

October 2004

General remarks and comments from the evaluation group of public administration programmes in Lithuania.

The following is general remarks from the evaluation committee that should indicate general aspects in relation to the evaluation of the different programmes. The viewpoints are of a more general character implying that for some of the points it will be very difficult for the individual university to make the necessary changes. In other areas the universities will have strategic choices to make.

An important observation to be noted concerns the fast and successful development of the public administration programmes in the Lithuanian universities. During approximately the five to ten years these programmes have developed to reach a high level in most cases.

1. The first year of study

Although we acknowledge the need for some common understanding, it must, given the Bologna process with a three year bachelor and a two year master, be discussed how a three years study programme can give the necessary competences within public administration when keeping this broad general introductions. It thus seems that the first year should focus on basic issues in social sciences (economics, political science, sociology and law) in order to help and ensure a background for the more specialised studies within social sciences. Many of topics taught at present in the first year courses at the universities have no relevance for public administration studies.

2. Number of students

In many programmes, especially at the master level, the numbers of students are too small to ensure a good study environment, but also too few to ensure a necessary research background for the studies. One needs, in the committees' viewpoint, a minimum enrolment of 20 students in a Department and preferably more students.

It might be worth considering at some universities to have a more generally first year of master programmes focussing on central aspects of public administration, and then a second year that opens for some specialisation – especially through the thesis.

3. Time for research

It is a requirement in Lithuania, especially for the master programmes, that the institutions shall have sufficient scientific or professional activities in the area, and, not less than 20 % of the teaching delivered by professors. These requirements are difficult to fulfil for most universities given the relatively limited amount of time allocated to research and lack of money for research. One way to help this, besides increase in the available funds from the state, would be to reduce the number of direct contact hours with the students. Especially master students should be able to study with fewer direct contact hours and with more independent work.

4. Office spaces for research

If staff is expected to do research, including writing articles in international refereed journals and also books in English, this requires more space.

5. Increase international profile

There is a clear need for most universities to participate more actively in research activities, and exchange of students with other universities outside Lithuania. One demand could be that at least 25 % of the teaching at master-programmes should be in English.

6. Requirements for employment

The universities should conform to international standards when employing staff. This implies that assistant professors at least need to have a doctorate, associate also to have published international articles, and full professor several books and articles in international peer reviewed journals.

7. More specialisation

In further development of public administration programmes in Lithuanian universities it should be possible to create more specialisation among the programmes. The most urgent needs are in training and research of regional and local self-governance and in the most important sector areas of public administration such as social and healthcare and educational administration.

Head of the group:

prof. Bent Greve

members:

PhD. Theo van der Krog

prof. Markku Temmes

prof. Harald Saetren

prof. Vladislavas Domarkas