

Decision Regarding Institutional Accreditation EuroAcademy

21/08/2018

The Quality Assessment Council for Higher Education at the Estonian Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education decided not to accredit EuroAcademy.

On the basis of clause 21 (3) 3) of the Institutions of Professional Higher Education Act, clause 14 (3) 3) of the Private Schools Act, subsection 10 (4) of the Universities Act, point 3.7.3 of the Statutes of the Estonian Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education (hereinafter referred to as 'EKKA') and point 48.5 of the document, 'Conditions and Procedure for Institutional Accreditation', authorised in point 3.7.1 of the above-mentioned EKKA Statutes; the EKKA Quality Assessment Council for Higher Education (hereinafter referred to as 'the Council') affirms the following:

1. On 15.09.2015 the Council decided to accredit EuroAcademy for three years, until 15.09.2018.
2. On 28.09.2017 EuroAcademy and EKKA agreed upon a time frame to conduct a new institutional accreditation.
3. The Director of EKKA, by her order on 05.03.2018, approved the following membership of the committee for the institutional accreditation as well as for the quality assessment of the Business and Administration, the Languages and Cultures, and the Life Sciences study programme groups at EuroAcademy (hereinafter referred to as 'the Committee'):

Helen Thomas	Freelance Education Consultant – Chair of the Committee (United Kingdom)
Anca Greere	Assistant Director, QAA, UK; Professor in Linguistics and Translation Studies, Babes-Bolyai University (Romania)
Tanja Dmitrovič	Vice-Rector, Professor, University of Ljubljana (Slovenia)
Olav Aarna	Advisor to the management board of the Estonian Qualifications Authority (Kutsekoda) (Estonia)
Anne Perkiö	Head of International Business Programme, Helsinki Metropolia University of Applied Sciences (Finland)
Roger Levy	Professor, The London School of Economics and Political Science (United Kingdom)
Tuula Tuhkanen	Professor, University of Jyväskylä (Finland)
Jekaterina Masenko	Student, Tallinn University of Technology (Estonia)
Johanna Mattila	Professor, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (Sweden)

4. EuroAcademy submitted a self-evaluation report to the EKKA Bureau on 14.03.2018 and the assessment coordinator forwarded it to the Committee on 16.03.2018.
5. An assessment visit was made to EuroAcademy during 8–10.05.2018.
6. The Committee sent its draft assessment report to the EKKA Bureau on 18.06.2018, EKKA forwarded it to EuroAcademy for its comments on 18.06.2018 and the higher education institution delivered its response on 5.07.2018.
7. The Committee submitted its assessment report to the EKKA Bureau on 13.07.2018. That assessment report is an integral part of the decision, and is available on the EKKA website.
8. Euroacademy submitted its additional comments to the Council on 14.08.2018 and, on 17.08.2018, its comments in letters. The Secretary of the Council informed the Committee of the additional information contained in the letters from EuroAcademy, and on 20.08.2018 the Committee decided to clarify its assessment in the report regarding graduation theses in the Life Sciences study programme group, leaving out the reference to graduation theses prepared at the level of professional higher education.
9. The Secretary of the Council forwarded the Committee's assessment report, along with EuroAcademy's self-evaluation report and its response to the draft assessment report, to the Council members on 2.08.2018. The letters from EuroAcademy to the Council were forwarded by the Secretary of the Council to the Council members on 17.08.2018. The Council discussed the comments and views contained in those letters and took note of them.
10. The Committee presented the following component assessments:

Organisational management and performance	Does not conform to requirements
Teaching and learning	Partially conforms to requirements
Research, development and creative activity (RDC)	Partially conforms to requirements
Service to society	Partially conforms to requirements

11. The Council with 12 members present discussed these received documents in its session on 21.08.2018. The Council decided to take note of the additional information contained in the letters from EuroAcademy and, in points 11 and 13 of this decision, to point out the strengths, areas for improvement, and recommendations regarding EuroAcademy as identified in the assessment report.
12. EuroAcademy filed a challenge on the assessment decision on 17.09.2018, which the Council decided to dismiss without action in its session on 08.10.2018, and to uphold the decision adopted on 21.08.2018. The Council supplemented the following strengths, areas for improvement and recommendations, presented in points 11 and 13 of the assessment decision (now points 12 and 14 respectively), with additional explanations in order to better explain its views described below:

12.1. Organisational management and performance

Strengths

- 1) In 2016 EuroAcademy (EA) moved to a new leased space which is spacious and bright and creates a favourable learning environment for students. Teaching staff, students and employers are very pleased with classrooms.
- 2) A new Study Information System has been introduced.

Areas for improvement and recommendations

- 1) EuroAcademy has not sufficiently taken into account the recommendations contained in the previous institutional accreditation report and in the quality assessment reports of the study programme groups.
- 2) EuroAcademy has not clearly defined its role as an institution of professional higher education – its strategy is based on a historical perspective (EuroAcademy as a university) rather than on its current status and does not give a clear view of its plans for the future.
- 3) The development plan of EuroAcademy still lacks strategic focus. EuroAcademy should define its position in the Estonian higher education landscape and, from this perspective, take a critical look at its strategic plans and its development plan to ensure they align with its mission and vision, are consistent, are based on achievable goals, and are built on sound and realistic financial plans. The development plan should also include measurable intermediate objectives. Also, there is no action plan with clearly measurable and achievable goals or a realistic financial plan that would support it.
- 4) The planning and monitoring of changes regarding study programmes, teaching and learning process, student progress and feedback from stakeholders are conducted in a very limited form at EuroAcademy. The assessment areas – *Research, Development and/or Creativity Activity*, as well as *Service to Society* – have not been developed sufficiently since the previous institutional accreditation. According to the Committee, the lack of progress in these key areas does not provide confidence in the sustainability of EA.
- 5) EuroAcademy offers study programmes in three languages within all faculties, including a considerable number of electives. Given the small size of the higher education institution, this can lead to excessive dispersal of its resources. Both the number of students admitted to different faculties and the popularity of the programmes offered in different languages vary considerably. EA should focus more on its niche market and redistribute resources accordingly.
- 6) EuroAcademy has not taken into account a recommendation in the 2015 institutional accreditation report about defining its requirements for the competencies and skills of teaching staff. EA must establish a uniform and transparent system for academic staff recruitment, management, evaluation and development that clearly supports its vision for the future; and it must define the requirements for competencies and skills of the academic staff. It is also recommended that EA widen its staff recruitment base.
- 7) Composition of the teaching staff at EuroAcademy provides continuity with the past, but does not provide security for the future. Attention should be paid to securing new generations of academic staff in both the medium and long terms.
- 8) EA has to ensure that all staff members follow the Copyright Act when copying books and case studies – the corresponding reference must also be included in the Code of Ethics.
- 9) EuroAcademy is in the process of introducing a system for staff evaluation, which is planned to be applied starting from the 2018/19 academic year, but at the time of the assessment visit the academic staff were not aware of it. The EuroAcademy needs to ensure that the evaluation system is implemented consistently and transparently across the faculties, and to specify how it intends to use the outcomes of such evaluations in staff development (including its salary policy). At present the level of remuneration and performance pay is decided exclusively by the rector, which cannot be considered transparent or objective.
- 10) EuroAcademy is managed by the Board of NPO *Estonian Euroinfo Society* which has three members who are former or current senior staff members of EA. At the time of the assessment visit, the Board also included the Rector and the dean of the Design Faculty. If the same persons are simultaneously engaged at various levels of management in a small institution, this can make the higher education institution vulnerable and endanger its long-term sustainability. It is recommended that EuroAcademy review its governance structure in order to mitigate such risks.
- 11) The terms ‘international’ and ‘interdisciplinary’, which are used to describe the focus of EA, are not clearly defined and are used by staff members inconsistently and in different senses. It is important for EuroAcademy to define the basic concepts used in study programmes so that all

staff members understand them in the same way and can apply them in developing and implementing programmes.

- 12) At EuroAcademy the international mobility of staff and students is low. EA should develop a strategy for increasing the international mobility opportunities for both staff and students.
- 13) EuroAcademy should develop a process for collecting and analysing feedback from stakeholders (including students, alumni, employers and professional organisations) more systematically and for using it in the teaching and learning process. EA should set up an advisory board composed of members outside of EuroAcademy to maximise the contribution of external stakeholders to the development of EA.
- 14) EuroAcademy should complement the informal communications with formal communication channels to inform all staff members about the changes at the higher education institution.
- 15) As there is no elevator in EuroAcademy, the two upper floors of the building are inaccessible for persons with physical disabilities.

12.2. Teaching and learning

Strengths

- 1) Students' transferable competencies, including their proficiency in Russian and English, support their competitiveness in the labour market. Students' language skills were also recognised by employers.
- 2) EuroAcademy has succeeded in slightly increasing the number of international students during the last two years, which is in line with the goals set.
- 3) Discussions with students and alumni clearly revealed that staff members are very supportive of students and are always available to them. EuroAcademy provides induction sessions for students as well as academic counselling throughout their studies. EA has recently employed a psychologist, whose role is to provide support to international students.
- 4) Organisation of studies enables efficient use of the students' time.

Areas for improvement and recommendations

- 1) There is a lack of clarity in EuroAcademy's educational objectives. Changes by EA in the area of teaching and learning are not driven by market demand and also are not sufficiently related to its plans for staff development, staff recruitment, or learning resources. Study programmes are not consistent with educational objectives specified in the development plan and the self-evaluation report. There is insufficient systematic collaboration with the working world to ensure that study programmes respond to both national and international societal needs. Based on market demand and on feedback from external stakeholders, EuroAcademy should set clear educational objectives together with an implementation plan.
- 2) Changes to study programmes are made in an uncoordinated manner, at individual levels and often on an ad hoc basis, and their impacts are not assessed in a systematic way. When planning changes, due attention is not paid to the availability of the necessary resources. EuroAcademy must ensure that study programme development is systematic, takes into account stakeholder feedback (currently done in a very limited way), and that the teaching staff understand the changes to the programmes and can fully implement them. Oversight of study programme development should be carried out by the faculty committees which include external stakeholders and students.
- 3) The Committee found that the titles and objectives of the study programmes in environmental protection and translation do not reflect the content of those programmes. This can be misleading for prospective students and other stakeholders, including employers. EuroAcademy must ensure that the titles, objectives, contents and intended learning outcomes of study programmes are clearly in line with one another.

- 4) Many lecturers work part-time, and some of them have very minimal contact with EA's general management structures. Also, based on the qualifications of staff members, their work experiences and research results, it is not possible to be sure that they have sufficient competencies to teach all the topics included in the programmes, or are proficient in the language of instruction.
- 5) Admission requirements are not transparent and are not applied consistently. EuroAcademy should develop clear admission criteria which would be based on a systematic analysis of dropouts, take into account the specifics of study programmes and allow EA to screen out unsuitable candidates.
- 6) The teaching methods used are in some cases outdated. EuroAcademy should provide teaching staff with appropriate in-service training in order to guide them in the use of effective and up-to-date teaching methods.
- 7) In a multicultural and multilingual learning environment one must be particularly attentive to ensure that the teaching methods used are appropriate for students' academic backgrounds. EA's awareness of this need is limited and its development plans do not focus on the specific needs of international students. Both academic and administrative staffs need training in order to better understand and respond to the needs of international students.
- 8) Learning outcomes are not always formulated so that their achievement by students can be assessed. Also, assessment criteria are not always consistent with the learning outcomes. It is therefore difficult to assess how the learning outcomes can be achieved or how the learning outcomes of different courses contribute to the overall objectives of a study programme.
- 9) Since the same member of staff may develop the course, establish assessment criteria and then assess students based on these criteria, there is insufficient objectivity in the assessment process. EuroAcademy should consider the implementation of the four eyes principle in the future and find ways of including some form of moderation into the assessment process. Also, students should be given more detailed feedback on their papers.
- 10) The quality of graduation theses, especially in the environmental protection and translation areas, varies and does not always meet the standards expected. EuroAcademy must ensure that the topics of the theses at both the professional higher education and master's levels are in line with the level of education, are professionally appropriate and enable the students to demonstrate relevant knowledge and skills. It is also necessary to ensure that, when approving the topics for graduation theses, it is checked whether the teaching staff has sufficient competence to supervise the students. Based on the letters sent by EuroAcademy to the Council, the Council considers it necessary to specify that the Committee's assessment was based on a random sampling of the graduation theses selected on the basis of a list of theses available on the EA website, the selection principles being that the theses would be either in English or in Russian, defended in recent academic years and their themes related to more geographically distant regions.
- 11) EA should develop a system for collecting data on its alumni to obtain information about relevance of the study programmes to the needs of the labour market, which in turn could be used as input for study programme development.
- 12) The dropout rate is high (fluctuating between 24% and 19.9% during 2014–2017). The reasons for this have not been sufficiently investigated, making it difficult for EuroAcademy to implement strategic measures to reduce the dropout rates.
- 13) EuroAcademy should better supervise its students on how to combine mobility periods with study programmes so that they could transfer as many credits as possible.
- 14) EuroAcademy is advised to clarify its strategy for e-learning and to ensure the resources needed for its implementation. The strategy should be communicated to all staff members.
- 15) EA should make better use of student feedback and communicate to students any development activities undertaken that had been based on their feedback.

- 16) It is recommended that EA support the work of the newly elected Student Council in order to ensure its effective functioning and consideration of the interests of all student groups.

12.3. Research, development and/or other creative activity (RDC)

Strengths

- 1) Students are offered publishing opportunities in the Baltic Horizons journal, published by EuroAcademy.
- 2) The number of graduation theses with practical orientations is increasing.

Areas for improvement and recommendations

- 1) Since the last institutional accreditation, the effectiveness and quality of RDC activities at EuroAcademy have deteriorated, and therefore cannot be considered as fully compliant with requirements. This position is based on the following findings:
 - The effectiveness of research has substantially declined at the higher education institution, including the number of publications per staff member and participation in ongoing research projects.
 - EA does not have a systematic approach regarding how to continuously measure, evaluate or stimulate its RDC activities.
 - Students are only sporadically involved in research; the quality of graduation theses varies widely, and there is no system to ensure that students are properly supervised in all three languages of instruction.
- 2) As the mission, vision and position of EuroAcademy in the Estonian market are not clearly defined, there is no solid foundation for its RDC strategy. Its goals for RDC are based on national priorities and are almost identical to the country level objectives, which makes them very difficult to implement at the institutional level. The Committee found no evidence that RDC activities are continuously measured, evaluated or encouraged. Responsibility for the development of RDC rests at the individual faculty level; more specific goals for RDC are presented in the faculty development plans. However, there is no plan on how to achieve these goals with concrete actions. Research is largely performed on an ad hoc basis, on the initiative of individual staff members. It is recommended that EuroAcademy develop a research strategy with a related action plan which would contain specific objectives, implementation measures and measurement of outcomes, and would clearly demonstrate how the RDC activities performed at EA contribute to development of a knowledge-based society in Estonia and increase the competitiveness of EuroAcademy.
- 3) EuroAcademy failed to demonstrate how the level of coordination between faculties, which is required to integrate interdisciplinary aspects into study programmes and research, is achieved within the decentralised RDC structure. It is recommended that EuroAcademy establish an RDC council to strategically support interdisciplinary (applied) RDC at the institutional level.
- 4) Between 2014 and 2017, the number of publications per staff member has dropped significantly (before 1.34, now 0.44).
- 5) One of the recommendations of the 2015 institutional accreditation was to strengthen the applied orientation of EuroAcademy's research. This recommendation has not been taken into account – increasing the practical content of theses cannot be considered to be a proper solution. EuroAcademy should focus more on applied research in order to better combine theory and practice, and to prepare students for entry into the labour market.
- 6) When planning its RDC activities, EA does not sufficiently or systematically take into account the needs of society and its stakeholders. The involvement of employers in EA activities is largely limited to providing internship placements.
- 7) In recent years the proportion of the RDC budget in the total budget of EuroAcademy has decreased from 10%, as indicated in the previous institutional accreditation, to 5.3% in 2017.

- 8) Research equipment at EuroAcademy is in part outdated. Laboratory equipment used in the Environmental Protection programme does not meet modern standards (except the computer classroom and software).
- 9) It is recommended that EA set up a research fund, which would be available to all staff members on a competitive basis. A transparent system for allocating research money should also be developed. EuroAcademy should target the use of internal RDC grants for developing the priority RDC areas.
- 10) Cooperation with public universities could be considered in order to gain full access to journal databases.
- 11) As there are virtually no externally funded research projects at EuroAcademy, students have very limited opportunities to be involved in research.
- 12) The percentage of students who are not satisfied with supervision has increased from two percent in 2014 to ten percent in 2017. It was not explained to the Committee how this problem was planned to be addressed. The EuroAcademy should improve the quality of thesis supervision and ensure its consistency.
- 13) It is advisable to develop more relevant requirements for students' final projects.
- 14) EuroAcademy should start using plagiarism detection software for student work in both the English and Estonian languages.

12.4. Service to society

Strengths

- 1) The EA teaching staff are actively engaged in professional associations and in various decision-making bodies in society.

Areas for improvement and recommendations

- 1) EuroAcademy does not systematically or purposefully popularise all of its core activities that arise from its development plan, the popularisation activities being mostly limited to activities aimed at marketing its study programmes. This affects the visibility of EA in the Estonian society. EA should develop, as part of a communication strategy, a general vision of how to popularise EA's activities in the Estonian society.
 - 2) The goals and target groups for in-service trainings offered by EuroAcademy have remained unclear. Therefore, in-service training for the general public has not become an essential part of the EA's mission nor a source for its income. EA is advised to conduct a systematic needs analysis for in-service training in collaboration with employers and other interested groups in order to identify potential target groups and to plan the necessary changes to in-service training courses.
 - 3) The general public is not well informed about the public-oriented activities taking place at EuroAcademy (mainly on an ad-hoc basis).
 - 4) EuroAcademy could involve alumni, students and staff members in the popularisation activities.
- 13.** If one component assessment is provided as 'does not conform to requirements', the Council shall analyse the strengths and areas for improvement of the higher education institution and conclude that the management, administration, teaching and research activities as well as the environments of learning and research at the higher education institution do not meet the requirements, and decide not to accredit the higher education institution; or shall conclude that there are shortcomings in the management, administration, teaching and research activities or in the environments of learning and research at the higher education institution, provide guidance for their elimination, and decide to accredit the higher education institution for three years. The accreditation for three years will only be possible if all the other component assessments are provided as 'conforms to requirements'.

14. Since one component assessment is 'does not conform to requirements' and all the other assessments are 'partially conforms to requirements'; the Council, drawing attention to the following shortcomings, pointed out in the assessment report:

1) EuroAcademy has not sufficiently taken into account the shortcomings identified during the 2015 institutional accreditation:

- Based on clauses 7 (1) 1) and 2) of the Private Schools Act, the development plan of a private school must present *the characteristics of core activities and ideas of the private school (principles and directions of development, nature of the training services to be provided, description of the staff to be used, risks involved and the possible ways of avoiding such risks); as well as information concerning the existence of financial resources or the sources thereof for at least the duration of a period corresponding to the nominal period of study as determined by the curriculum.* According to point 7.1.1.2 of the regulation, 'Conditions and Procedure for Institutional Accreditation', authorised in clause 10 (1) 1), subsection 10 (4) and §12 of the Universities Act, subsections 21 (1) to (3) and (5) of the Institutions of Professional Higher Education Act, and subsections 14 (1) to (3) and (5) of the Private Schools Act; *the development plan and the related action plans of a higher education institution must arise from the concrete objectives that are built on its mission, vision and core values, and that consider the country's priorities and society's expectations.* The development plan of EuroAcademy still lacks a specific strategic focus. There is also no action plan with clearly measurable and achievable goals nor a realistic financial plan that would support it.
- According to point 7.1.2.1 of the regulation, 'Conditions and Procedure for Institutional Accreditation', *the principles and procedures for employee recruitment and development must arise from the objectives of the development plan of a higher education institution, and ensure academic sustainability.* EA does not have a coherent or transparent system for recruiting, managing, evaluating and developing academic staff. Requirements for teaching staff's competencies and skills are not clearly defined and are limited to extracts from legislation. Seven out of eleven members of the teaching staff working in the position of a professor (an excerpt from the Estonian Education Information System as of August 2018) have not actively been engaged in research and development activities over the last five years, which is in conflict with the requirements for the position of a professor at the professional higher education institution (subsection 15 (2) of the Standard of Higher Education). Although EuroAcademy's document, 'Requirements for qualifications and evaluation procedures for academic staff of EuroAcademy' (adopted in 2013) stipulates that staff members are evaluated once a year in September, the teaching staff was unaware of such evaluations being conducted. Deficiencies in the staff development system are confirmed by the fact that the average age of academic staff members in 2017 was the highest during the last three years.
- Subsection 6 (2) of the Government of the Republic Regulation, 'Standard of Higher Education', prescribes that *study programmes and the process of teaching and learning must be consistent, inter alia, with national quality requirements and agreements.* According to point 7.2.2.2 of the regulation, 'Conditions and Procedure for Institutional Accreditation', *development activities related to study programmes must be systematic and regular and different stakeholders must be involved in the development of study programmes.* Although EuroAcademy has approved procedures for programme development as part of the Statute of the Study Programme, changes to the programmes are made in an uncoordinated manner, at individual levels and often on an ad hoc basis, and their impacts are not assessed in a systematic way. For example, the self-evaluation report on the Languages and Cultures study programme group repeatedly mentions frequent changes to the programme, but the teaching staff could not explain the reasons for those changes or the driving forces behind them. The Committee did not find evidence of a systematic market analysis or the collection and analysis of feedback from external

stakeholders in the Business and Administration study programme group either. Recommendations made during the external quality assurance evaluations are not addressed systematically or consistently.

- According to subsection 6 (4) of the 'Standard of Higher Education', *the objectives and learning outcomes of a study programme must be formulated in a way that they provide a basis for evaluation of the knowledge and skills of graduates of that study programme*. Learning outcomes are not always formulated so that their achievement can be assessed. Also, assessment criteria are not always aligned with learning outcomes, and student assessments are not sufficiently transparent or objective.
- According to subsection 6 (4) [2 (4)] of the Institutions of Professional Higher Education Act, *the functions of an institution of professional higher education are to promote lifelong learning corresponding to the needs of the labour market, to provide services including education and development, conducting applied research and helping students to become responsible citizens who are able to demonstrate initiative. While carrying out their mission, institutions of professional higher education cooperate with different institutions and actively communicate with the general public, supporting the development of society through effective development and innovation activities as well as applied research in their fields*. One of the recommendations of the 2015 institutional accreditation was to strengthen the applied orientation of EuroAcademy's research. This recommendation has not been taken into account. According to the data in the Estonian Research Information System (ETIS), EuroAcademy has launched only one applied project since 2014 (EUAB02-4 'The impact of financial accounting on profit numbers'); neither have there been any significant changes in the applied orientation of theses as compared to the previous evaluation.
- Point 7.4.1.1 of the regulation, 'Conditions and Procedure for Institutional Accreditation' prescribes that *a higher education institution must have a system for popularising its core activities*. EuroAcademy still lacks a systematic approach to popularising its core activities.
- According to point 7.4.2.2 of the regulation, 'Conditions and Procedure for Institutional Accreditation', *in-service training must be planned in accordance with the needs of target groups as well as with the potentials and objectives of an institution of higher education*. The goals and target groups for in-service trainings offered by EuroAcademy have remained unclear.

2) There are significant shortcomings in the areas of *Organisational Management and Performance* and of *Teaching and Learning*:

- According to point 7.1.1.1 of the regulation, 'Conditions and Procedure for Institutional Accreditation', *a higher education institution must define its role in the Estonian society*. EuroAcademy has not clearly defined its role as an institution of professional higher education – its strategy is based on a historical perspective (EuroAcademy as a university) rather than on its current status and does not present a clear view of its plans for the future.
- According to point 7.1.2.3 of the regulation, 'Conditions and Procedure for Institutional Accreditation', *the principles of remuneration and motivation of employees must be clearly defined, available to all employees, and implemented*. At EuroAcademy, the level of remuneration and performance pay is decided by the rector exclusively, which cannot be considered either transparent or objective.
- According to subsection 6 (1) of the 'Standard of Higher Education', *a study programme must be in line with the areas of activity of the educational institution that are based on the development plan or statutes of the institution. A study programme must contribute to fulfilling the mission of the educational institution and to achieving its goals and must take into consideration the needs of the labour market and the target group*. EuroAcademy's educational objectives lack clarity.

Changes are not driven by market demand and are insufficiently motivated by plans for staff development, employee recruitment or learning resources. Educational objectives indicated in the development plan and the self-evaluation report are not consistent with study programmes. There is insufficient systematic collaboration with the working world to ensure that study programmes respond to both national and international societal needs. The assessment reports on the Languages and Cultures, Business and Administration, and Life Sciences study programme groups reveal limited consideration of the development of competencies needed in the labour market.

- According to point 7.2.1.4 of the regulation, 'Conditions and Procedure for Institutional Accreditation', *the admission rules must be consistent with the mission and objectives of an institution of higher education and support the formation of a motivated student body.* Admission requirements are not transparent and are not applied consistently.
- Clause 6 (7) 2) of the 'Standard of Higher Education' prescribes that *a member of the teaching or research staff who conducts studies in a given subject (including visiting members of the teaching staff) must have the necessary teaching competence and his or her qualifications support achievement of the objectives and learning outcomes of the study programme.* Many lecturers work part-time, and some of them have very minimal contact with the EA's general management structures. Also, based on qualifications of the staff members, their work experiences and research results, it is not possible to be sure that they have sufficient competencies to teach all the topics included in the programmes or are proficient in the language of instruction.
- According to point 7.1.2.6 of the regulation, 'Conditions and Procedure for Institutional Accreditation', *employees must base their activities on principles of academic ethics, which means, inter alia, that they must follow the provisions in § 19 Free use of works for scientific, educational, informational and judicial purposes of the Copyright Act, which require that copies used for educational purposes must indicate the name of the author, the title (name) of the work and the source of publication.* EA's staff members have not always followed the Copyright Act when copying books and case studies; neither is a reference to the Copyright Act included in the Code of Ethics of EuroAcademy.
- Subsection 6 (5) of the 'Standard of Higher Education' prescribes that *the title and the content of a study programme must be aligned.* Neither the titles nor the objectives of study programmes in the Life Sciences and the Languages and Cultures study programme groups reflect the content of those programmes.

3) Since the last institutional accreditation, the effectiveness and quality of RDC activities at EuroAcademy have deteriorated:

- According to point 7.3.1.1 of the regulation, 'Conditions and Procedure for Institutional Accreditation', *a higher education institution must define its RDC objectives and must measure their implementation.* The effectiveness of research has significantly declined at EA, including the number of publications per staff member and participation in ongoing research projects. EuroAcademy does not have a systematic approach regarding how to continuously measure, evaluate or stimulate its RDC activities. Research is largely performed on an ad hoc basis, on the initiative of individual staff members.
- Point 7.3.3.1 of the regulation, 'Conditions and Procedure for Institutional Accreditation' prescribes that *a higher education institution includes students of all academic cycles in research, creative or project activity; and, according to point 7.3.3.2, professionalism, effectiveness and the workload of supervisors must be reasonably balanced, which ensures the quality of research papers and positive graduation rates.* Students are only sporadically involved in research; the

quality of graduation theses varies widely, and there is no system that ensures that students are properly supervised in all three languages of instruction.

DECIDED

not to accredit EuroAcademy.

The decision was adopted by 12 votes in favour and 0 against.

15. A judicial challenge to this decision is possible within 30 days after its delivery, by filing an action with the Tallinn courthouse of the Tallinn Administrative Court pursuant to the procedure provided for in the Code of Administrative Court Procedure.

Eve Eisenschmidt
Chair of the Council

Hillar Bauman
Secretary of the Council