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General statement on the strengths and weaknesses of Teacher's training and Education field study programmes in Lithuania

This general conclusion is based on external evaluation of four programmes in two institutions (at the Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences and at Mykolas Romeris University) in November 2015.

Strengths:

The main strength of teacher's training and education study programmes in Lithuania is the strong link between theoretical and practical training. Amount of practical training and the status of the practice institution are regulated on state level. There is good connection between HEIs and practice institutions, mentors from schools/kindergartens etc participate in programme development, mentors are members of the programme committees, defending boards of students' final works.

There is ongoing programme development, the role of the study programme committee is well designed and established. Higher education institutions develop quality management systems. The electronical environment of feedback system is introduced which gives a good basis for systematic programme development. There is a good cooperative culture with social partners.

Weaknesses:

The main weakness is academic staff members little international cooperation and very few joint research projects. One reason is that staff members are ageing (in LEU) and they are not able to communicate in English. Also participation in exchange programmes should be improved. The strategy for internationalization of universities could help to create more systematic approach – i.e. cooperation agreements with foreign universities which, allow for mandatory student and staff exchange programmes, dual or joint degrees, joint lectures through video- conferencing etc.

The research capacity of staff members is not high. There are few scientific articles published in the high level international journals. For example, HEIs could organize special internal research grant and motivation systems for staff members. Young researchers should be involved into research teams.

One aspect of the programmes which seems to be national level question is small size of the subjects in the programmes (average is 2-3 ECTS). Bigger courses like 6–10 ECTS allow students to focus on smaller number of the subjects on the same time and students' learning process could be more holistic. For example in Scandinavian countries the average amount of the course 15 ECTS.