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STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

ŽEMAITIJOS KOLEGIJOS

VEIKLOS VERTINIMO IŠVADOS

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW REPORT OF

ŽEMAITIJA COLLEGE

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. This report describes a review of Žemaitija College (the College) carried out in 2015 by a team of experts from Lithuania and other European countries (the team).
2. In advance of the site visit the College provided the team with a Self-Evaluation Report (SER) supported by detailed annexes. Preparation of the SER had been overseen by a group broadly representative of the Žemaitija College community and its social partners, including a student representative, but the internal members were predominantly based at the Rietavas campus and the external members were from the Rietavas area. The external members were involved as sounding boards, and to review the results produced. The review team considers that the results of the self-evaluation and the SER itself would have been more effective if the group had primarily consisted of internal members coming from a wider range of internal functions, especially also from the Faculties in Telšiai and Mažeikiai, although these faculties were represented on four sub-groups that looked in more detail at the areas to be evaluated.
3. The SER covered the information required to prepare the team for its visit to the College and was presented in a clear format; it described its activities under each heading and provided some analysis of them, drawing conclusions about strengths and weaknesses and presenting aims for improvement. However, the team noted that a recommendation from the previous review, addressed directly at future self-evaluation reports (that “in future review and evaluation self-assessment reports, greater attention is paid to highlight the most significant issues drawing on systematic evidence available to the College”), had not been addressed by the College.
4. Before visiting the College, members of the team reviewed the SER with its annexes, commenting on the points it made and the questions it prompted. Additional information was requested and supplied in advance of the site visit, and further documentation was supplied during the visit. In advance of the visit the team was provided with other background information, including an evaluation of learning resources by MOSTA. The team met in Vilnius immediately before the visit to the College for a day’s training, including an overview of the national education system, and preparation of the agenda. The visit took place over the three days 27 – 29 October 2015, and included two tours to review facilities and 12 formal meetings. The team spent the day after the visit agreeing its

judgements and drawing together material for its report, which was refined and finalized by email correspondence over the subsequent month.

5. The review team consisted of the following members.
 - Professor Robert William Munn (U.K., team leader): independent consultant on quality in higher education, emeritus professor of chemical physics and formerly Vice-President for Teaching and Learning at the University of Manchester, with experience of reviewing institutions in the U.K., Lithuania, South Africa and Saudi Arabia.
 - Dr. Fredy Sidler (Switzerland): former Secretary General of the rector's conference of the Swiss UAS (KFH).
 - Ms. Jolanta Bareikienė (Lithuania): Head of the Kėdainiai Jonušas Radvila Study Centre (division of Kaunas College).
 - Mr. Guido Wolf (Lithuania, representative of social partners): UAB "Baltic RED", director for business development.
 - Mr. Augustinas Rotomskis (Lithuania, student representative): Master's in Clinical Psychology, University of Vilnius.
 - Dr. Gillian King (U.K., team secretary): higher education consultant, formerly Deputy Director (Audit), Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, U.K.

6. The team was supported by an SKVC evaluation coordinator.

II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSTITUTION

7. The present College was formed between 2002 and 2003 by re-designating Rietavas Post-Secondary Agricultural School as Žemaitija College, merging Telšiai College of Applied Arts with Žemaitija College, and establishing Mažeikiai Management Studies Branch. These three entities gave rise to the current three Faculties, of Rietavas, Telšiai, and Mažeikiai.
8. The mission of the College is to be recognized as a modern higher education institution oriented towards the needs of Žemaitija Region that trains specialists in demand in the labour market; is integrated into the European Area of Higher Education; is constantly learning and is guided by democratic traditions; applies the latest technologies to the teaching process; and develops applied research and applied scientific activity. It offers study programmes in art and in social, biomedical, and technological sciences. On 1 October 2014 there were 751 students according to data presented in the Annual Report, of whom about two-thirds were part-time and one third full-time.
9. The College previously underwent review in 2012, and was assessed negatively in the area of strategic management. While recognizing some strengths in that area, the review team at that time noted a number of weaknesses that had the potential to undermine the College's capability and capacity to manage change in the context of the current economic and demographic climate; it felt that the College's failure to employ measurable strategic objectives effectively, its lack of systematic data management, and a reluctance to recognize and manage poorly performing programmes exposed the College to considerable risk. Accordingly, the 2012 report made a number of recommendations including developing the leadership of the College at executive and Board level to ensure greater direction for staff at all levels to focus on the priorities of the College and the key risks.
10. Since the report of the 2012 review, the College has undertaken a range of measures designed to address the issues raised. Consequently, in the course of the present review the team explored the nature and effectiveness of these measures and has commented on them below.

III. STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

11. As noted above, the area of Strategic Management received a negative evaluation from the previous review team, which made a total of nine recommendations, some of the highest priority and urgency; six of the recommendations applied to the College's strategic management.
12. During the meetings of the review team with the various stakeholders of the College, it became clear that the operational functions of the institution are administered well. The staff are motivated and generally well trained. The review team notes that the College's response to the previous evaluation appears to have brought closer together the various faculties and departments.
13. The College's Mission is given in its Strategic Activity Plan. The Strategic Activity Plan for 2011–2016 that was operational for the previous review in 2012 was revised for the period 2014–2016 in the light of that review, but the Mission remained unchanged. This Mission is the same as the generic mission common to all colleges in Lithuania, apart from stressing the College's location in the region. As a result, the Mission of the College does not describe the distinctive position of the College in the region and cannot serve as an adequate basis for making strategic decisions. Although the main strategic documents of the College do comply with provisions of the European Higher Education Area and the EU documents relating to higher education, operations within the College do not always reflect this position, as noted below (paragraph 67).
14. One example of the way that the lack of a clearly thought-out and realistic mission has impacted the College can be seen in its attitude to its regional identity. While the regional presence of the College, in terms of its relations with external partners, is exceptionally strong, the team considers that the management has interpreted its role as a regional institution in too limited a way. The team found that at least 17% of students at some point came to the College from outside the Žemaitija region (and others even continue their studies there while working abroad, flying back when attendance is required). However, there was no evidence that the College had capitalized on this position by recognizing that wider recruitment could to some extent offset the demographic decline in the region. In fact, the number of out-of-region students in the College was claimed to be much lower and

insignificant. This suggests that opportunities may have been missed to market at least some of the College's part-time programmes to students residing outside the region.

15. The College is advised to develop a mission which specifically reflects its own aspirations and purposes, and prompts wider thinking about the contribution that the College can make. The mission can then inform an effective strategic plan which will enable implementation of realistic and purposeful strategic aims.
- 16. Recommendation 1: The team recommends that the College should express its mission and aims to indicate its distinctiveness from other HE Colleges and provide direction for its strategic activities.**
17. The College has produced a number of documents related to strategic activity: Strategic Activity Plan 2014–2016, Indicators of Žemaitija College Strategic Activity Plan Implementation, Annual Report. It is unclear how exactly they relate to each other, to the mission of the institution, or to the serious challenges faced by the College.
18. The College's Strategic Activity Plan 2014–2016 does not bear much evidence of a specific focus on the recommendations made after the previous evaluation of the institution. Neither do the strategic aims of the plan explicitly address the serious issues facing the College, such as the decreasing number of students. There is also some confusion over the key indicators which are used to monitor the plan. Several of the indicators in the Strategic Plan itself are not included in a separate list of 'Indicators of Žemaitija College Strategic Activity Plan Implementation' (e.g. 'Number of newly developed study programmes'; 'Proportion of teachers applying proper methods to assure qualitative studies'). However, the institution's Annual Report refers to the list of Indicators rather than to those in the Strategic Plan. It would give a clearer picture of progress against the Strategic Plan if the Annual Report, or any other planning and reporting document, consistently drew upon the same set of indicators. The team considered that, in any case, the list of Indicators was not particularly relevant to the Strategic Plan, considering some of the tasks allocated to the College management, especially with respect to the fourth strategic goal, which is 'To optimize the institutional management system'.
19. So while there are several indicators for monitoring the strategic plan implementation, they are not sufficiently clear in guiding the College leadership in addressing the core issues

highlighted in the previous evaluation. Chief amongst these issues are the falling recruitment rate for students, the high drop-out rate, and below average employability in some fields.

20. The current evaluation of the College occurs in light of a continued rapid decline in student numbers, which now are as low as 30% of those ten years ago. Data in the SER and accompanying documents indicate that in 2011 274 (part-time and full-time) students entered their first year of study; in 2015 this figure was 145, a decline of some 47%. The College attributes problems in recruitment to depopulation in the region, to the desire of many young people to move to a city, and to emigration. While these are reasonable assumptions, in fact at least 17% of its student recruitment was from outside the region, with two-thirds of students studying part-time in distance mode. The team considers that the College needs to have a more accurate understanding of the factors affecting recruitment, and where it is recruiting students, in order to be able to address this problem effectively.
21. The Annual Report 2014 gives non-completion (drop-out) rates in 2013 of 28%; this had risen to 33% by 2014 (although from analysis of student number data supplied by the College the team believes that it is higher: see below, paragraph 28). The highest rate (60%) occurs in the first year. Analyses of student drop-out data carried out by the team indicated that most students did not complete their studies because of non-attendance and academic reasons.
22. Although the teaching staff whom the team met were working hard as individuals to support students in their studies, the review team saw no evidence of a strategic, systematic and sustained effort to address the causes of student drop-out, for either full-time or part-time learners. For example, the team was given no evidence of action to ensure attendance, identify learners at risk and ensure that students entering with poor academic attainment are given the customised and intensive support they need to be able to complete their studies. The team was told that some teaching staff are individually available to students by e-mail well outside normal working hours.
23. A significant number of drop-outs occurs among students studying part-time. Data provided by the College for the number of drop-outs in 2014 showed that 78% of drop-outs were part-time students. Part-time learners now make up the greater part of the student body, yet as a group they appear to receive disproportionately less attention. Unfortunately, there were no part-time students among the group who met the team, although the College had made

arrangements for some to attend. The team formed the impression that there is no systematic review of part-time students' needs in the College. In particular, no specific adaptations are made to cater for the needs of mature part-time students, who may be returning to study, sometimes after a length of time. The review team notes that Recommendation 7 of the previous review; ("the College considers what, if any, additional mechanisms could be developed to support part-time learners and improve the arrangements that enable them to complete their course of studies") seems not to have been taken up sufficiently beyond an intensification of previously existing measures.

24. Recommendation 2. The team recommends that the College should recognise that part-time students make up a significant part of student body and ensure that planning and review activities take into account the separate learning and support needs of part-time and full-time learners, both young and mature students.

25. The College has compared the employability of its graduates with those from other colleges. The SER shows that of the nine study programmes, five have graduate employability rates below the national college average. Employability rates range from 64% – 100%. The team comments further on employability in paragraph 64.

26. Recommendation 2 of the 2012 review was "that in the light of the serious problems of falling enrolment and student non-completion, the College acts with urgency to review the strategic and operational planning processes to ensure that plans addresses the immediate priorities and drive appropriate actions to address poor performance in study courses." The College has clearly failed to do this and the present review team can only repeat it with renewed urgency.

27. Recommendation 3. The team recommends that, without delay (and before another cohort of students is admitted) the College should review its approach to dealing with low student recruitment, high student drop-out rate and below average employability to ensure that current students are given the best possible opportunity to complete their studies and find employment.

28. The presentation of the Annual Report is the College's main route for reporting on progress towards strategic aims. However, it was by no means clear to the team how some of the figures presented in the Annual Report 2014 had been calculated. That report comments on

the degree to which the Strategic Activity Plan for 2014 had been implemented, noting that, “The College failed to stabilize student non-completion (drop outs): within the reporting period it increased 5 percent, compared to the previous year, and it reached 33 percent.”.

The College provided the team with student number data going back several years, including information on drop-outs. The data showed that total enrolments fell from 1807 in 2009 to 951 in 2012 (the time of the previous review) and further to 751 in 2014, i.e. by 58% in five years. New enrolments fell from 412 in 2009 to 265 in 2012 and to 178 in 2014, i.e. by 57%, with the figure for 2015 lower still at 145. The number of drop-outs was 147 in 2012, 113 in 2013 and 104 in 2014, with part-time students representing 69%, 74% and 62% of these totals, at or slightly above their proportion in the student body.

29. Turning these figures into a standardized drop-out rate is complicated by the mixture of full-time and part-time students and by students who re-enter the programme. One measure is that on average over these three years the drop-outs have amounted to about half the number of new enrolments (so nearer to 50% than 33% as given in the Annual Report): the absolute number of drop-outs has been falling, but so has the number of new students admitted. Overall, student numbers have declined steadily and significantly through steadily declining new enrolments combined with a large and steady proportion of drop-outs. While it is possible that the College is using a definition and analysis of drop-out rate with which the team is not familiar, the lack of transparency in the figures provided by the College is itself a cause for concern. It is difficult to see how the College gains a true picture of the seriousness of the situation facing them when this important indicator is so unclear.
30. Given that the college is operating in a dynamic environment, developing a clear understanding of the situation is ever more important for formulating a clear vision for the future, strategic aims, and a coherent strategy for achieving them. The various decision-making bodies of the college (primarily the College Council and the Director) were not able to produce convincing evidence that they fully understand the seriousness of the situation the College finds itself in, so that they can respond adequately to the underlying issues.
31. **Recommendation 4: The team recommends that the College should ensure that there is a single definitive, consistent and coherent strategic planning document; in order to achieve this the College should seek external professional advice on how to carry out an effective strategic planning process. This should include ensuring that the indicators**

used to track progress against strategic aims are the same as the indicators included in the strategic planning document.

32. The underlying analysis of the serious issues discussed above suffers from poor data utilisation, which only makes worse the understanding and analysis of the situation and how to correct it. In several instances the College provided data that the team analysed in order to understand the situation, since the College did not appear to have performed such analyses. The review team notes that Recommendation 3 of the previous evaluation (“as a matter of priority, there is a review of the ways in which data is collected, reported and used formally to support the College’s ability to measure the key goals of its strategic plan using quantitative and qualitative indicators”) has not been satisfactorily addressed by the College.

33. Recommendation 5: The team recommends that the College should ensure that relevant management information data is collected and analysed to enable the College to identify appropriate strategic indicators to inform strategic planning.

34. The review team explored the roles and functions performed by the governing bodies of the College (the College Council, the Academic Council and the Director) and how they interact. (It was not possible to meet the Chair of the College Council, who was away).

35. The team learned that the Director of the College has been President of the Plungė Industrialists Union for six years, with the Vice-Director for Academic Affairs as Secretary; the Director is also Deputy Mayor of Rietavas Municipality, with the Vice-Director for Academic Affairs a councillor. These close links with local life help to keep the College aware of local needs and to keep the local community aware of the College’s needs and capabilities, consistent with the College’s view of itself as a regional college. On the other hand, there could be a risk that such thorough embedding in local life prevents the College from taking a fully independent view of its needs and those of the local community.

36. The team explored the role of the College Council in relation to the report of the 2012 review and the College’s response to it. The Council discussed the report and, as reported in its minutes at the time, was not happy that the area of strategic management could be given a negative evaluation when the other areas were given a positive evaluation. The Council was supportive of the Director and of the plans developed to address the recommendations in the review report. It seems not to have queried the adequacy of the proposed response to the

recommendation “as a matter of urgency... to develop the leadership of the College at executive and Board [i.e. Council] level”. The College response consisted of proposals to develop a new management structure, a human resource strategy, and systems to enhance qualification and competences and to motivate and assess staff, none of which relates to leadership by the Council. Members of the Council told the team that individual members developed professionally, but not as a Council.

37. Moreover, the team found no mention of the action plans in subsequent Council minutes, which tend to record formal approvals rather than any accompanying discussion. In addition, there is no evidence that pressing issues, such as a continuous high level of student drop-out, have been intensively or repeatedly discussed in Council meetings.
38. The team heard that in some years the Council held formal, minuted meetings only once a year (as the team was told it is legally entitled to do), although it communicates actively between meetings through e-mail, and the Chair of the Council is in frequent contact with the Director. However, the Council’s own regulations state that the Council should meet at least twice a year. The team considers that the Council might have given the College a better lead in addressing the recommendations by meeting at least twice a year after the 2012 review and producing more discursive minutes.
39. **Recommendation 6: The team recommends that the College Council should meet formally as often as necessary, but no less than twice per year, fully documenting their discussions by keeping minutes which include discussion of strategic issues.**
40. **Recommendation 7: The team recommends that College Council should develop a clear understanding of how effective strategic management operates in an institution of higher education and should proactively engage with strategic planning in the College. The Council should obtain external advice on best practice in management of a higher education institution, to move to a proactive supervision of the College management, rather than merely approving proposals submitted.**
41. Evidence of a performance review by the College Council of the Director and his activities was not provided to the team, and is mentioned in the minutes of the Council meeting neither before the renewal of his contract, nor at any later point. As noted above, no relevant action was taken on the previous review’s recommendation to develop the leadership at both

Council and Executive level. The team heard that the senior leaders developed themselves through co-operation and communication with other College leaders, by studying strategic documents and by attending conferences and the like. While such activities are doubtless worthwhile, they do not form the coordinated, structured plan of development which the previous review was pointing to, and the team considers that further action is required.

42. Recommendation 8: The team recommends that the Council should ensure that the Director and other senior members of the college executive have the correct training and support to enable them to lead the college effectively and professionally.

43. The College has responded to Recommendation 5 of the previous evaluation (that “the quality management system should be reviewed to ensure that as a result of active engagement by staff in quality assurance and there are robust mechanisms to support, develop and enhance the academic quality of poorly performing courses”) by reviewing its Quality Guide and introducing a new position of Quality Manager. The procedures associated with the Quality Guide were not introduced sufficiently promptly to allow a full cycle of procedures to be implemented before the current year; hence although the procedures were being implemented at the time of the team’s visit, no results of the procedures could be presented to the review team, and no evaluation of effectiveness could be made. In view of the slow pace of introducing the changes the team considers that the College should pay particular attention to ensuring that the procedures are now implemented and monitored in a timely way.

44. Recommendation 9: The team recommends that the College should ensure that quality assurance procedures are implemented effectively, monitored continuously and supported by adequate management of quantitative data.

45. The Quality Manager is empowered to audit the activities of the College at any level. While College Leadership is covered by the College’s Quality Guide, the jurisdiction of the Quality Manager seems not to cover the activity of the Management bodies.

46. The management of the College’s core activities, training specialists in full-time and part-time studies, suffers from a lack of consistent risk analysis, data analysis, and management. For example, while most of the College’s attention seems to be directed at school-leavers studying full-time, as noted above these are, in fact, now a minority at the College. Focusing

on mature students returning later in life, to make up for declining numbers of school leavers choosing to study at the College, seems to have been insufficiently considered as a way of managing strategic risk by the bodies in charge of the College. Similarly, the risk that deep involvement with regional activities could compromise activities and contributions at a national level seems not to have been considered (even though this was pointed out by the previous review). On the other hand, day-to-day risks relating to the operation of the activities of the College seem to be adequately addressed.

47. Recommendation 10: The team recommends that the College should introduce a systematic methodology for identifying and managing strategic risk.

48. While all teaching staff seems very engaged and open to be approached in case of personal or academic problems, there appears to be little awareness at the College of formal support structures for students in either case. No counselling services are available on-site or visibly advertised.

49. The College has a fund which allocates money to students who achieve good grades, financial support for disabled students, and accommodation within dormitories. Social scholarships, funds for the disabled and loans are made available as required by legal acts of the government. Students may participate in the activities of the sports associations and art collectives which operate at the College.

50. The teaching staff and students have a strong collaborative relationship which helps to solve day-to-day problems relating to learning. Surveys are conducted to gain feedback and students have meetings with faculty staff to discuss any concerns or issues. The student representative system is in place and ensures the participation of students in the decision-making process. Examples were readily given of changes that had occurred as a result of student feedback. Students noted that teaching staff were extremely accessible and evidently had no problems with contacting staff directly, including the Director, with their problems. For some students contact lasted well beyond the point of graduation.

51. The team commends as good practice the College's effective staff-student relationship.

52. The review team noted positively the entrepreneurial spirit surrounding the college, with many of the current and past students starting their own companies. The College may wish

to foster this entrepreneurialism in order to benefit both its students and the economy. While it is for the College to decide how this could be done most effectively, it could consider, for example, supporting its students and graduates more in developing their own businesses, providing them with start-up incubator services, and possibly space on campus.

53. The management of human resources of the College appear to be on-going, consistent and adequate. A Human Resource Management Strategy has been developed.
54. The infrastructure and learning resources at the College appear well maintained and, by and large, suitable for its purpose. College premises are well maintained and provide a good range of resources for students' practical work. There is a library facility on each campus that is complemented by a virtual collection of papers and databases. The learning resources were assessed positively by MOSTA.
55. The College runs a central budget, in which expenses of the three faculties are covered according to annual budgeted requests. Data provided by the College shows that it ran a small surplus in 2012 and 2014. There seems to be little incentive to earn extra income to support additional activities at the Faculties, since any earned income is retained by the centre.
56. The College has a Code of Ethics and a Committee to enforce it. The small, close-knit structure of the College seems to contribute to the apparent absence of violations of the code. Violations of academic honesty are dealt with at department level.
57. The core plans and reports produced by the College, as well as the report of the previous evaluation, are made available by the College on its internet website.
58. In summary, the inadequate and belated response by the College administration to the recommendations of three years ago, both at College Council and Director level, highlights and reinforces the previously identified shortcomings. Overall, based on the observations above and the recommendations issued, the review team found that the College's management bodies have not understood the requirements of Strategic Management. The Strategic Plan is not fit for purpose and given the lack of effective data management it is hard to conclude that its implementation can be guaranteed. Decision-making, risk management and management of change all require improvement in order to enable the

College to respond effectively to the challenges that it faces. Further examples of inadequate strategic management were observed across the College's activities, specifically in academic studies and lifelong learning, but also to a less marked extent in research and art (paragraph 86) and in impact on regional and national development (paragraph 91).

59. Judgment on the area: Strategic Management is given negative evaluation because it does not meet the criteria of the methodology in respect of validity and interoperability of the strategic plan components (8.1.2), reasonableness and comprehensiveness of the indicators of implementation (8.1.3), relevance of procedures for monitoring implementation (8.1.4), and management of change (8.2.5). Because these criteria are not met, and because the College leadership has not introduced effective change in response to the last review, the team does not have confidence in the current leadership and management and considers that for the College to continue operating it will need new leadership and management.

IV. ACADEMIC STUDIES AND LIFE-LONG LEARNING

60. The team heard from various members of the College and social partners that study programmes and life-long learning provision are designed with regional needs in mind and, on the face of it, it would appear that the courses offered do provide practical skills and training necessary in the development of the region. However, the team heard of certain instances where study programmes were developed to completion at the request of social partners but then did not recruit sufficient students and so had to be modified or withdrawn. It would appear that no systematic survey of student demand is carried out and the team was therefore uncertain how student demand for programmes is actually identified.
61. The desire to fulfil the training needs of the immediate region – as voiced primarily by the employers consulted – seems to have led to a certain short-term approach in study field design, rather than focusing on the long-term needs of future employees. This may have contributed to the institution losing its distinctive profile, leaving it without a strong focus on academic excellence in any specific field. Had academic excellence been fostered, the College might have fulfilled a lighthouse function for the region and further afield, drawing students from afar because of its expertise. An example of this is the College's traditional strength in agricultural studies, which is now perceived as requiring additional support, with local demand once more increasing after a period of relative decline.
62. Students from outside the region have made up a significant proportion of the student body in the past, but the team did not see any evidence that the College was exploring the potential needs of regions apart from Žemaitija. While such areas might once have been seen to be outside the strategic aims of the College, the changing nature of the student body, and the contributions of staff members to programmes outside the region, are further factors which seem to indicate that a strategic re-evaluation of the College's mission would be worthwhile (see paragraph 14).
63. Continuing education and professional development are a major activity for the College, devised in consultation with local job centres, municipalities, representative bodies and employers. Over 1000 people a year undertook 35 formal and numerous non-formal programmes of continuing education and training each year from 2012 to 2014, and this activity, together with consulting, has been a useful source of private and public income.

64. The previous review recommended that “the College is encouraged to review the ways in which it might make better use of graduate data and Alumni engagement to improve the tracking of former graduates and the promotion of the College to potential students”. The team heard that a system of graduate monitoring had been put in place, but that it had not yet reached the stage where a report on graduate destinations could be made. Currently the data do not allow the College to know which work markets the students end up in, so the College has limited opportunity at the moment to examine the trajectory of students’ careers after they graduate. The College is of the impression that employability is relatively high but the figures on which this assumption is made are incomplete since they are derived from the national insurance database which students do not join if they travel abroad. The present report has already commented on the low employability data in some programmes in paragraph 25.
65. The alumni and former students whom the team met were very positive about their time at the College and enjoy making continued contact with the College. They are often invited to an annual event and to College activities such as cultural events. They continue to seek advice from teachers and also to invite members of the College to events at their work. Alumni seem eager to promote and support their College. The team heard that the College’s Alumni Club had had varying success with its activities and the College could perhaps do more to capitalize on the goodwill felt by alumni to actively market the College.
66. The team heard very positive feedback from social partners about their engagement with the College. Many social partners are involved in thesis defence committees and give feedback about study programmes during that process. Some partners teach on study programmes. Others commission research and consultancy from the College and can feed in comments about those activities. In some subjects an annual round table is held where critical discussions of study programmes takes place between employers and staff. Despite the College having no systematic way of gaining feedback from regional social partners, the team found a high level of engagement and impact of the partners on study programmes. While this is a positive factor, as mentioned in paragraph 60, this may have led to a short-term approach in the strategy for study programme development.
67. After the previous review the College reviewed all its study programmes in order to ensure that learning outcomes matched the Lithuanian Descriptor of Study Cycles. In the SER the College indicates that accreditation of its programmes by SKVC is taken as evidence that

programmes meet Level 6 of the Lithuanian Qualifications Framework and European Qualifications Framework descriptors. Between 2012 and 2015 twelve programmes were submitted for accreditation by SKVC. Of these, three were accredited for the full six years, seven were accredited for three years, and two were not accredited at all (and subsequently withdrawn). Of the three-year accreditations and non-accreditations, several programmes received scores for Programme Aims and Learning Outcomes which indicated that improvement was necessary. Evidence for student-centred learning was limited. As already noted (for example, in paragraphs 22 and 23), there is no systematic approach to explore and respond to the needs of different groups of students such as full-time on-campus and part-time distance learners or young adults and returners to education, while paragraph 60 notes the lack of input from actual or potential students to gauge demand for new programmes. Overall, the team note that, although the main strategic documents of the College do comply with provisions of the European Higher Education Area and the EU documents relating to higher education, operations within the College do not always reflect this position.

68. It is clear from the above accreditations that not all programmes have effective learning outcomes. In addition, teaching staff whom the team met did not appear to be aware of the importance of testing learning outcomes in assessment. It was not clear what learning outcomes were set for final theses, although the team heard that there were 'very specific criteria'.
69. The team explored whether the strong professional practical focus of the study programmes – which students and employers welcomed – was balanced by sufficient study of fundamental principles to allow graduates to continue learning and responding to developments in their professional practice. Students and employers were content with the balance, although a few of the graduates who met the team (most of whom graduated quite recently) referred to encountering more advanced practice in their employment. Teaching staff referred to the basic material in the first year of study programmes, but this seemed to be mainly topics such as mathematics and physics intended to remedy any deficiencies in students' preparation before College, whereas the Lithuanian Qualifications Framework expects that programmes should include at Level 6 "broad theoretical knowledge based on the results of new fundamental and applied research". As noted in the previous paragraph, learning outcomes do not appear to be well embedded in the study programmes.

- 70. Recommendation 11. The team recommends that the College should review learning outcomes to ensure that they meet Level 6 of the Lithuanian Qualifications Framework and, in particular, that they require broad theoretical knowledge based on the results of current fundamental and applied research.**
- 71. Recommendation 12. The team recommends that the College ensures that staff have the required knowledge and training to enable effective use of learning outcomes in assessment.**
72. Incoming and outgoing international mobility is growing and increasingly a strong point of the college. The College has a proactive international affairs office, which participates in a number of international outreach activities integrating the institution in the wider region.
73. The opportunity for international exchange is highly valued in broadening the horizons of students. Several examples of international mobility of staff and students were shared with the team. Staff reported support for work abroad and noted that the Erasmus programme helped students to travel and bring with them new understanding and skills. The team also heard that international links could continue and develop after students completed their programmes.
- 74. The team commends as good practice the proactive and successful international mobility opportunities for staff and students.**
75. In summary, the team's findings indicate a lack of strategic oversight of this area. Despite excellent engagement with regional partners, and a commendable effort at international mobility, the College faces some severe challenges. Student data related to programmes (recruitment, drop-out rate, employability) are all in need of urgent attention; there is an emphasis on delivering programmes which employers in the region may need, but which students do not want and which do not cater for needs outside the region, with which the College increasingly engages; there are questions relating to the level and fundamental knowledge content of programmes; and, although strategic documents mention European requirements, there is doubt whether these inform all operations at study programme level.
- 76. Judgment on the area: Academic Programmes and Life-long Learning is given negative evaluation because it does not meet the criteria of the methodology in respect**

of compliance of the qualifications with national needs (9.1.1) and compliance with EHEA expectations (9.2.1). The team considers that the lack of strategic management noted above has led to these criteria not being met and to a lack of suitable action to address the deficiencies. Because of this the team does not have confidence in the current leadership and management and considers that for the College to continue operating it will need new leadership and management.

V. RESEARCH AND ART

77. The College is concerned to develop applied research, art, and consulting activities as part of its mission, in collaboration with national and international stakeholders where relevant. It defines these areas of activity rather widely, to include professional development courses, consultancy, and the preparation of teaching materials.
78. There is a clear hierarchy for oversight of research and art. The Vice-Director for Academic Activity coordinates the overall activity, with Deans of Faculties, Heads of Department and individual academics each coordinating activity in their respective areas of responsibility; the College sees coordination of research in the departments as of primary importance. Artistic activities are concentrated in the Telšiai Faculty where corresponding teaching is done.
79. The College concentrates on research and art in specific areas influenced by its teaching programmes and by national strategic goals. The areas are as follows:
- education, including quality assurance, labour market needs analysis, educational development and educational technology;
 - economic, social and technical topics relevant to the region;
 - cultural identity and art;
 - applied research related to academic staff disciplines.
80. These areas contribute to the development of the College's own activities and to the development of the region, and there is wide-ranging interaction with social partners.
81. Academic staff above the level of Assistant are allocated time to undertake applied research, projects and other innovative activity, and these are an integral part of their salary. Research activities usually require only modest financial support, for which staff can apply to the Directorate. There is also support for attendance at conferences. Teaching staff are expected to publish articles and presentations, about 100 of which appeared during 2012–15. These clearly fall within the areas summarized in the preceding paragraph, with an emphasis on regional development. However, the College notes that such activity is rather limited because rather few academic staff have doctorates or are willing to pursue doctoral studies. If staff do want to pursue such studies, the College will support them; the team met one person who had taken up this offer, and was told that another person is actively considering

it. Staff report on their applied research and art activity along with their other activities annually. The activity is formally assessed as part of the attestation process every five years, with the expectation that in that time staff will produce at least two pieces of work, which may include consultancy as well as publications and presentations.

82. Academic staff also develop teaching and learning materials, typically in electronic format for internal use. This serves to keep materials relevant in areas that can change quite rapidly, but this rate of change makes it more difficult to publish such materials beyond the College. This activity is perhaps better considered as part of normal teaching development, though informed by scholarship.
83. Applied research is closely aligned with local needs. It is particularly noteworthy in the area of agriculture, with six academic staff specially accredited as consultants for developing leadership and other training in this sector. As a result, they provide training across the country, not just within the region. Applied research is furthered by collaboration with suitably experienced academic staff in some nearby universities, including Aleksandras Stulginskis University, formerly the Lithuanian University of Agriculture. Similarly, the programmes offered are aligned with local needs established through consultation with regional stakeholders.
84. Research is presented at conferences, of which the College itself has organized two or three a year, especially in the areas of business and culture. International conferences on intercultural dialogue have been held in Rietavas for the last three years. Academic staff supervise student applied research projects and artistic activities, and students present the findings of their research in conferences that involve students from other colleges. Student research work is assessed by a panel that includes external members.
85. Artistic and cultural projects are commonly undertaken with social partners, particularly by the Telšiai Faculty, given the disciplines it covers, but also in business and technical areas. These projects are numerous, and may involve individual staff members and student groups, for example in music and dance, exhibitions, or participation in competitions.
86. In summary, the College undertakes a modest amount of research and artistic activity, consistent with its small size, but the activity is well focused on the College's mission and the region's needs. There is strong interaction with social partners, leading to a large amount

of well-focused continuing education and a wide range of artistic and cultural projects. However, introducing methods of evaluating the quality and impact of the College's research and artistic activities would help to guide their development in future (see also paragraph 58).

- 87. Judgement on the area: Research and Art is given positive evaluation because it meets the criteria of the methodology in respect of relevance (10.1) and for colleges the criteria in respect of internationalization (10.2) are not essential.**

VI. IMPACT ON REGIONAL AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

88. In the SER the College states that, “The College was established in 2002 as a regional non-university school in Higher Education, therefore the vision, mission and the strategic goals of the College are closely related to the regional needs.” The team heard that the College’s vision for the future comes from regional expectations and the impact that it makes in the region. This vision – making a regional impact and raising the intellectual level of people in the region – is said to be shared with the College’s social partners in the region.
89. The College states that its activities increase the competitiveness of the region and that it is actively involved in raising the intellectual level of the people in Žemaitija Region. The College does this by training specialists in 16 study programmes, catering for both full-time and part-time learners, and by continuously trying to provide conditions for life-long learning for people who demand it.
90. The College organizes courses on different topics, and seminars required by local institutions and businesses. The teachers of the College provide research and consultation activities, especially advice services for business. This is not only valued by the local institutions and enables the college to earn extra funds but also provides the college with a network of social partners who actively participate in the activities of the College:
- they are members of the Final Thesis Defence Boards and give feedback, which is used to improve the future final work; the recommendations on the thesis are sometimes used to improve institutional activities;
 - they are members of the Study Programme Committees and participate in creating new study programmes and improving the existing ones;
 - they participate in implementation of projects;
 - they provide placements for the students;
 - they participate in events organized by the College.
91. Despite carrying out a wide range of activities in the region, the College has no particular strategy for deciding which activities to engage in and has no systematic understanding of what employers and students of the region might require long-term: mainly it reacts to the short-term needs of employers. Neither has it identified any specific measures which would help to measure the impact of its activities. Because of this, the College cannot know whether the activities it carries out are the most effective use of its resources or that they

most effectively meet the needs of the region. These deficiencies reflect the inadequacies in strategic management identified above by the team (see paragraph 58).

- 92. Recommendation 13. The team recommends that the College should develop and articulate a clear understanding of regional and national needs in order to show how they are being met by the College.**
- 93. Recommendation 14. The team recommends that the College should devise effective measures to determine the impact of College's activities at regional and national level.**
94. The representatives of the College (e.g. the Director and Vice-Director for Academic Affairs) actively participate in the activities of Rietavas municipality. They claim that the main challenge for the municipality is to develop a strategy for the period, and the College plays a very important role in that planning. As noted earlier, the Director also participates in the activities of Plungė Industrialists Union. The College's representatives' participation in political and business affairs have an obvious benefit, but in some cases the contacts and activities are so closely interrelated that conflict of interest may occur, as discussed above (paragraph 35).
95. The College's infrastructure is used by the local community. The decreasing number of students allows the College students' dormitory to be used as a hostel for temporary workers in the town. Local people use the swimming pool and sports ground, but new enterprises in the region create competition and difficulties in using the infrastructure effectively.
96. Žemaitija College implements pedagogical study programmes in arts (Music Pedagogy, Dance Pedagogy, Art and Crafts pedagogy) which enables the College to make an impact on cultural development of the region: concerts, exhibitions and other cultural events are organized. The College teachers are active participants in cultural, artistic and sport activities as well as in different professional and non-professional associations.
97. In paragraph 146 of the SER the College mentions problems of environmental protection but no mention is made of sustainable use of resources and the impact on sustainable development of the region.

98. Recommendation 15. The team recommends that the College should use its collective knowledge and expertise to contribute towards sustainability and environmental protection.

99. In summary, the College is an important institution of higher education in the region and it implements many activities in different fields, but in many cases the activities are performed without regular or strategic planning. Instead the College concentrates on satisfying external demands, and proper quantitative and qualitative indicators to measure the impact they make on the region are not used.

100. Judgement on the area: Impact on Regional and National Development is given positive evaluation because it meets the criteria of the methodology in respect of effective implementation (11.2), compliance with development priorities (11.3), inclusion in student practice and projects (11.4), and recognition of staff participation (11.5).

VII. GOOD PRACTICE AND ENHANCEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Commendations

- Commendation 1: The team commends as good practice the College's effective staff-student relationship.
- Commendation 2: The team commends as good practice the proactive and successful international mobility opportunities for staff and students.

Recommendations

- Recommendation 1: The team recommends that the College should express its mission and aims to indicate its distinctiveness from other HE Colleges and provide direction for its strategic activities.
- Recommendation 2. The team recommends that the College should recognize that part-time students make up a significant part of student body and must ensure that planning and review activities take into account the separate learning and support needs of part-time and full-time learners, both young and mature students.
- Recommendation 3. The team recommends that, without delay (and before another cohort of students is admitted) the College should review its approach to dealing with low student recruitment, high student drop-out rate and below average employability to ensure that current students are given the best possible opportunity to complete their studies and find employment.
- Recommendation 4: The team recommends that the College should ensure that there is a single definitive, consistent and coherent strategic planning document; in order to achieve this the College should seek external professional advice on how to carry out an effective strategic planning process. This should include ensuring that the indicators used to track progress against strategic aims are the same as the indicators included in the strategic planning document.
- Recommendation 5: The team recommends that the College should ensure that relevant management information data is collected and analysed to enable the College to identify appropriate strategic indicators to inform strategic planning.
- Recommendation 6: The team recommends that the College Council should meet formally as often as necessary, but no less than twice per year, fully documenting their discussions by keeping minutes which include discussion of strategic issues.

- Recommendation 7: The team recommends that the College Council should develop a clear understanding of how effective strategic management operates in an institution of higher education and should proactively engage with strategic planning in the College. The Council should obtain external advice on best practice in management of a higher education institution, to move to a proactive supervision of the College management, rather than merely approving proposals submitted.
- Recommendation 8: The team recommends that the Council should ensure that the Director and other senior members of the college executive have the correct training and support to enable them to lead the college effectively and professionally.
- Recommendation 9: The team recommends that the College should ensure that quality assurance procedures are implemented effectively, monitored continuously and supported by adequate management of quantitative data.
- Recommendation 10: The team recommends that the College should introduce a systematic methodology for identifying and managing strategic risk.
- Recommendation 11. The team recommends that the College should review learning outcomes to ensure that they meet Level 6 of the Lithuanian Qualifications Framework and, in particular, that they require broad theoretical knowledge based on the results of current fundamental and applied research.
- Recommendation 12. The team recommends that the College should ensure that staff have the required knowledge and training to enable effective use of learning outcomes in assessment.
- Recommendation 13. The team recommends that the College should develop and articulate a clear understanding of regional and national needs in order to show how they are being met by the College.
- Recommendation 14. The team recommends that the College should devise effective measures to determine the impact of College's activities at regional and national level.
- Recommendation 15. The team recommends that the College should use its collective knowledge and expertise to contribute towards sustainability and environmental protection.

The team's overall conclusion on the College is that it has failed to effectively address the recommendations of the previous review. In particular, it has not put in place a strategic plan which has enabled it to deal with the serious issues of student recruitment and retention identified by the last review. In 2012 the review team gave Strategic Management a negative evaluation. The effects of not addressing the weaknesses identified in that area have now spread

to other areas of the College's activities, in particular to teaching and learning, such that urgent action is required to ensure the College's viability and protect outcomes for students.

VIII. JUDGEMENT

Žemaitija College is given negative evaluation.

Grupės vadovas:

Team leader: Prof. Robert William Munn

Grupės nariai:

Team members: Dr. Fredy Sidler
Jolanta Bareikienė
Guido Wolf
Augustinas Rotomskis

Vertinimo sekretorius:

Review secretary: Dr. Gillian Mary King

APPENDIX 1 LIST OF DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED

1. Self Evaluation Report of Žemaitija College 2015
2. SER Appendix 1. Žemaitija College Management Schema.
3. SER Appendix 2. Žemaitija College Strategic Activity Plan for 2014–2016.
4. SER Appendix 3. Statute of Žemaitija College.
5. SER Appendix 4. Annual Activity Report of Žemaitija College for the year 2014.
6. SER Appendix 5. Žemaitija College Income and Expenditure in 2012–2014.
7. SER Appendix 6. Indicators of Žemaitija College Strategic Activity Plan implementation.
8. SER Appendix 7. Žemaitija College Quality Guide.
9. SER Appendix 8. A list of Žemaitija College Study Programmes.
10. SER Appendix 9. Number of Žemaitija College Students by Study Programme.
11. SER Appendix 10. A List of the Most Significant Applied Scientific Researches Related to Regional Development.
12. SER Appendix 11. The Most Significant Collaboration Results with Academic, Public Sector and Business Partners of Žemaitija College.
13. Appendix 12. A List of the Most Significant Projects and Other Activities Related SER with Regional Development.
14. Appendix 13. Public Activity of the Academic and Administrative Staff of Žemaitija College.
15. SER Appendix 14. Subjects of the Final Projects in Žemaitija College.
16. SER Appendix 15. Žemaitija College Activity Improvement Plan.
17. SER Appendix 16. A Self-Assessment Group of Žemaitija College, Sub-groups and Terms.
18. Copy of slides from a Powerpoint presentation: 2017–2023 long term strategy draft
19. Study Regulations (No. V-10AT-17, 09-12-2013) (in Lithuanian)
20. Specifications of Quality Assurance Procedures for Operational Processes (in Lithuanian)
21. Human Resource Management Strategy (in Lithuanian)
22. Survey information (in Lithuanian):
 - a. Feedback of Surveys 2014–15: Students, social partners, graduates;
 - b. Feedback of Surveys 2014–15: Studies and programme assessment;
 - c. Feedback of Surveys 2014–15: Study suspension/cancellation
 - d. Feedback of Surveys 2014–15: Subject teaching quality Rietavas faculty

- e. Feedback of Surveys 2014–15: Subject teaching quality Telšiai faculty
- f. Feedback of Surveys 2014–15: Subject teaching quality Mažeikiai faculty
- g. Feedback of subject teaching quality Rietavas faculty 2015–16 (in Lithuanian)
- 23. Council Minutes 2010–2015 (in Lithuanian)
- 24. Academic Council Minutes 2014, 2015 (in Lithuanian)
- 25. Minutes of Study Programme Committees 2014, 2015 (in Lithuanian)
- 26. Staff turnover data 2013/2015 (in Lithuanian)
- 27. Examples of plans of teachers (in Lithuanian)
- 28. Examples of Descriptions of study programmes (in Lithuanian)
- 29. Module descriptions from Agribusiness Technologies Road Vehicle Maintenance, Music Pedagogy, and Social Work study programmes (in Lithuanian)
- 30. Examples of Diploma Supplements (in Lithuanian)
- 31. Activity improvement plan and comments on the implementation
- 32. College Continuing Education Programmes and numbers of students taking part 2010–14 (in Lithuanian)
- 33. Student drop-out data 2014
- 34. Student enrolment and drop-out rate by faculty 2011–15
- 35. Student data according to place of residence 2011–14
- 36. Number of students beginning programmes at 1 October, 2011–2015
- 37. Council Regulations 2010 (Tarybos darbo reglamentas)

APPENDIX 2 LIST OF MEETINGS HELD

	Tuesday 27 October 2015
09.00 – 10.15	Meeting with College Director and Administration staff
10.25 – 11.40	Meeting with self -evaluation team and persons responsible for quality assurance
11.50 – 12.50	Meeting with College Council
13.50 – 14.50	Meeting with Academic Council
15.00 – 16.00	Meeting with Deans of Faculties and Heads of Departments
	Wednesday 28 October 2015
09.00 – 10.00	Meeting with teaching staff and researchers
10.15 – 11.15	Meeting with employees of divisions and support staff
11.30 – 12.30	Meeting with Students and Student Representative Office
13.30 – 14.30	Review of facilities and learning resources Rietavas faculty
14.30 – 15.30	Meeting with Alumni and graduates
15.45 – 16.45	Meeting with Business and social partners
	Thursday 29 October 2015
09.00 – 9.30	Review of facilities and learning resources Telšiai faculty
9.30 – 10.30	Meeting with Administration of Telšiai and Mažeikiai faculties
10.40 – 11:30	Meeting with teaching staff and researchers of Telšiai and Mažeikiai faculties
13.30 – 14.20	Final meeting with Director

ANNEX. ŽEMAITIJA COLLEGE RESPONSE TO REVIEW REPORT



ŽEMAITIJOS KOLEGIJA

Viešoji įstaiga, L. Ivinskio g. 5, Rietavas, tel. (8 448) 68 471, faks. (8 448) 68 584 el. p. zemko@zemko.lt
Duomenys kaupiami ir saugomi Juridinių asmenų registre, kodas 111968394

Studijų kokybės vertinimo centrai	2015-12-30	Nr. R-3-393 (1.42)
	Į	Nr.

DĖL PASTABŲ APIE IŠVADAS

Siunčiame pastabas apie Išvadas.

PRIDEDAMA:

1. Vertinimo išvados, 3 lapai.
2. Vertinimo išvados, anglų kalba, 3 lapai.

Direktorius

Jonas Bačinskas

Kristina Montrimienė, el. p. zemko@zemko.lt, tel 8-448-68471

THE INACCURACIES NOTICED

Chapters and items of the Review Report	Comments on the factual errors
<p>Introduction</p> <p>Item 2.</p> <p><i>Preparation of the SER had been overseen by a group broadly representative of the Žemaitija College community and its social partners, including a student representative, but the internal members were predominantly based at the Rietavas campus and the external members were from the Rietavas area.</i></p>	<p>The team of SER consisted of the College directorate staff whose duties are related to the activity of the whole College but not only to the activity of Rietavas Faculty. Students were represented by one student of Rietavas Faculty and the graduates were represented by one representative of Telšiai Faculty. External members were represented by one person from Rietavas region, the second member was from Plunge region. The subgroups of SER were represented by all faculties (3 persons from Rietavas Faculty, 2 persons from Telsiai Faculty, 2 persons from Mazeikiai Faculty).</p>
<p>III. Strategic Management</p>	
<p>Item 13.</p> <p><i>This Mission is the same as the generic mission common to all colleges in Lithuania, apart from stressing the College's location in the region. As a result, the Mission of the College does not describe the distinctive position of the College in the region and cannot serve as an adequate basis for making strategic decisions. Although the main strategic documents of the College do comply with provisions of the European Higher Education Area and the EU documents relating to higher education, operations within the College do not always reflect this position, as noted below (paragraph 67).</i></p>	<p>Mission of Žemaitija College was formulated on the basis of the aims and objectives of the College activity, defined in Žemaitija College Statute, approved by the Resolution No. 946 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania on 18 July 2012.</p> <p>The network of colleges of the Republic of Lithuania was formed considering the provision for each county to have one state college operating.</p> <p>Žemaitija College is the only college in Telšiai county, therefore, being distinctive and that is reflected in the vision formed.</p> <p>The College by its actions satisfies the requirements of the main documents and the Mission:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Enrolls students in full-time and part-time studies (during general admission and after its completion) keeping to the requirements set. 6. Admits persons who are willing to study one or several subjects and to take an examination to validate the outcomes. 7. Since 2016 distance learning starts. 8. Improvement of qualification and re-qualification is organized.
<p>Item 14.</p> <p><i>One example of the way that the lack of a</i></p>	<p>There is no evidence provided to name the</p>

<p><i>clearly thought-out and realistic mission has impacted the College can be seen in its attitude to its regional identity.</i></p> <p><i>Even though at least 17% of students at some point came to the College from outside the Žemaitija region (and others even continue their studies there while working abroad, flying back when attendance is required), little recognition is given to this by the College. Nor was there evidence of recognition that wider recruitment could to some extent offset the demographic decline in the region. In fact, the number of out-of-region students in the College was claimed to be much lower and insignificant. This suggests that opportunities may have been missed to market at least some of the College's part-time programmes to students residing outside the region.</i></p>	<p>mission as a lacking clearly thought-out and unrealistic mission. Structure of industry and agriculture in Telšiai County does not differ essentially from the other counties of the Republic of Lithuania.</p> <p>Žemaitija region consists of 16 municipalities. Žemaitija College is situated in Telšiai county that consists of 4 municipalities. The statement „little recognition is given to this by the College“ is drawn without any proof. The College values each student, provides everyone with the conditions to study and to pay the study fees in the favorable form for the student, promotes the study programmes actively in 15 regions.</p> <p>Within the General Admission every citizen despite his/her living place can enter the College and he/she is always very much welcomed. Study programmes of Rietavas Faculty were conducted in Telšiai, currently Accounting study programme is conducted in Mazeikiai.</p> <p>There are considerably fewer students entering the College from other counties because those counties also have colleges that offer similar study programmes.</p>
<p>Item 17.</p> <p><i>The College has produced a number of documents related to strategic activity. It is unclear how exactly they relate to each other, to the mission of the institution, or to the serious challenges faced by the College.</i></p>	<p>All the documents that regulate the College activity are combined by the Quality Guide of Žemaitija College which is the one that becomes the connecting link.</p>
<p>Item 18.</p> <p><i>The College's Strategic Activity Plan 2014–2016 does not bear much evidence of a specific focus on the recommendations made after the previous evaluation of the institution. Neither do the strategic aims of the plan explicitly address the serious issues facing the College, such as the decreasing number of students. There is also some confusion over the key indicators which are used to monitor the plan.</i></p>	<p>In reference to the recommendations provided by the experts of the review, the College developed the Plan of Actions for the implementation of the recommendations. The plan provided the measures for each recommendation to be implemented. The plan was endorsed by SKVC. All the measures stipulated in the plan were successfully implemented except the increase of the students' number and reduction of “drop-outs”.</p>
<p>Item 19, and others, as well as recommendation 3, <i>below average employability in some fields..</i></p>	<p>In the paragraph 112 of SER there is the information provided about the high employment rate of the College graduates' in the majority of study programmes or the employment indicator is near the national</p>

	<p>average: „The data of the implemented research The Map of the Specialists Qualifications, the Initial Analysis by Science and Study Monitoring and Analysis Center (MOSTA) in 2015 enables to compare the employability of the College graduates, in accordance with the qualification awarded and the salaries received for the job, with the average indicators of the corresponding study fields graduates from other colleges of Lithuania (see Table 2.3). The graduates of <i>Land Management and Geodesy, Electrical Systems Maintenance</i> have the most successful employability and their indicators are above the average of corresponding study field indicators of the colleges in the country. Employability of the graduates of <i>Social Work, Business Management, Accounting, Road Vehicle Operation</i> study programmes is near the national average. Employability of the graduates of <i>Rural Tourism Management, Landscape Gardening and Design</i> study programmes is below the average of corresponding study fields of the colleges in the country.”</p>
<p>Item 23. <i>For example, the College did not include any part-time students among the group it organized to meet the team.</i></p>	<p>Part-time students were included in the group, it was agreed and confirmed personally about their participation, however, because of the heavy occupancy at work the invited persons did not manage to come and participate in the meeting.</p>