e., undergraduate study programme in Social Work, graduate study programme in Social Work and graduate study programme in Social Policy) and vocational study programmes (i.e., vocational undergraduate study programme in Public Administration, vocational specialist graduate study programme in Public Administration and vocational undergraduate study programme in Tax Administration).

The education of social workers in Croatia started in 1952 in Zagreb, and till now, the department of Social Work in Faculty of Law (University of Zagreb) is still the only place in the country for social work education.

Public Finance: in these scientific fields, the Faculty of Law also offers specialist and doctoral study programmes, and conducts scientific research and profession-related work.

CONCLUSIONS OF THE EXPERT PANEL

ADVANTAGES OF THE INSTITUTION

1. Strong reputation as the oldest law school in the country which attracts a lot of activity
2. Proximity to legal and governmental institutions
3. A good number of high-quality scientific papers published in prestigious publication fora, providing a significant contribution in the field of law
4. Diversity in study programmes, including a vocational programmes in Public Administration and Tax Administration and the only higher-education level Social Work studies in the country
5. Good position for international collaborations

DISADVANTAGES OF THE INSTITUTION

1. The considerable degree of autonomy of chairs (in choosing teaching methods, setting requirements etc.) makes it difficult to implement quality control mechanisms
2. Practice of low pass rates, particularly in Law is not perceived as a problem; yet they impact on student atmosphere and teacher-student ratios
3. The size of the student body hampers effective communication between the faculty and students

FEATURES OF GOOD PRACTICE

1. Collaborations with legal and administrative practice are well-developed
2. Collaborations with universities abroad are well-developed
3. Opportunities for students to gain practical experience
4. Overall active research culture, including the facilitation of law journals

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Specific recommendations for improvement of quality that HEI should implement in accordance with the Criteria for Re-Accreditation of Faculty of Law which are based on the ESG:

1. **Management of the Higher Education Institution and Quality Assurance**

- The collection and analyses of relevant data (e.g. teaching hours, research quality) should be improved.
- Mechanisms for quality assurance should be more pro-active and should include more direct feedback mechanisms to chairs and students.

2. Study Programmes

- Learning outcomes of courses should be explicitly matched to learning outcomes at the study programme level and should ideally be formulated in terms that rely on Bloom's taxonomy and tested systematically (e.g. through the introduction of a 'testing matrix').
- It should be clear and transparent that (and how) the actual work load for students matches the number of ECTS allocated to a certain course.
- Low pass rates and slow study progress should be addressed as problems.
- In the study programme in Law more assessments should take place during the courses.
- Alumni tracking should be done in a more systematic manner.

3. Students

- Communication to students should be improved and be more consistent across chairs.
- Students are not using official complaint and participation mechanisms much because they appear not to believe it makes a difference; subsequently faculty management is not able to take any action due to a low degree of input from students. This vicious circle should be broken.
- Ensuring consistency and transparency of assessments should be a point of attention at the faculty level.

4. Teachers

- In the medium term, FLZ should consider putting in place an international recruitment policy (which still may include hiring experts in national law for certain positions of course).
- In the short term, encouraging juniors (PhD students and assistants) to apply for (temporary) academic jobs abroad may benefit the institution in multiple ways.
- A programme of training didactic skills and teaching-related skills (e.g. on formulating testable learning outcomes) is advisable.

5. Scientific and Professional Activity

- The number of publications in internationally acclaimed journals could possibly be expanded upon further in the next couple of years, possibly through the introduction of incentives such as teaching reduction.

6. International Cooperation and Mobility

- FLZ should consider establishing an international fellowship programme.

7. Resources, Administration, Space, Equipment and Finance

- The IT facilities in the lecture rooms could use an update.
- Library opening hours should be expanded.
- Students should get access to electronic databases from outside the campus through a VPN connection.

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

1. Institutional management and quality assurance

1.1

The Faculty of Law in Zagreb (FLZ) did develop a strategic plan, but the inclusion of stakeholders could have been more systematic in the development of such documents in the future. Annual operational plans and monitoring their implementation would be helpful in implementing the strategic plan.

1.2

In some respects, the organizational structure of FLZ is functioning effectively; in other respects, in particular when it come to fostering a quality culture this is less apparent. Although mechanisms such as a Quality Management Committee are in place, the considerable degree of autonomy of chairs in the way they approach teaching and research makes it difficult to ensure minimum quality standards regarding, for instance, what information is communicated to students or research productivity. This difficulty of *ensuring* quality (which does not mean that there are quality problems per se) is particularly present within those parts of FLZ that mainly contribute to the study programme in Law because of its sheer size.

1.3, 1.4

We have not found any issues concerning the conformity of FLZ strategy with the overall university strategy and of its study programmes with the institutional mission.

1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8

Many of the quality assurance mechanisms are still quite new (e.g. the Quality Management Committee dates from 2007; the Regulation on the Quality Assurance System is from 2012) and responsibilities – despite of the broad mandate of the aforementioned committee – appear rather scattered across various bodies and committees. The monitoring system for teaching quality (criterion 1.6) in particular holds a considerable risk of ineffectiveness since the good practices that we found (e.g. peer review) existed mostly on a very small scale and informal basis, therefore only reaching those already open to self-reflection and continuous learning as teachers. As criterion 1.5 mentions, better collection of relevant data (including more frequent evaluations, but also possibly new data such as an analyses of test validity) could be a good place to start when streamlining quality assurance and aiming for it to have greater impact ‘on the ground’.

2. Study programmes

2.1

The aforementioned autonomy of chairs appears to hinder the effectiveness of the procedures for monitoring and improving the quality of study programmes. Whereas new courses, for instance for Erasmus students have been successfully developed, there are some issues regarding the improvement of existing courses which will be addressed more in detail below. The self-evaluation report (p. 22) identifies obtaining feedback from practice on the need to modify study programmes, which it characterizes as an inadequate and slow process, as a weakness in the SWOT analysis. On this point FLZ could be more proactive and extend the range of stakeholders to include students (more actively), recent alumni and international peers.

2.2

Although there are no glaring issues regarding the enrolment quota as such, they should be considered in conjunction with the low pass rate. If the latter were at a healthier level, as this report recommends the FLZ to strive for, the enrolment quota would possibly need to be reconsidered as well. At the same time it bears mentioning that it is not evident that a less favourable economic climate should immediately be reflected in the enrolment quotas. As to the Social Work employment opportunities specifically it is noted that especially with a bachelor diploma only and especially in rural areas, jobs are difficult to find, which is a possibly argument to move to a '3+2 system'.

2.3

As mentioned above, the problem appears to lie not so much in the quotas, but rather in the fact that students in the study programme in Law tend to progress very slowly through the programme with only about 6% finishing in time and the average time needed for completing the regular law degree being around 8 years. This means that more students than one would expect purely on the basis of enrolment quotas are in need of teaching or supervision for many courses for which they have not passed the exam yet. 'Insufficient motivation for studying', which is listed in the self-evaluation report as a cause of large outflow from the study programme in Law (p. 43) specifically but also as a case for the slow progress of many students more generally (p. 44), undoubtedly plays a role. The self-evaluation report concludes that there currently is no method for detected unmotivated candidates. Be this as it may, because of the pressure the slow study progress is putting on the system (in terms of institutional resources and student atmosphere), this issue appears to belong on both FLZ's and the national higher education policy agenda. Pass rate analysis is being conducted but could include a larger number of variables and perhaps even extend to exam analysis (validity and consistency of testing).

2.4

The faculty has only just embarked on an initiative to define learning outcomes at the programme level. It is as of yet unclear how the faculty will ensure that the learning outcomes of individual courses combined will add up to the overarching learning outcomes (or, vice versa: that the course-level learning outcomes are derived from the programme-level ones). Given the general issue of little central quality control regarding the content and approach of courses (the various bodies are more oriented towards 'adopting' and 'proposing' measures rather than towards 'monitoring', see also the self-evaluation report p. 23-27), the panel would recommend that the faculty includes this implementation issue in its new plan for programme-level learning outcomes.

2.5

More guarantees of consistency and transparency in testing would be needed. Especially when, such as in the study programme in Law, in the vast majority (84,1%, see self-evaluation report, p. 81) of courses students are assessed on the basis of a final exam only, it is vital that students are actually tested on the learning outcomes and are tested on all learning outcomes. There should be a maximum and faculty-wide effort to ensure consistent and transparent assessment (e.g. through compiling testing matrixes, expressing at which cognitive level of Bloom's taxonomy specific learning outcomes will be assessed and what their relative weight is). These kind of guarantees can also be applied to oral exams, and are especially important in subjects where there is only a final oral exam and/or where just one professor examines the students. In the Social Work programmes assessments are more process-based: students must be active during the semester and they have tasks and homework for every week. The exams are then based on the results of 'portfolios'.

2.6

It is not transparent how study load and ECTS are being matched. It appears to be the case that the study load has been 'set' at the time of introducing a course and not necessarily with the number of hours students are expected to study for 1 ECTS (30 hours) in mind. Also there is no mechanism in place to ensure that workload and ECTS become or remain well matched. Without meaning to advocate a strict system for ECTS allocation (such as one that is based solely on the number of pages students have to read), the committee does think that some sort of formula of guideline in this respect will help teachers prioritize within their subjects and help students in determining what is expected of them. In view of the many student complaints regarding the amount of literature that needs to be studied, FLZ would do well to demonstrate more explicitly how it expects students to spend their time within a particular course. Here, once again, the large measure of autonomy for each chair does not make this an obvious 'faculty issue', yet the panel is of the opinion that – in particular in view of the students' complaints - it should be.

2.7

Many courses appear to be in line with internationally recognized standards, but there is no mechanism in place for ensuring or encouraging this. There appear to be many informal opportunities for discussing the content of courses, but here, too, a weak point is that in the end

the chair decides. In the case that, for instance, the chair opts to use outdated materials or teaching methods that discourage independent student learning, there appears to be little that the faculty, or one of its bodies or committees, can do about it.

2.8

Appropriate teaching methods will be applied in many individual cases, but the fact that this depends entirely on the chair is a vulnerable link in the system (see above). The 'frontal teaching method' (i.e. the teacher is speaking and students are taking notes, without much dialogue) appears to still occupy some ground. The panel would like to emphasize that this is not to say that there are no individual good practices; clearly there are and these deserve a wider following.

2.9

Students enjoy access to many different electronic and other resources.

2.10

FLZ offers many opportunities for practical learning a bit later in the Law degree programme. For activities such as moot courts and law clinics, only few places are available and in combination with the application of strict selection criteria this means that these are out of reach for a large majority of students. This in itself is not a problem, given that FLZ supplements this shortage by also facilitating internships, but the situation could be communicated better and earlier to students. In the Social Work department there is a team for students practice - in this field practice is as important as theory, so the attention for extra-academic activities is laudable. The teachers from Social Work are organizing a conference on practice in September 2015.

3. Students

3.1

While the number of enrolled students has been slowly declining during the last four years, the majority of processes concerning enrolment are still adequate. It should be noted that the state matura requires FLZ's applicants to successfully pass only the obligatory subjects, while taking an exam in subjects that are close to the area of law, such as philosophy or sociology, are not a condition. Since the abovementioned conditions are defined on a national level, FLZ cannot do anything to change them, but its adaptation and analysis of these criteria has been carried out regularly, professionally and transparently.

3.2

FLZ has a total of fourteen student associations and their activities are being financially supported by the HEI in a yearly amount of 400,000 kunas. However, due to the structure of the building in which the HEI is situated, it enables the use of the premises only for the work of the student associations. Students have a reduced number of opportunities for carrying out their

extracurricular activities. They also complained about a lack of space in which they could potentially study or engage in student activities.

3.3

FLZ has a Student Counselling Office which assists students in individually determining the best way of achieving their personal and professional development. The work report of the Student Counselling Office for 2014. showed that 27 students visited the Office in the summer semester of 2014., which is a generally low number when the total amount of the HEI's students is taken into account. The main issue for FLZ here appears to be how to get students to effectively make use of the possibilities that exist.

3.4

The knowledge assessment procedures and methods are made known to students from day one; they can be found on FLZ's website and course pages, and are applied to students in the same manner in which they are presented. Both oral and written methods of questioning are applied, and teachers can give feedback to students, but due to their large number, the feedback system does not function optimally. The 'obligatory feedback mechanism' is not representative (last class), the non-obligatory feedback mechanism appears to be fragmented (both in terms of whether it is happening at all and in terms of the in publicness of results). None of the mechanisms seems to have any actual consequences, which is not in line with relevant practices at renowned European institutions. Students can appeal against their grade, in which case they can choose another teacher from that chair to question them the next time they take the exam, or they can ultimately decide to take it in front of a committee consisting of three teachers. The pass rates are analysed for all courses, but it should be noted that they are low in general which can be demotivating and increase the number of students who deregister after the first year (see also under 'Study programmes' above).

3.5

At this moment, FLZ does not maintain systematic contact with its former students. They are planning to make a database of alumni and a webpage for them, and they also monitor employment, but no alumni network currently exists.

3.6.

FLZ maintains a transparent website, available both in Croatian and in English. Basically every aspect of FLZ's activities is visible on the website, informing the public on the study programmes, teaching plans, learning outcomes etc. The Dean also introduced a third generation library catalogue that is already in use and can also be reached through the website.

3.7.

The Vice Dean for Education and Student Affairs personally helps and advises students regarding issues that occur during their studies. Students may also offer assistance to each other; the Students' Union (the main representative body of the students) elects a Student Ombudsman who receives complaints and counsels the students about their rights and

maintains a solid line of communication to the abovementioned Vice Dean. Although FLZ encourages its students to use these channels, they rarely do so, ostensibly because, they either think that their complaint will not make any difference or in some cases because they worry about negative implications (N.B. here the panel is only reporting subjective reasons and not suggesting that these are objective issues). The willingness to help on the part of the Vice Dean is not in question, but it does not suffice if students do not make use of the channels offered. As for the communication with teachers and chairs, practices appear to vary hugely from one case to another.

3.8.

On this point FLZ needs to find alternative mechanisms to merely relying on the student representatives in the faculty council. Less formalized feedback mechanisms could help increase students' faith in communication channels.

4. Teachers

4.1

As the self-evaluation report points out on p. 118 many of the problems related to human resources policy are connected to the general hiring limitations that apply across the Croatian higher education system.

4.2

In theory staff hiring competitions are transparent and job vacancies are advertised internationally, but in practice this is not the case because due to the governmental restrictions on recruiting new staff there have not been any vacancies lately. Also because of the Croatian tradition of training assistants to take over once a proper academic position becomes available and the large number of assistants waiting for positions, it is unlikely that recruitment will be of an international nature in the near future. Yet, in order to move closer to the good practice of renowned European higher education institutions, FLZ should consider what is needed in order to achieve an international recruitment policy (which still may include hiring experts in national law for certain positions of course). Encouraging talented PhD students and assistants to look for jobs abroad may be part of such a policy and may further strengthen FLZ's international networks. Due to FLZ's successful stimulation of participation of junior colleagues in important conferences and mobility programmes the latter should be achievable.

4.3

Despite the aforementioned difficulties regarding the hiring freeze, FLZ has made efforts to improve the teacher-student ratio, but it is still far from optimal. It should be noted that the teacher-student ratio is mainly a problem for the study programme in Law, where the exact manner of calculation of the reported teacher-student ratio remains unclear (cf. the self-evaluation report on p. 20 "[i]n seminars and exercises, the student-teacher ratio is 30:1"). The aforementioned problem of low pass rates plays a role here. An active policy to increase pass

rates (which does not imply lowering standards of course) would benefit the teacher-student ratio.

4.4

FLZ is committed to offering scientific-teaching staff good possibilities for educating themselves at conferences abroad, but due to the hiring restrictions, which are also felt in the Social Work part, it may be difficult to motivate junior staff to invest in specific academic skills development. Also, as the SWOT-analysis in the self-evaluation document points out (p. 22), development of teaching competencies of teachers could be more systematically addressed.

4.5

There is no faculty level mechanism for coordinating workload issues; differences from one teacher to another appear to exist – this is partly due to the hiring restrictions but even in the face of these hiring restrictions a more equal distribution of teaching load would probably benefit excellence in research and teaching.

4.6

Although the number of staff having consultancy, expert witness or commercial litigation work appears to be quite large, we did not find concrete problems on this point. Overall the balance between internal teaching and research activities of the lecturers and external commitments which also (indirectly) benefit the institution seems to be there at FLZ.

5. Scientific and professional activity

5.1

FLZ plans to implement a strategic research agenda in September this year. The document envisages the following four main scientific topics: 1) The new Croatian legal system, 2) History of Croatian law and its European legal historic assumptions, 3) Economic development strategy and developmental policy of the Republic of Croatia, and 4) Social policy and social work in the Republic of Croatia.

5.2

The institution currently has several different forms of cooperation with national institutions on applied research (ministries) and a few others with foreign universities.

5.3

As the largest Croatian law faculty, the institution has an adequate number and profile of researchers for the implementation of its strategic research agenda. The research profile of a good number of the staff members is clearly of international standard, others (a small minority however) have virtually no publications. Several staff members received their postgraduate degrees abroad, mainly in Western Europe.

5.4

FLZ has an adequate number of high-quality scientific papers (published in prestigious scientific journals or by prestigious publishers), providing a significant contribution in the field of law and directly facilitates several publication fora. The number of publications in internationally acclaimed journals could possibly be expanded upon further in the next couple of years. The journals in which staff members have published mentioned in the self-evaluation report (p. 157) are amongst the very best ones in Europe, and they are relatively prestigious ones in the US.

5.5

A systematic reward system for international publications should be established. Currently, research is only recognised in the promotion system, but neither financial, nor teaching load compensations are in place.

5.6

FLZ research staff have published regularly, with an above average output. See above criterion 5.3. Next to the largely research active staff, holding projects from both national and international/EU funds, there is a small part of the staff with little to no research activities at all. Establishing a transparent system of financing proofreading could be considered in order to encourage international publications. A weekly faculty research seminar is worth considering.

5.7

FLZ has an adequate number of domestic and international projects. With administrative support (which is currently minimal) for research projects, this could be further expanded upon. There is no reward mechanism (financial or teaching load) for externally funded projects.

5.8

FLZ encourages cooperation for the transfer of knowledge with the public sector. Several staff members are doing advisory work for the Croatian government. The staff of Social Work education has been visible outside of university, because they participate in different working groups, projects and panels, organized by Ministry of Social Affairs.

5.9

FLZ has a number of externally funded projects, including international ones.

5.10

FLZ carries out a high-quality university postgraduate (doctoral) study programme (with an adequate number and profile of mentors), it is the most established PhD programme in law in Croatia. The number of mentors in its "Public and Private International Law" PhD programme is clearly too low (one single mentor). PhD students are actively involved in scientific research at the institution. The strong research profile of senior staff members helps in delivering a high quality PhD programme. FLZ has several double blind peer reviewed law journals which is impressive considering the size of the academic community. A weekly faculty research seminar is could further help in the research activities of FLZ.

6. International cooperation and mobility

6.1

With reference to permanent mobility, i.e., the permanent transfer of a student to the Faculty of Law of Zagreb (FLZ) from another HEI, the Institution enables and facilitates mobility of students from other HEI of Croatia and abroad, by recognizing the exams already held within the other HEI that corresponds to the curriculum of FLZ.

With reference to temporary mobility (i.e., the attendance of certain courses at the Faculty by students from other higher education institutions and the attendance of certain courses at other HEI by FLZ students), the FLZ is doing a great job, making the most with the budget provided for by the Croatian Government and the opportunities provided for by European and International Cooperation – and this applies to all study areas.

With reference to teaching mobility, FLZ devotes around 200.000 euro per year of its budget to sponsor participation of FLZ academic staff to international Conferences and for visiting research and visiting teaching periods.

6.2

In keeping with the international context of study programmes, students have opportunities to complete a part of their programmes abroad. Due to financial difficulties, the number of scholarships does not correspond to the number of FLZ students who would like to spend a period abroad, but on average the FLZ students going abroad overcomes the number of available scholarships. For example, in the academic year 2014/15, 103 FLZ students registered for student exchange, only 60 students received scholarships but a total of 67 students went on exchange.

6.3

FLZ is very active in promoting international cooperation and mobility of its teachers and researchers, and, in accordance with the criteria of the Croatian normative framework for advancing in the academic career, gives due importance to the capacity of the FLZ academic staff to win European and International financed research grants, and to do international research and teaching cooperation. FLZ is very active in sending FLZ academic staff to international conferences and research and teaching periods abroad. Furthermore, FLZ organizes many important international conferences in Zagreb. FLZ should consider establishing an international fellowship programme.

6.4

FLZ is part of many relevant international associations, exchanging the result of scientific research in a wider scientific community. In particular, FLZ participates in: the Rotterdam Law

Network, the European Law Faculties Association, the South East European Law School (SEELS) Network, the European Law Institute and the International Academy of Comparative Law. FLZ is also involved in the International Political Science Association, the European Group of Public Administration and the Network of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration in Central and Eastern Europe (NISPAcee). Negotiations are underway for the Faculty to become a member of the CIEL Network. Furthermore, FLZ participates and largely finances participation in six international moot court competitions: European Law Moot Court, Central and East European Moot Court, Philip C. Jessup International Law Moot Court, Willem C. Vis International Commercial Arbitration Moot, the Vladimir Bayer Moot Court Club and the International Criminal Court Moot Court Competition. FLZ combines this new teaching method with international research and cooperation, as it happened with the Moot Court Competition in media law, held every year at the University of Oxford, within which FLZ started a research cooperation in the implementation of the Freedom of Expression Law Clinic. During the on spot interviews, FLZ academic staff stressed how important is a functional approach, an approach of law-in-action both as programme of the courses (where a case-law approach has been stated as highly significant) and as topic of their researches.

6.5

FLZ has adequate conditions for attracting students from abroad. It offers a considerable number of courses taught in English, both the academic staff and the students proved to be very fluent in English. In the Social Work department there are significantly less courses in English, the apparent reason being that it is hard to motivate teachers to work in a foreign language.

6.6

FLZ tries its best to attract researchers and professors from abroad. FLZ is successful within the Erasmus context in this type of international cooperation, as it may rely on funding through the Erasmus programme, and the period of staying are short. With reference to researchers and professors coming for longer periods, also from non-EU countries, there are both problems of financing and bureaucracy. In general, as FLZ is a public institution, it suffers because of Government financial cuts since 2011, and it cannot compensate the public financial cuts through private fund raising as this is restricted by the Croatian legislation; furthermore, with reference to non-EU researchers and teachers, sometimes there are difficult red-tape passages in order to get visa and health insurance for them. FLZ is already competitive in winning European and International research grants, and it is planning to set up a special administrative unit within the FLZ administration, with a research officer, to help the academic staff to prepare EU and International research proposal, as such calls are highly technical and time consuming.

FLZ has set up a highly relevant number of Erasmus+ exchanges (with over 300 incoming and 300 outgoing exchange students). Building on the international curricula of its academic staff (Columbia University, New York University, Yale University, Fordham University, the University of Pittsburgh, Duke University), FLZ cooperates actively with US Universities organizing also summer schools, setting up highly relevant Moot Court teams and participation in the work of two law clinics, one general law clinic and one specialised law clinic – the Freedom of Expression

Law Clinic. Recently, FLZ has started cooperation with Asian HEI, in particular the East China University of Political Science and Law from Shanghai, and the Sungkyunkwan University College of Law, the oldest university in the Republic of Korea. With these Asian HEI, FLZ is discussing ad hoc bilateral cooperation agreements.

7. Resources: administration, space, equipment and finances

7.1

FLZ provides appropriate learning resources for enrolled students in some respects, but could improve on this in other respects. If more students showed up for class (something the panel believes could be part of an active policy to increase pass rates at FLZ) lecture halls would be too small. This problem is not present for the Public Administration and Social Work programmes. The library and IT room seem to be functional, but the opening times of the library are limited and students cannot access all electronic resources from outside the premises as a VPN connection is not available to students. Group study spaces could be more widely available.

7.2

More administrative help would free lecturers from certain tasks so that they have more time for teaching and research and this would benefit the institution as a whole; a government decision limiting hiring possibilities is negatively affecting FLZ in this regard.

7.3

There are no apparent problems here, and the self-evaluation report indicates that actual training needs are being met (p. 252), but there is no clear policy as such.

7.4

The IT equipment in the IT room and in the library is suitable.

7.5

The equipment in the lecture halls is functional if a bit outdated.

7.6

Electronic databases and the collection in the Law library appear to cover all necessary content in the fields the institution is dealing with, but the opening hours of the library could be more extensive. Whereas a deadline of 1:00 pm for requesting books from storage may be defensible for efficiency reasons, a closing time of 6:00 pm does not sit well with the ambition of excellence and a demanding study programme with many part-time students.

It is specifically noted that in the Social Work library a lot of recent professional literature in English was present.

7.7

Funding and possibilities for the use of funding (especially hiring new staff) are limited, partly because of central ministerial measures. This applies across the faculty, so also in Social Work and Public Administration.

7.8

We did not detect any problematic issues regarding the manner in which the institution uses its own funds to benefit teaching and scientific activity.