

REPORT ON EVALUATION OF SCIENTIFIC ACTIVITIES OF DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN THE PERIOD 2017 – 2021

Department: Department of Economics and Public Administration

EVALUATION COMMITTEE

Assoc. Prof. Thierry Baudasse (chair of the committee)

Assoc. Professor of Laboratoire d'économie d'Orléans, Université d'Orléans, France

Prof. Alka Obadić

Professor of Department of Macroeconomics and Economic Development, Faculty of Economics and Business, University of Zagreb, Croatia

Assoc. Prof. Šárka Laboutková

Assoc. Professor of Department of Economics, Faculty of Economics, Technical University of Liberec, Czechia

SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The evaluation applies to: (1) the department's overall results in research activities covering period 2017 till 2021 and its conception of research activity in general and (2) the individual department's members which depend for the most part on funding from.

GOAL OF THE EVALUATION

The committee was asked to provide: (1) an overall assessment of the department's research activities and its conception, including specific recommendations towards conceptual or organizational changes for its further development and (2) assessment of the individual members of the department from the point of view of their contribution towards the excellence of the research activities of the department – publication productivity and quality, level of international collaboration, or their overall perspective for further development of the research activity of the department.

The envisaged outcome in part (2) was a ranking of the evaluated department members into several categories according to their performance, from the best to the worst. In order to grade systematically the scientific quality of their research, faculty adopted the following scale for ranking the individuals:

Grade A (excellent) – researcher provides science activities at a high international level of international interest with broad impact within its field and with substantial ratio of high quality publications also in internationally leading journals. The researcher is internationally known as one of leading experts at least in a subfield of his/her interest. The researcher publishes with appropriate frequency. It is expected that the high quality and the frequency of outputs will be preserved in next years.

Grade B (very good) – researcher provides science activities at an international level with impact within its field and with a reasonable ratio of high quality publications in internationally well-known journals. The researcher has an international reputation within the field. The researcher publishes with good frequency. It is expected that the quality and the frequency of outputs will be preserved in the next years.

Grade C (good) – researcher provides outputs that are of good standard and impact and at least partially published in well-known journals. An adequate scientific contribution is required. There is a hope for improving the situation in near future.

Grade D (acceptable) – researcher provides infrequent research outputs of good standard during a longer period of time, the research activities contributes to effort of the department only to a limited extent.

Grade E (insufficient) – researcher provides very low number of publications during observed period. The research activities contributes to the effort of the department in the field of science only to a negligible extent.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT

Scope of scientific activities of the department
<i>Evaluate, whether the scope of scientific activities of the department is in accordance with modern trends in the field of economics and public administration; evaluate a research vision and concept of the department for the period 2022–2026.</i>
<p>The scope of scientific activities of the department corresponds to the latest trends in the field of economics and public administration. The research area of the department members is focused on econ papers, public administration papers, law papers, sociology, psychology, econ history as well as regional econ and international econ papers.</p> <p>The research vision and concept of the department for the period 2022-2026 is solid, one positive thing is that the project of Czech Technology Agency that is implemented by the Rector and faculty member focuses on the quality of PhD studies at the university and faculty.</p> <p>The biggest challenge we see is the internationalization of the department, especially internationalization outside of neighbouring countries like Slovakia or Poland. More efforts should be given to internationalization towards Western European, American and Asian Universities.</p> <p>A positive evolution is the willingness to diminish the papers published in Conference Proceedings and to focus on Scientific Journals, much more appreciated at international level. It's nevertheless important to notice that this decrease in publishing papers in Conference Proceedings is also linked to the decrease in the number of Conferences as a result of COVID19 pandemics. It is necessary to continue and amplify this movement from Conference Proceedings to Journal Articles in the post Covid era. Conferences are very important but they should be used only in order to have a feedback on a paper and present it to Scientific Journals. For the record, the percentage in 2017-2021 period of each category is the following: 10 monographs and chapters in monographs (7%), 53 articles in Journals (36%) and 83 Conference Proceedings (57%).</p>

Quantity and quality of publication activities

Evaluate quantity and quality of publication outputs, e.g. whether research results are published in international scientific journals listed in WoS or SCOPUS databases; evaluate proportion of papers published in journals with high influence in the relevant field of science (e.g. journals with a high AIS score)

The department shows the commitment to publish in international scientific journals in WoS and Scopus, the commitment itself is positive but this goal is not so far completely attained.

During a five-year-period (2017-2021) on average 17 members of Department have published 9 articles in journals with an impact factor and 21 published in the Scopus and 23 in ERIH+ and Web of science. Altogether that are 53 articles in indexed journals what is 10.5 per year or 0.62 per department member per year. That is not satisfactory, but it is already detected as a problem in self-evaluation report. Only a small group of 6-7 academic staff members are internationally recognizable and give department's best outputs.

We have noticed large share of publications in MDPI (Mutidisciplinary Digital Publishing Institute) journals that are excluded from many databases that universities in Western Europe are using (such as ABDC, Australian Business Deans Council Journal Quality List, and other nationally listed journals) and accused of being a predatory publisher (see <https://beallslist.net>).

There are some quality journals such as Land Use Policy, Journal of Cleaner Production, and others, but not many in the field of economics and public administration, at least not in the high impact journals. A focus should be given to the quality of publications instead of their number.

Correspondence between scientific activities and educational activities

Evaluate whether the focus of the research activities of the department is in accordance with the educational activities of the department

The analysis show that during these five years the department has completed 11 research projects. The majority of them (6) are internal projects of School of Business Administration. External ones have been done for different domestic agencies and ministries. Field of scientific research shows that all that projects activities confirm clear fitting between teaching and research.

It is well-meaning that during the period under consideration, academics concentrated on three areas of scientific research - Economic aspects of public administration, Legal and social aspects of public administration, Economic policy in the global economy - which is closely related with an area of narrow interest of nineteen employees.

Department staff and its development

Evaluate composition of the team, e.g. whether there is appropriate number of professors, associate professors, assistant professors with Ph.D., assistants without Ph.D. and internal Ph.D. students; evaluate the personnel development of the department in the covering period

There is only one Full professor, 4 associate professors, 11 assistant professors, one teacher without a PhD, and two PhD students.

It seems that Assistant Professors are too numerous while there is a lack of Associate and Full Professors, and particularly a big lack of PhD students. The Department should encourage the promotion of Assistant Professors to Associate Professors, leaving time to those Assistant Professors who obtains the best grades (Ingrid Majerova and Kamila Tureckova). The Committee has the impression that there is not a lot of promotion for employees. Among the 11 assistant professors, 4 are post-doc and 7 have completed their PhD more than 8 years ago. The Committee recommend to improve the professional dynamic of the employees, and especially to give more attention in research work and progress of post-doc department members.

We have found large differences in quantity and quality of publication outputs among the employees, however, that is common issue at each department. I take it as a sign of personal preferences of the employees and their individual career paths: there are employees who publish less, yet they are part of the faculty or university management boards (the rector, the vice-dean), or are more involved in practice (lawyers), or more involved in teaching instead of research.

Finally, we have found that only 3 members of the department have been productive in terms of Research in the long term, this is putting a lot of weight on their shoulders and is negatively affecting their recent academic activity.

Scientific and publication activities of Ph.D. students

Evaluate the involvement of Ph.D. students in scientific activities (e.g. students grants, publications)

The data shows that the department has only two doctoral students. Unfortunately, one of them who is already on the last year of his Doctoral Program is unable to actively use English language. But on the other side he has an extremely high scientific production for his age with a high h-index (5) and the seventh best citation at the department. He is very self-motivated in scientific research and eager for knowledge and learning and is seen as a future powerful driver of scientific Department activity. Another PhD candidate is in her fourth year of study, actively speaks English, is very focused in her field of research, but so far has not had any serious scientific publications record.

The biggest challenge the Committee found in their files is their lack of international experience, they do not take foreign mobilities. They also should develop their language skills. Therefore, the Committee recommend to give English classes to PhD students and to foster foreign mobilities, in particular to Western Europe, America or Asia.

Scientific projects

Evaluate research projects, consider particularly results achieved, internalisation and the share of projects funded from external resources

The scientific research activities of the Department of Economics and Public Administration have long been aligned with the framework theme 'Macroeconomic aspects of the Czech economy and the role of public administration in the globalized economy' and during these five years have completed 11 research projects.

The Department is also involved in joint project activities with the faculty Institute of Interdisciplinary Research. The institute is established ten years ago, has two employees who provide different services to municipalities. These are strategic plans, marketing strategies, and updates for approximately 5 municipalities and cities in the Moravian-Silesian region during this period.

Nevertheless we have found little evidence of large share of external funding. We see that the vice-dean has been the principal investigator of an externally funded project at the faculty, yet there is little evidence on any other sole-handed externally funded grant at the faculty.

We appreciate the strong commitment of the faculty to engage in local municipality or region funding grants since it is in accordance with the scientific focus of the faculty. We did not find evidence of international projects such as Horizon 2020, Erasmus+ Capacity Building, cross-border grant programmes etc. Nor did we find evidence of international co-authorships what complies with very little international mobility of the faculty and PhD students.

National and international cooperation

Evaluate national and international co-operation of the department – e.g. whether department members are involved in international research teams; incoming and outgoing research mobilities

The Department of Economics and Public Administration collaborates with other universities and entities in the Czech Republic and abroad, both for scientific research and educational purposes. International relationship is mostly established with universities and faculties in Slovakia and Poland.

The international collaboration is established with colleagues from the Department of Public Economics and Regional Development, Faculty of Economics, Matej Bel University in Slovakia, with the University of Ostrava, the project's main bearer, departments has collaboration with the German Fraunhofer Institute for Industrial Engineering IAO. There is also a long-term collaboration with the Polish Faculty of Management at Rzeszów University of Technology, Polish WSB University, University of Economics in Wrocław with the University of Information Technology and Management in Rzeszów (Poland). In

recent years, the School of Business Administration has been also cooperating with Chinese universities, in which the Department of Economics and Public Administration is involved.

Nevertheless, there is not a lot of evidence of international cooperation of the research teams. Faculty members and PhD students tend to co-author each other papers, they do not participate in general in international mobilities or they visit only neighbouring countries for Erasmus mobility (the deputy head Majerova is the only exception). They also do not travel to international conferences outside of the Central and Eastern Europe region such as Bulgaria, Slovakia. There are papers published in conference proceedings from EBES and MIRDEC and IBIMA conferences but no further evidence of any scientific collaboration within these networks.

We could not find evidence of any international consortia the faculty members team up on a regular basis. The Committee recommend to develop international networks in Research.

Social significance of scientific activities

Evaluate scientific activities and their impact on society in the covering period 2022 – 2026 – e.g. whether there is a positive impact of the department's research activities on society

The department is much involved in different social activities towards the field of public administration. Therefore, it seeks to engage in projects and research whose outcomes contribute to improving the quality of life in cities, municipalities, and regions, for example, by utilizing and implementing new modern smart technologies in public services for citizens, ecology, and health care. There is also a significant social impact in the case of projects involving the evaluation of financial health and long-term sustainable financing of municipalities, as well as the remediation of brownfields on their territory. Social-oriented projects, which are primarily concerned with investigating the living conditions of the senior population in cities, their activities, and the need for social services provided to these people by municipalities, cities, or non-profit organizations, help to improve their lives in society.

The Social Impact of Research apperas to be one important strength of this Department.

Cooperation of the department with the application sphere

Evaluate the most significant interactions with the non-academic application/corporate sphere. Take into consideration how the evaluated department looks up for and cooperate with application partners.

We appreciate the cooperation with the region as well as with the Czech bar association. There are four lawyers at the faculty (more than 20% of the staff) so the practitioner part of the faculty team is well guaranteed. The Department also obtained Research Projects from the Technological Agency, which shows the involvement of the researchers in applied Research.

It appears that the application of Research is actually one of the main strength of the Department.

Overall assessment and recommendations

Summarize here the key findings of your assessment in the context of the whole evaluation and suggest concrete recommendations for improvement and progress.

Recommendations:

- In order to increase the scientific productivity of all the members of the department it could be concluded that financial reward system is not sufficient and not enough motivating for all the members. Therefore, perhaps it should be considered to try more to include those who do not participate so much in writing internationally recognizable papers in specialized international forms of professional seminars, but also in international projects in which more productive department scientists are already involved. Also department should organize different events involving visits of international colleagues which could be inspiring for whole department.
- There is a lack of international visibility of the department. It is unclear how many numbers of outgoing research visits and also how many numbers of visits of international researchers is to Karvina. Better international cooperation and mobility would certainly contribute to better productivity of those who have not yet succeeded.
- One member of department has stressed that he has used ERASMUS+ mobility exchange but nevertheless considers that these short stays of one week each are too short for more serious international co-operation. On the other hand, he pointed out the fact that most members of the department for family reasons do not want to go for a semester or longer to a foreign university. The committee is sure that even shorter international mobility exchange programmes would be beneficiary for the whole department and should be defined as priority. The Committee recommend boosting international mobility of staff and particularly of PhD students also to countries outside of Eastern and Central Europe.
- The Committee recommends increasing the funding of Research activities from external sources. We also recommend focusing more on basic research, as the department guarantees an academic study programme, a large number of subjects with a theoretical basis, and its ambition is also to participate more significantly in the new PhD programme.
- The Committee recommends boosting international cooperation in terms of publishing (co-authorship with researchers from foreign Universities) and international grant programs.
- In terms of PhD studies, teaching of research methods shall be entrusted to more than one person so that the PhD students can get broader overview of the plethora of methods used
- The Committee recommends to motivate publications in journals listed not just in WoS and Scopus, but simultaneously in other quality journal lists such as ABDC (Australian Business Deans Council). All the Researchers should focus on submitting papers to Scientific Journals and not in Conference Proceedings.

- The Committee recommends the Faculty members to focus on more specific research design. The areas of Research look too wide and too general and should be more specialized.
- Focus should be given on the post-doc, giving them time and resource in order to boost their career. They should also be encouraged to submit Junior Projects in Basic Research in National Grant Agency.
- We also encourage researchers to apply for internal university grants, where they can get feedback from evaluators outside the university, which they can subsequently use when applying for external projects.

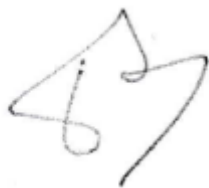
ASSESSMENT OF THE INDIVIDUAL DEPARTMENT MEMBERS

The committee provided assessment of the individual members of the department from the point of view of their contribution towards the excellence of the research activities of the department and the ranking of the individual department member. For reasons of the personal data protection the individual assessment is not presented. The following table summarized the numbers of individual grades of all department members.

Overview of the individual grades

A	B	C	D	E
2	3	7	7	0

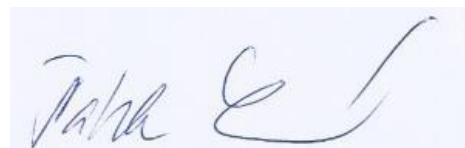
Karviná, March 2, 2022



Thierry Baudasse
(chair of the committee)



Alka Obadić



Šárka Laboutková