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## **PAQUALITY: Public Administration Education Quality Enhancement Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership KA203**

No – 2018-1-SK01-KA203-046330, Slovakia, 09/2018-08/2021

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### **Intellectual Output 3:**

**Methodological framework for quality improvement of project partners**

## **EVALUATION REPORT**

Programmes under the evaluation within the project are evaluated by selected project partners based on review of their self-evaluation studies against the EAPAA accreditation criteria. Site visits were not included into the project activities; therefore the evaluation statements are limited to the available written information and discussion among project partners during the Project Transnational Meeting held in Ljubljana on November 15, 2019.

**Name of the programme:** Territorial Management

**Level:** Bachelor

**Name of the Institution:** Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica

**Address:** Department of Public Economics and Regional Development, Faculty of Economics, Tajovského 10, 975 90 Banská Bystrica

**Country:** Slovakia

### **Evaluators:**

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*Note: The report expresses an opinion of the the authors. The EC doesn't have responsibility for any utilization of included information.*

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**Country:** Romania

**DATE:** December, 2019

## Part 1: Accreditation Criteria

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| <b>1. Preamble</b>                             |   |
| 1.1 National educational system                | <p>Slovakian Public universities have an educational system compatible with the systems of the member states of the European Union. This system is based on three levels of higher education. Level one, Bachelor study lasts for 3-4 years and graduates obtain a Bachelor title (abbr. Bc.). Level two usually lasts 2 years and graduates obtain the following titles: Master (abbr. Mgr.), Engineer (abbr. Ing.) or Doctor in the studied branch (MUDr., MVDr., and MDDr.). The third level is Doctoral study, which lasts for 3 – 5 years, depending on the type of doctoral study – internal or external form. The graduates of doctoral studies are granted a title „Ph.D.“.</p> <p>The university titles are obtained after writing a Bachelor/diploma thesis and passing a state exam. Universities can provide education only in those programmes that are accredited by the Slovak Accreditation Commission.</p> |
| 1.2 National evaluation system                 | <p>In Slovakia, a special accreditation commission carries out accreditation. The Accreditation Commission was established by the government of the Slovak Republic in the year 1990 as its advisory body. The essential tasks of the Commission are to monitor and independently evaluate the quality of education, research, development, artistic and other creative activity of universities. The Commission comprehensively reviews the conditions under which these activities take place at individual universities and carries out a comprehensive accreditation of universities' activities every six years. Within the comprehensive accreditation the Commission also evaluates the level of research, development and other creative activities of the university and evaluates the standards of the particular university compared with other universities</p>   |
| 1.3 Formal exams for entrance to civil service | <p>Formal exams for entrance to the civil service are not a part of the Slovak legislation system. Students of the programme are prepared in terms of general requirements of the public administration and civil service system. Special competences are not required for activities related to economic education.</p>  |
| <b>2. Applicability/Eligibility</b>            |   |
| 2.1 Domain                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The present programme fall within the field of Public administration as used by EAPAA. The graduates acquire skills and competences necessary for managerial positions in bodies of central state administration, local state administration, local and regional self-government and other bodies established and funded by them.</li> <li>• The objectives of the programme are not very clearly stated.</li> </ul>   |
| 2.2 Geography                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The country where the programme is provided (Slovakia) belongs to the Council of Europe.</li> </ul>  |

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| 2.3 Programme longevity              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The longevity of the programme fulfils the criterion for normal accreditation.</li> </ul>  |
| 2.4 Programme variants and locations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are no other programme options apart from full time. - The study programme is offered only as a full time programme .</li> <li>There are no different programme locations - Faculty of Economics, Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica is the only location where the programme is provided.</li> </ul>   |
| 4 Category of accreditation          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>First/Bachelor level of study programme - there are no arguments threfore.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>5. Standards</b>                  |   |
| 5.1 Domain of public administration  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The level of the programme complies with the general requirements of home and abroad PA, national criteria of accreditation.</li> <li>The multidisciplinary character of the programme is well-founded.</li> <li>The content and the structure of the programme is apt for the public domain, which enable the students to gain the needed specific competences.</li> <li>The programme objectives are not clarified from the point of view of the PA domain.</li> </ul>   |
| 5.2 Mission of the programme         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The background and development of the programme are clearly sketched.</li> <li>The mission statement is clear. The relevant stakeholders are involved in the programme's development and the mission process.</li> <li>The educational format derives from the mission and educational philosophy of the programme. The educational philosophy is in conformity with the mission of the university and the faculty, quality management system EN ISO 9001: 2008, practice requirements, foreign academic and scientific institutions.</li> <li>The relation between the mission and programme objectives is not clearly explained.</li> <li>The relation between the intended competencies or learning outcomes is not clearly explained.</li> </ul> |
| 5.3 Level                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The way students are brought to an academic bachelor level is explained.</li> <li>The level of the programme adequately cover the general characteristics of academic bachelor. A special emphasis is put on corresponding final qualification to the ECTS, the national accreditation of the study programmes and the Dublin descriptors for Bachelor award.</li> <li>The corespondence of programme level defined by the intended learning outcomes to the the Dublin descriptors is not explained.</li> </ul>   |
| 5.4 Practice and internships         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The adequate training of practical skills is demonstrated in the programme. The scope of the study programme is directly linked with the development of practical skills and application of</li> </ul>   |

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|  | <p>theoretical knowledge in practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The criteria for the internships are clear and relevant.</li> <li>• The programme provides adequate common (academic and practical) supervision of the training of practical skills - the guarantors of the study programme work actively with representatives of local and regional self-governments and state administration bodies, which are the usual partners for students' internships.</li> <li>• The programme has adequate and regular links to the public administration profession. The cooperation with practice is strengthened by partnerships in international networks, partners cooperations in the frame of the Erasmus programme, etc.</li> </ul>  |
| 5.5.1 Curriculum Content                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The link between the mission, programme objectives, and curriculum characteristics is made explicit and is 'reasonable'.</li> <li>• The programme is multidisciplinary in character and the way multidisciplinary is achieved in the programme is demonstrated. The programme incorporates teaching in current academic public administration theories.</li> </ul>   |
| 5.5.1.1 Core components                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The core components of the programme cover the basic concepts, theories, methods and history of Public Administration and its grounding disciplines.</li> <li>• The core components of the programme are adequate for the level of the programme.</li> <li>• The core components train students for real action in the public sector.</li> <li>• It is clearly shown that the core components enhance the student's values, knowledge, and skills to act ethically and effectively.</li> <li>• The mastering of relevant research methods is part of the programme. From the first year of study, they are given many opportunities for students to improve their written skills and to build up and strengthen their independent opinions.</li> </ul> |
| 5.5.1.2 Other Components                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The objectives of the additional curriculum components are well explained. The main aim is to offer students the possibility to extend their educational plan according to their interests with an emphasis on interdisciplinary approach.</li> </ul>  |
| 5.5.1.3 Structure and didactics of the programme | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The programme is coherent in its contents and scheduling.</li> <li>• It is shown that the teaching methods in the programme components correspond to the didactic concept.</li> <li>• There is no 'proof' that the programme is 'do-able' in the time foreseen.</li> </ul>   |
| 5.5.1.4 Intake                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The entrance requirements of the programme are not fully explained and connected to the qualifications needed.</li> </ul>  |
| 5.5.2 Length                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The length of the programme is in line with the Slovak laws and the accreditation category that is applied for.</li> <li>• It is not clear if the length of the programme is in line with the objectives of the programme?</li> </ul>  |
| 5.5.3 Results                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is proofed that the graduates of the programme are able to operate</li> </ul>   |

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|  | <p>adequately in the public administration field in appropriate functions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are no proofs if the final qualifications of the graduates meet the intended learning outcomes of the programme.</li> </ul>   |
| 5.6 Quality Improvement and Innovation |   |
| 5.6.1 Programme accomplishment         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The needed circumstances for applying of programme monitoring are created. External and internal supervision of the programme are done.</li> <li>• Programme components (content of study courses) are monitored on a regular basis according to the requirements of the PA practice as part of the programme monitoring.</li> </ul>   |
| 5.6.2 Curriculum Development           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The curriculum is innovated and improved regularly: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All relevant stakeholders are involved in this process: students (through questionnaire surveys); graduates (after the final state exam); experts form the PA domain (through discussions).</li> <li>• The results of the programme monitoring are used to revise the programme and its components: if possible, the changes are made immediately; if not, they are included in the accreditation process.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>   |
| 5.6.3 External Reviews                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The programme successfully passed within the national accreditation evaluation process in 2014-2015.</li> </ul>  |
| 5.7 Student Assessment                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A clear system for student assessment is developed in the Faculty and in the programme. The tests, evaluations and examinations are in line with the Faculty of Economics Study and Assessment Guide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is clear and transparent procedure for examination and evaluation which is in line with the educational philosophy of the programme, regarding the organization, supervision and feedback.</li> <li>• The tests, evaluations and examinations are in line with the content of the various programme components - these conditions are stated in the course abstracts.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• There is no specific explanation about the provision of an adequate check on attainment of the intended learning outcomes of the programme.</li> </ul> |
| 5.8 Programme Jurisdiction             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The place of the programme within the wider institutional and organisational context is clear.</li> <li>• The way the programme is managed is clear.</li> <li>• People in charge of the programme has substantial influence with respect to: programme policy and planning; degree requirements; courses and curriculum; certification of degree candidates; managerial, financial, organizational, personal, educational and qualitative decisions of the programme management.</li> </ul>  |
| 5.9.1 Faculty nucleus                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of staff is sufficient to ensure that the programme is provided to the required standards for the actual number of students.</li> <li>• The specifications of each staff member's tasks are clear to all involved.</li> </ul>   |
| 5.9.2 Faculty qualifications           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The quality of the staff faculty (level, experience and educational skills) is sufficient to realise the programme.</li> <li>• The share of the faculty members holding a PhD is sufficient.</li> <li>• A sufficient number of the staff faculty is actively involved in public administration research activities.</li> <li>• A sufficient number of the staff faculty is actively involved in public</li> </ul>  |

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|   | administration international conferences.   |
| 5.9.3 Diversity: gender and minorities  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is the predominance of women in core staff of the programme connected with the historical background and culture of the country.</li> <li>• The programme has an attainable policy to realise a balanced (professional) staff - during last years, the representatives of various nationalities have been hosted.</li> </ul>   |
| 5.10 Admission of Students              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admission policy and admission standards, including academic prerequisites, are in line with the mission and programme objectives.</li> <li>• The information given to potential entrants is given on the Faculty website and provides an adequate and realistic picture of the programme and the career perspectives after graduation.</li> <li>• There is no information about programme policy for realising gender equality among the students.</li> </ul>   |
| 5.11 Supportive Services and Facilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The programme has financial resources sufficient to support its stated objectives. The budget for supporting the study programme along with related material facilities is processed on three levels (state, university, and faculty).</li> <li>• All members of the academic community of the university have a free access to the information resources based on their registration as an employee or a student.</li> <li>• Individual departments of the faculty manage their own specialized libraries which are parts of the University Library. Specialized titles related to the study programme of Territorial Management are located in the library of the Department of Public Economics and Regional Development.</li> <li>• There is an adequate clerical assistance for the programme staff provided by the secretariat of the Department of Public Economics and Regional Development, which is located in a separate office.</li> <li>• The programme runs the pedagogical and research activities in two buildings which are in the ownership of Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica. The overall classroom space allows optimal use and appropriate arrangement for various types of courses (lectures, seminars, case studies, computer-aided modelling etc.) and classes of different size.</li> <li>• Programme faculty and students have access to appropriate equipment for coursework and research: all classrooms are equipped with a desktop PC with the internet access, a multimedia projector, a projection screen and a set of loud speakers; access to PC workstations; available wireless internet connection in all premises of the faculty.</li> <li>• A significant computer facility is the learning management system (LMS) Moodle 2, which serves as an e-learning and distance learning platform and as a tool for communication with the students signed up to the courses.</li> <li>• The offices for faculty provide adequate space and privacy for students and for the staff.</li> <li>• The workplaces of the faculty are equipped with high-capacity copying and printing devices, data projectors, notebooks and scanners, as well as other didactic technology, which is designed for the needs of the workplace during normal operation and organization of professional and scientific events.</li> </ul> |
| 5.12 Student Services                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The students services meet the need of the students:</li> <li>• There is an effective and informative advising system provided by the university and faculty level. The Study Department provides in</li> </ul>  |

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|                              | <p>particular information and advisory services related to the organisation of study during the academic year, rules for course selection, administration of study, control of study results, and processing students' complaints and applications.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The programme monitors the student attrition and uses this information to advise students as well as to develop the programme. As a result there are no students with Bachelor's degree after (programme length + 2) years during last 6 years.</li> <li>• A system of student tutoring is operative and functions adequately. The programme efforts at retention consist in providing students with relevant and helpful information on the course of study through the advisory system and in individual approach to answer the students' needs as soon as they appear.</li> <li>• The career guidance and job placement services are provided by the Career Centre of the university with the cooperation of territorial organisations. Their representatives are invited to provide lectures, seminars and workshops and encouraged to establish contacts with programme's students.</li> </ul> |
| 5.13 Public Relations        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ways of presentation and promotion of the present programme are adequate and up-to-date. They are included in the Marketing Communication Plan of the Faculty and supported by the faculty website.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>6 Additional Criteria</b> | N/A  |

## Part 2: Conclusions and recommendations

The Self-evaluation report sketches an adequate and honest picture of the present programme, its mission, educational philosophy and results. The report demonstrates enough reasons that the Territorial Management is an academic public administration degree programme which is eligible for EAPAA accreditation.

The Bachelor study programme combines more than 30 year long tradition based on continuous scientific, research, publishing and teaching activity and several innovations to reach the present form based on the needs of practice and experience from cooperation within an international academic environment.

Nowadays, the study programme uses more modern teaching methods, multidisciplinary curriculum associated with the IT and communication technologies as well as is oriented to solving the problems from practice. The curriculum enables students to focus on skills, values and abilities relevant to management of the public sector.

This report contains proofs that the programme creates a connection between theory and practice, which enables the students to gain knowledge, skills and experience necessary for successful employment in the labour market.

The programme attains the level of the degree to general, internationally accepted descriptions of the qualifications of an academic bachelor degree. In connection with the ECTS, the national accreditation of



the study programmes a special emphasis is put on corresponding final qualification to the Dublin descriptors for Bachelor Awards.

At the same time, some recommendations could be made:

1. Nevertheless the educational mission and philosophy of the programme are stated, there is need for better clarification of programme objectives and learning outcomes, especially from the point of view of the public administration domain.
2. In connection with the recommendation 1 it is not clear if the curriculum length is in line with the programme objectives?
3. In the context of the educational programme philosophy it could be clarified the relation between the core and additional curriculum components and the intended learning outcomes of the programme.
4. The intake procedure should be clearer. There should be answered a question: is there a fit between the characteristics of the programme and the qualification of the entering students?
5. A programme policy for realising gender equality among the students is missing.