



STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS

Klaipėdos universitetas

***VISUOMENINĖS GEOGRAFIJOS PROGRAMOS
(621L70002)***

VERTINIMO IŠVADOS

**EVALUATION REPORT
OF *HUMAN GEOGRAPHY* (621L70002)
STUDY PROGRAMME
At Klaipėda University**

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Išvados parengtos anglų kalba
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DUOMENYS APIE ĮVERTINTĄ PROGRAMĄ

Studijų programos pavadinimas	<i>Visuomeninė geografija</i>
Valstybinis kodas	621L70002
Studijų sritis	socialiniai mokslai
Studijų kryptis	visuomeninė geografija
Studijų programos rūšis	universitetinės
Studijų pakopa	antroji
Studijų forma (trukmė metais)	nuolatinės (1,5)
Studijų programos apimtis kreditais	90 ECTS
Suteikiamas laipsnis ir (ar) profesinė kvalifikacija	visuomeninės geografijos magistras
Studijų programos įregistravimo data	2007 m. sausio 29 d.

INFORMATION ON EVALUATED STUDY PROGRAMME

Title of the study programme	<i>Human Geography</i>
State code	621L70002
Study area	Social Sciences
Study field	Human Geography
Kind of the study programme	University studies
Study cycle	Second cycle
Study mode (length in years)	Full-time (1,5)
Volume of the study programme in credits	90 ECTS
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	Master of Human Geography
Date of registration of the study programme	29 January 2007

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The Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education

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I. INTRODUCTION

The external evaluation of the Bachelor study programme in *Human Geography* at Klaipėda University (hereafter, 'the University') was initiated by the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education of Lithuania nominating the international expert group (hereafter, the 'expert group' or 'assessment panel') formed by Professor Geoffrey Robinson (lately of the University of St. Andrews, Scotland – team leader), Professor Bjørn Asheim (University of Lund, Sweden), Professor Tommi Inkinen (University of Helsinki, Finland), Rytas Šalna (President of the Lithuanian Association of Geography Teachers) and Inga Bačelytė (final-year Bachelor student, Vilnius University).

The evaluation of the study programme ('the programme') made use of the following documents: Law on Higher Education and Research of the Republic of Lithuania (2009); Procedure of the External Evaluation and Accreditation of Study Programmes (2009); Methodology for Evaluation of Higher Education Study Programmes (2010); and General Requirements of First Degree and Integrated Study Programmes (2010).

The basis for the evaluation of the study programme is the Self-Evaluation Report (SER), written in 2013, its annexes and the site visit of the expert group to the University on 17 December 2013. The Department of Social Geography ('the Department'), located in the Faculty of Social Sciences ('the Faculty'), is directly responsible for the programme, overseeing its delivery and monitoring. The site visit incorporated all required meetings with different groups: the administrative staff of the Faculty, staff responsible for preparing the self-evaluation documents, teaching staff, students of all years of study, graduates, and employers. The expert group inspected support facilities and resources (classrooms, laboratories, library, computer facilities), scrutinised students' final works, and various other materials.

After discussions and preparations of conclusions and remarks, the expert group presented introductory general conclusions of the visit to the Department's staff. The group subsequently met to discuss and agree the content of the report, which represents the members' consensual views.

Both the evaluated Bachelor and Master programmes are located in the same Department within the same Faculty. They share the same facilities; the same departmental staff contribute to both programmes, albeit with different loadings and with the addition in the Master programme of specialist teachers from other departments; administration and management are essentially the same for both programmes; and employers who met with the evaluation group related to both programmes and interacted at Department and Faculty levels. The site visit covered both programmes simultaneously and, inevitably, the two evaluation reports have much in common.

II. PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

1. Programme aims and learning outcomes

The programme aims and learning outcomes, detailed in the SER, are well defined, clear and publicly accessible in a variety of open information sources. The aim of the study programme is to train highly qualified specialists of social geography by developing their competences orientated towards the knowledge economy: these include abilities to investigate the social and economic development problems of Lithuania and to apply the principles of sustainability to the solution of social problems in the context of the Baltic Region and EU member states. Sixteen specific intended learning outcomes are outlined in five groups (knowledge and its applications, research abilities, special abilities, social abilities and personal abilities). These include both quantitative and qualitative requirements with emphasis on the importance of critical academic

thinking. Every course is built around a selection of those learning outcomes, the whole designed to further the programme's four priorities. In addition to satisfying local and regional employment and development needs, the priorities include ensuring international mobility for students and graduates in the European labour market and in further studies. Overall, the expert group considers the outlined priorities to be quite broad but adequate to summarise the general mission of the programme. The goals are supportable and correspond to normal expectations of MA studies.

Meetings with both employers and alumni revealed they were satisfied with the personal learning results and skills together with employment competence. Both stakeholder groups stressed the importance of management skills and other knowledge sources such as basic knowledge of contracts and law, areas that the programme managers might consider in strengthening students' preparation for administrative roles. The expert group was concerned that the study goals and aims in the Department's bachelor and master programmes are still quite similar, even though the programmes have gained more individuality since the previous evaluation. It may simply be that much of the text is identical in the SERs but it was also noted that the staff could not account for the difference in the bachelor and master level programme names to the evaluation panel.

The programme was extensively revised in 2012. Following reviews of labour-market demands, student surveys, recommendations of alumni and employers, conclusions of the previous external evaluation and surveys carried out by Department staff, the decision was taken to update the programme, with the aim of strengthening its competitiveness. The programme aims and intended learning outcomes underwent considerable change as part of the update and they continue to be under review. The programme name, however, remains problematic, the SER indicating that the title *Human Geography* is not understandable to employers. In a parallel revision the BA programme was more narrowly defined as *Social Economic Geography and Regional Studies*. This nomenclature is somewhat confusing, in that *Human Geography* is commonly understood as the meta-concept and *Social [and] Economic Geography* as subsections of human geography. The evaluation panel recommends reconsidering the naming of both programmes. They could possibly have the same title but one option would be to name the BA programme *Social and Economic Geography*, even though these are two separate branches within the study field of Human Geography, and to name the MA programme *Social and Economic Geography and Regional Studies*. This should make it easier to distinguish between the programmes and also allow an increased specialisation towards topics of specific relevance for Lithuania generally and the region specifically.

2. Curriculum design

Beginning in the autumn of 2013, the programme now extends over three semesters rather than the previous four. This is reflected in the reduction to 90 credits, the minimum legal requirement for second-level programmes. Students had been involved in the moves for and planning of this change and fully approved of it.

The programme design accords with the University's regulations and national legislation. Since the previous evaluation the programme designers have considerably revised the courses. The subject areas are clearly distinct from each other. The structural organization of courses is logical and also provides a small selection of elective courses. The study content and student workload are spread evenly within the timetable. The courses are not repetitive and are broad and extensive in content, presenting a range of the diversity of Human Geography, in line with the programme's general goals. They are consistent with the master study level as far as can be seen from the course descriptions and are designed to enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes. Topics are more up to date than in the undergraduate programme but reading lists could be more representative of mainstream modern studies.

The publications cited for students indicate that the programme's scientific content still relies extensively on national publications, focusing on the local and national at the expense of international issues. The previous evaluation panel encouraged the referencing of international publications in courses and more staff interaction with the international geographical community. This is even more of a weakness than for the BA programme. The present staff acknowledge that more teacher and student international exchanges would aid the inclusion of more international science in the programmes. In their meeting with the evaluation panel, however, the staff claimed that they lacked information on how to make the programme more international in its nature and standards.

Amongst the improvements made since the last external evaluation is the greater presence of methodological courses. It is notable, however, that the increased attention to methodology is strongly focused on GIS. This is partly a response to employers' expressed wishes for graduates who can work with such technology. But if the intention is to present to students examples of the full range of the subject's modern approaches, courses focusing on qualitative analytical methods are desirable. Several courses state the intention to develop students' understanding of 'processes'. Most often the understanding of a 'process' in Human Geography requires a qualitative research design based on an explicit theoretical framework. The methodological courses do not fully complement the substantive courses and qualitative research methods and themes could be strengthened within the programme. This is a particular area that would benefit from the recommended increase in international collaborations.

3. Staff

The SER provides details of the qualifications and experience of all the programme staff. The senior staff members hold PhD degrees and have extensive teaching experience. They comfortably meet the legal requirements and their number is more than adequate to enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

A much smaller proportion of the Department staff deliver the MA programme. At the previous evaluation only six staff contributed to the programme. Now, eight staff teach 10 compulsory courses and four electives. Five of these staff are from the Department; the other three are from the Department of Public Administration and Law, the Department of Mathematics and Statistics, and the GIS Research Lab, Versailles University (France), the latter providing a welcome international input to the programme. It is expected that more personnel will join the programme from other departments, both in the University and abroad, to teach specialist courses. It is a concern of the Department that some of the specialist teaching has to rely on teachers who are not geographers, due to the lack of human geography specialists in Lithuania, a situation that is likely to persist with the country's lack of doctoral studies in the subject. But it is clear that this group of staff is adequate in number and qualifications to ensure the achievement of intended learning outcomes.

The overall reduction in the length of the Department's two programmes and the number of courses that staff are responsible for, appear to have had a positive effect on the time available for staff to allocate to research. There were some contradictory views expressed to the expert group, however, by members of staff regarding workloads that some consider as remaining heavy.

Staff turnover is well managed, having been largely the changes of external staff contributing to the programme. The running of the programme in respect of staff continuity appears to be sustainable. The University offers programmes to support staff in developing their professional skills. Teachers have adapted their teaching methods to incorporate the use of discussions, debates, the Moodle system, visualizations and other innovations in their classes. Students greatly appreciate these developments. It is a concern, however, that at present, doctoral degree studies are unavailable in Human Geography in Lithuania. There is no doubt that PhD

qualifications in that subject field, as opposed to Physical Geography (where new PhD programmes are also not to be developed), following on from 1st. and 2nd. cycle studies, would greatly improve the academic integrity (and national reputation) of the subject and have a positive impact on its future teaching. In recent years some staff members have visited abroad, and seven of them have participated in international projects and conducted scientific or applied research related to the study programme. They collaborate in international projects and can inject their knowledge of an international context into their teaching. In this regard, it is laudable that the Faculty offers some financial support to participate in international conferences and research activities. Most of the staff, however, are limited in the orientation of their teaching and research to regional or national issues. Moreover, the international visibility of the research is very limited. Most of the work is published in Lithuanian and in publications that do not have an impact on the scientific community outside Lithuania. This limited research activity shows also in the curriculum design.

The evaluation panel saw an improvement in international teacher exchanges since the previous evaluation. Although the number of the Department's outbound teachers remained constant at two over the two-year elapsed period (SER Table 5), the number of inbound teachers increased from one to five in 2012-13, albeit only one joined the MA programme. Their impact is selective through particular courses, but the participation of foreign teachers in the programme does help to motivate students to consider international dimensions of their studies.. Nevertheless, there is still scope for considerable enhancement of the programme's internationalism through the staffs' activities. Again, there has been improvement since the last evaluation. For example, an international seminar is held annually on the themes of social geography, research methodology, and regional studies; these lead to published articles, some of them, as with other staff publications, appearing in foreign periodicals. Together with 12 partners from Lithuania, Russia, and Poland, the Department was awarded an international project under the Lithuania-Poland-Russia Cross-Border Co-operation Programme (2007-2013) – *Lagoons as Crossroads for Interaction between Peoples and Tourism in the South-East Baltic Region: from History to Present (CROSSROADS 2)*. The Department received a grant of €112,000 for the implementation of activities, which has played a big part in funding some of the improvements in the Department's material resources.

It is evident that the international outlook, with some exceptions, focuses largely on neighbouring countries such as Poland and other Baltic countries. The panel therefore strongly encourages the staff to seek additional possibilities for international research collaboration on a more extensive European and global scale. For example, there are no identified contacts in the USA or Asia. A related obstacle to enhancing the international dimensions of the Department's two programmes is the strong orientation to publishing only in the Lithuanian language. This is perfectly understandable but the expert group does recommend committing to publishing in English and participating in international research networks such as IGU (International Geographical Union), RSA (Regional Studies Association) and AAG (Association of American Geographers). This cannot happen in the short term – it will require a systematic widening of outlook and the securing of considerable financial support – but it would ultimately help the staff's publication and research profile and hence feed into the programme's international content.

4. Facilities and learning resources

The available lecture theatres, seminar rooms, computing laboratories and libraries, with adequate space, seating and Wi-Fi connectivity continue to provide a good setting in which to deliver much of the programme. Nevertheless, the Department seeks to improve the main lecture theatre for geography teaching and to that end has already purchased new furniture and installed new audio-visual equipment for lectures. But the material resources available to the programme were severely criticised in the report of the last evaluation. It is to the Department's credit and

indeed that of the University and the Faculty that considerable steps have been taken and funding secured, in such a short time, to achieve substantial improvements in the facilities and equipment available to the programme.

EU projects have provided devolved funding to improve the facilities. The classrooms used for the studies of “Geographic Research Methods” and “GIS Studies” have been adjusted to specialised use. All the classrooms have computer equipment and internet access, supplemented with effective Wi-Fi connectivity throughout the Faculty building. The University has an extensive range of software licences and the Department has secured an adequate provision of computing and related technical equipment, including the ArcGIS 10.1 software, to satisfy the needs of staff for preparation and delivery of the courses, as well as having unlimited access for staff and students to ArcGIS 9.3. Other material resources have also seen improvements. These include an upgrading of the stock of maps and atlases. The continuing enrichment of learning resources related to studies of general cartography and GIS had already begun before the last evaluation, and the latest teaching literature for theory studies and practical assignments has been acquired.

The University and Faculty libraries have significantly improved their provision in terms of available books, databases and periodicals, as more funds have been made available. The SERs do not separately identify the library provision for the two programmes but, for example, the Department is able to obtain approximately 152 printed books annually for students, a much better provision than at the time of the previous evaluation. The librarians acknowledge that the overall stock of traditional book resources is rather low but are trying to redress the situation by increasing the acquisition of e-books. The University library provides access to leading publishing houses and academic databases. As yet, however, there are few references to the various electronic media in students’ theses, despite the collaboration of the Department with the University library in organising courses and workshops to develop students’ competence in making best use of the available resources. References to international literature are also very limited, despite the international content of many bibliographies and even allowing that the programme’s recent acquisitions listed in the SER’s Appendices 6 and 7 have a poor international presence. Clearly there is still more work to be done in encouraging both staff and students to avail themselves of the full range of literature resources relevant to their courses.

5. Study process and student assessment

The programme offers Lithuania’s only second-level qualification in Human Geography. It admits graduates of undergraduate programmes in the fields of social and physical sciences. Since 2013, there has been no entry exam and admission is by competition scores that are well founded and clearly explained in the SER.

The number of entrants to the programme has increased in recent years but remains low. Only nine students were enrolled in 2013 although the demand for the programme is shown by there having been 26 applicants, the programme being the first priority of 15 of them. Although low recruitment does provide good opportunities for close contact with and support from the eight staff who deliver the programme, the long-term sustainability of a programme with such numbers must be questionable.

The organisation of the study process, in terms of lecture, seminar and examination schedules, supports the programme aims and enables an adequate acquisition of knowledge and skills in achieving the intended learning outcomes. To cater for the majority of students who are in employment, classes are held in the evening. There are good academic and social support systems, as outlined in the SER, including psychological help and sports clubs within the Faculty. Limited additional funding is available for students with special needs and there are incentive grants for students who achieve a very good or excellent academic record. In actuality,

few have been awarded to students in the Department and the grants appear not to be providing their intended stimulus. This is perhaps a matter to be reviewed by the Faculty.

All necessary information is made readily and reliably available to students in a variety of ways. The students voiced no complaints to the expert group about the information provided to them and this is confirmed by their course-questionnaire responses.

On average, two students from every group drop out before completing the programme. The most common reason is that they are in employment and although having passed the in-course assessments fail to complete the final theses on time. Generally, however, they return to studies a year later and defend their theses. As with the BA programme, graduates secure work in a variety of employment areas. It is clear, however, from the meeting with employers and alumni, together with information in the SER, that the MA programme is producing highly employable graduates, albeit in small numbers, for the targeted labour market of local, regional and national agencies. Many graduates continue in employment with the same organisations in which they worked during their studies. Graduates' ability to work with GIS and utilise analytical skills are valued but administrative skills and strategic thinking were identified, even at this level, as qualities that could be better developed.

Students are encouraged to carry out research activities and 12 from the Department are involved in the abovementioned CROSSROADS project. The Faculty demonstrates good practice in holding an annual international conference where students can present their work. Master-level students in particular also participate in projects with staff members, where they can improve their theoretical knowledge and research skills.

The Department is involved in the Erasmus exchange programme but there has been no MA student participation in 2011–2013. This has been explained by students being in employment and employers being reluctant to release the students for the requisite periods of time.

The assessment system of students' performance is extensively documented. The regime and the marking criteria are well documented and students were content with the assessment methods and their fairness, as reported to the evaluation panel and demonstrated by the results from regular student surveys. There is an effective feedback system and the students have means to interact and have their views heard. During the courses, students complete assignments and accumulate grades towards the outcome of their final examination. The marks are ultimately scaled to represent 50 per cent of the programme assessment, the remaining 50 per cent being derived from the final thesis. At the previous evaluation, the expert group had urged a critical review of the final thesis and this major component of the programme still warrants attention. The level of analysis and standard of presentation have certainly improved, although qualitative analysis is still lacking. The theses still contain few international references, countering observations that the limited library holding of books is compensated by Internet access to journals – resources might be there but the students are not making best use of them. The standard of theses remains below that which is expected in other European universities. The expert group is aware that the theses are defended to a panel of competent specialists. Complying with the legal requirement to include an external member, a scientist from another university – the external examiner system that is usual elsewhere – might begin to address the comparability issue of standards.

6. Programme management

The SER clearly presents the system and responsibilities for decision making and management of the programme. The University's internal quality assurance system appears to be working well. Each of the three management levels, Department, Faculty and University, has clearly assigned roles in periodic review and monitoring processes. And a mark of the effectiveness of the management system is the achievement in making so many successful changes and improvements to the programme in only two years since the last external evaluation. The SER

lists 11 major changes in response to the 2011 evaluation, many of them already mentioned elsewhere in this report. The current panel was impressed by the efforts that had been made and especially by the sense of ownership of the improved programme conveyed by all parties in the various meetings.

The internal evaluation and improvement processes engage representatives of all stakeholders. Management information is collected and analysed adequately at several levels of administration. Of great help for programme improvement are regular surveys of students' opinions about the quality of studies and the objectivity of assessments. The results are disseminated within the programme and are additional to the continuing feedback that emanates from the classroom interactions of students and staff. Employers who met with the assessment panel were content that their informal and continuing contacts with programme staff had influenced and continue to influence programme developments. They welcome their representation on the programme committee but would still welcome the opportunity for a more formal wider engagement with the programme, perhaps in a round-table format on a regular, possibly annual basis. Both students and staff were particularly keen to express how the staff are willing to listen to and adopt suggestions. They cited the reduction in the length of the programme as deriving partly from student input into programme review. The expert group did have one concern over the manner of appointment of the student representative on the programme committee and wonder if selection would be more appropriate by the student body rather than by the staff.

The evaluation panel is of the view that the low number of students starting on and graduating from the master programme represents a big challenge to the Department. The panel is aware of the limitations of the number of state-funded places but, despite the well-documented demand for the programme, the low student numbers may represent a threat to its sustainability. This is perceived as a very serious problem for the discipline, as the programme is unique in Lithuania by offering second-level studies in human geography. Graduates are the only ones who could proceed to doctoral studies in the subject, albeit that these would have to be pursued outside Lithuania. Therefore the Department, Faculty and University should carefully consider how to expand the intake of students to the programme.

One solution, which is often used abroad, especially in smaller nations such as the Nordic countries, is to merge similar master courses offered in the same faculty. The evaluation panel observed that the Faculty offers programmes in European Studies and Regional Governance, which topic wise have features in common with Human Geography, even if the theoretical perspectives differ. These master courses are also suffering from a low number of students. It is not in the remit of the expert group to state what should be done but, as an illustration, a merged master course in regional studies could consist of common general courses (e.g. the history of the European Union, regional planning and methodology) and specialised courses in social and economic geography, European studies and regional governance, which would moreover be reflected in and give perspective to the master theses. Graduates from such a programme would certainly be eligible for PhD studies in Social and Economic Geography elsewhere in Europe.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Make a sound academic case to change the programme names so as to convey their scope better and submit it to the relevant legislative body; and continue to review the aims and intended learning outcomes of the Department's two programmes so as to reinforce their distinctiveness.
2. Increase the international content of the programme, for example by constantly upgrading the course reading lists and including more journal articles from leading foreign publications.

3. Introduce more qualitative methods and themes, including a separate specialist course, and better complement the content of substantive courses with appropriate methodological analysis, in line with modern international developments in the subject.
4. Further encourage the growth of the staff's international activities. Currently the programme's international dimension largely comprises staff and student visits and individual projects that commonly involve neighbouring countries. (The CROSSROADS project is a notable and valuable exception to the individuality of projects.) The international perspective could be broadened more to include Western Europe and North America and could extend to publishing more in leading international journals. This recommendation is not to deny the importance of studying and addressing Lithuanian issues. But bringing to bear on them aspects of the accumulated scholarship and methodological developments in the international geographical community would enhance Lithuanian studies and, reciprocally, would bring Lithuanian work more prominently into that arena.
5. Continue the improvement in material resources, especially by expanding the representation of international publications.
6. Address the remaining weaknesses in final-year theses, especially by requiring more references to foreign literature sources and better analytical content. Inclusion of an external member of the thesis defence panels is essential.
7. Strengthen still further the stakeholder input to programme planning, perhaps by instituting an appropriately timed annual round-table exchange of views and information with programme staff.
8. Develop strategies for increasing the number of entrants to the programme or collaborating with other departments to launch a more sustainable programme that will produce more graduates in Human Geography and related subjects for which the labour market demonstrates a clear and continuing demand.

IV. SUMMARY

Programme aims and learning outcomes: *Strengths* – well-defined aims and mainly achievable intended learning outcomes; the programme aims are consistent with learning outcomes that are appropriate to the master studies level and to the target labour market for graduates. *Weakness* – the naming of both BA and MA programmes is problematic and the individuality of the two programmes remains less clear than it should be.

Curriculum design: *Strengths* – the changes made to the curriculum, which both in length and revised courses have led to greater student satisfaction while preserving an acceptable coverage of the diversity and breadth of human geography; practical and methodological content has been improved, albeit qualitative analytical methods warrant more attention. *Weakness* - the paucity of international references in the courses, reflecting the need to grow the international dimensions of the programme.

Staff: *Strengths* – a well-qualified staff enthusiastic about the programme and who liaise well with the students in continuing to develop the programme. *Weakness* – despite some improvement since the previous evaluation, the international dimensions of teaching and research activities remain in need of enhancement.

Facilities and learning resources: *Strengths* – the considerable effort and financing that have gone into improving the facilities and resources to their present level where they much better provide for the needs of the programme. *Weakness* – although literature resources have grown, there is still room for considerable improvement in international representation.

Study process and student assessment: *Strengths* – organisation of the programme schedule to accommodate the needs of a student body that is largely in employment; opportunities for

research work, especially in the CROSSROADS project. *Weaknesses* – poor use by both staff and students in the courses, including the final-year theses, of the available international literature resources. Although much improved since the previous external evaluation, the overall standard of the theses remains well below that expected in other European countries; the theses still feature a relatively low amount and quality of analytical content; they still closely follow the quantitative traditions within the subject and fail to embrace the more qualitative approaches that characterise much of modern human geography.

Programme management: *Strengths* – the good use made of the outcomes of external and internal evaluations to improve the programme; the achievement of so many positive changes to the programme since the previous external evaluation exemplifies the management's effectiveness. All levels of the planning and quality-assurance systems welcome and pay heed to students' opinions. There is now employer representation on the programme committee and staff maintain good contact with alumni and employers.

V. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *Human Geography* (state code – 621L70002) at Klaipėda University is given **positive** evaluation.

Study programme assessment in points by evaluation areas.

No.	Evaluation Area	Evaluation Area in Points*
1.	Programme aims and learning outcomes	3
2.	Curriculum design	3
3.	Staff	3
4.	Material resources	3
5.	Study process and assessment (student admission, study process, student support, achievement assessment)	3
6.	Programme management (programme administration, internal quality assurance)	4
	Total:	19

*1 (unsatisfactory) - there are essential shortcomings that must be eliminated;

2 (satisfactory) - meets the established minimum requirements, needs improvement;

3 (good) - the field develops systematically, has distinctive features;

4 (very good) - the field is exceptionally good.

Grupės vadovas:
Team leader: Prof. Geoffrey Robinson

Grupės nariai:
Team members: Prof. dr. Bjørn Asheim
Prof. dr. Tommi Inkinen
Rytas Šalna
Inga Bačelytė

**KLAIPĖDOS UNIVERSITETO ANTROSIOS PAKOPOS STUDIJŲ PROGRAMOS
VISUOMENINĖ GEOGRAFIJA (VALSTYBINIS KODAS – 621L70002) 2014-02-24
EKSPERTINIO VERTINIMO IŠVADŲ NR. SV4-80 IŠRAŠAS**

<...>

V. APIBENDRINAMASIS ĮVERTINIMAS

Klaipėdos universiteto studijų programa *Visuomeninė geografija* (valstybinis kodas – 621L70002) vertinama **teigiamai**.

Eil. Nr.	Vertinimo sritis	Srities įvertinimas, balais*
1.	Programos tikslai ir numatomi studijų rezultatai	3
2.	Programos sandara	3
3.	Personalas	3
4.	Materialieji ištekliai	3
5.	Studijų eiga ir jos vertinimas	3
6.	Programos vadyba	4
	Iš viso:	19

- * 1 - Nepatenkinamai (yra esminių trūkumų, kuriuos būtina pašalinti)
 2 - Patenkinamai (tenkina minimalius reikalavimus, reikia tobulinti)
 3 - Gerai (sistemiškai plėtojama sritis, turi savitų bruožų)
 4 - Labai gerai (sritis yra išskirtinė)

<...>

IV. SANTRAUKA

Programos tikslai ir numatomi studijų rezultatai. *Stiprybės:* apibrėžti tikslai ir iš esmės pasiekiami numatomi studijų rezultatai; programos tikslai dera su numatomais studijų rezultatais, kurie atitinka magistro studijų pakopos absolvento lygį ir tikslinės darbo rinkos poreikius. *Silpnybės:* ir bakalauro, ir magistro studijų programų pavadinimai abejotini, o abiejų programų savitumas vis dar ne toks aiškus, kaip turėtų būti.

Programos sandara. *Stiprybės:* programos pakeitimai, susiję su jos trukme ir patikslintais dalykais, dabar labiau tenkina studentus, nors kartu išsaugota priimtina visuomeninės geografijos įvairovė; patobulintas praktinis ir metodinis turinys, nors kokybiniais analitiniais metodams reikėtų skirti daugiau dėmesio. *Silpnybės:* dėstant dalykus mažai naudojamosi tarptautine informacija; tai reiškia, kad reikia stiprinti tarptautinį programos aspektą.

Personalas. *Stiprybės:* kvalifikuotas personalas, kuris su dideliu užsidegimu įgyvendina šią programą ir toliau ją tobulina palaikydamas ryšį su studentais. *Silpnybės:* nepaisant kai kurių patobulinimų, atliktų po paskutinio įvertinimo, vis dar reikia stiprinti tarptautinį mokymo ir mokslo tiriamosios veiklos aspektą.

Materialieji ištekliai. *Stiprybės:* daug pastangų ir finansų įdėta į materialiujų išteklių pagerinimą iki dabartinio lygio, kuris daug geriau užtikrina šios programos poreikius. *Silpnybės:* nors literatūros išteklių padaugėjo, tarptautinių šaltinių galėtų būti ir daugiau.

Studijų eiga ir jos vertinimas. *Stiprybės:* programos tvarkaraščio sudarymas atsižvelgiant į studentų, kurie dirba, poreikius; mokslinio darbo, ypač pagal projektą *Crossroads* galimybes. *Silpnybės:* ir dėstytojai, ir studentai kursuose, taip pat ir rašydami baigiamuosius darbus, mažai naudojami prieinamais tarptautiniais literatūros šaltiniais. Nors po paskutiniojo išorinio vertinimo atlikta daug patobulinimų, bendras baigiamųjų darbų lygis ir toliau gerokai atsilieka nuo siekiamo kitose Europos valstybėse; Baigiamieji darbai rodo, kad analitinės dalies apimtis vis dar palyginti maža ir neaukštos kokybės; juos rašant vis dar stipriai laikomasi kiekybinių tyrinėjamos temos apimtės tradicijų, o ne šiuolaikinei visuomenės geografijai būdingo kokybinio požiūrio.

Programos vadyba. *Stiprybės:* programai patobulinti gerai pasinaudojama išorinio ir vidinio vertinimo išvadomis; tai, kad po ankstesnio išorinio vertinimo pasiekta tiek daug teigiamų programos pokyčių, patvirtina efektyvią vadybą. Visuose planavimo ir kokybės užtikrinimo lygmenyse paisoma studentų nuomonės. Šiuo metu programos komitete yra darbdavių atstovas, darbuotojai palaiko gerą ryšį su absolventais ir darbdaviais.

III. REKOMENDACIJOS

1. Parengti ir atitinkamai sprendimus priimančiai institucijai pateikti akademiškai pagrįstą siūlymą keisti studijų programų pavadinimus, kad jie geriau atspindėtų programų apimtį, ir toliau tikslinti abiejų Socialinės geografijos katedros programų tikslus bei numatomus studijų rezultatus siekiant sustiprinti jų savitumą.
2. Stiprinti programos turinio tarptautiškumą, pavyzdžiui, nuolat atnaujinant dalykų literatūros sąrašus ir įtraukiant daugiau pagrindiniuose užsienio žurnaluose paskelbtų straipsnių.
3. Įdiegti daugiau kokybinių metodų ir įtraukti daugiau temų, įskaitant atskirą *specialybės* kursą (dalyką), o gilinamųjų dalykų turinį labiau papildyti atitinkama metodine analize, atsižvelgiant į naujausius tarptautinius pokyčius konkretaus dalyko srityje.
4. Toliau skatinti darbuotojų tarptautinę veiklą. Šiuo metu programos tarptautinę dimensiją daugiausia sudaro personalo ir studentų vizitai, dažniausiai į kaimynines šalis, ir individualūs projektai, kuriuose paprastai dalyvauja kaimyninės valstybės (naudinga ir vertinga šių individualių projektų išimtis yra projektas *Crossroads*). Tarptautinę perspektyvą būtų galima labiau išplėsti į šią veiklą įtraukiant Vakarų Europą ir Šiaurės Ameriką ir daugiau straipsnių skelbiant svarbiausiuose tarptautiniuose žurnaluose. Šia rekomendacija nenorima paneigti Lietuvos problemų nagrinėjimo ir jų sprendimo svarbos. Bet jeigu jie būtų susieti su tarptautinės geografinės bendruomenės sukauptais mokslo ir metodologijos pasiekimais, tai paskatintų Lietuvos tyrinėjimus ir atitinkamai išryškintų Lietuvos pasiekimus šioje srityje.
5. Toliau gerinti materialiuosius išteklius, ypač didinant tarptautinių leidinių skaičių.
6. Šalinti su baigiamaisiais darbais susijusius trūkumus, ypač reikalaujant pateikti daugiau nuorodų į užsienio literatūros šaltinius ir stiprinti jų analitinę dalį. Labai svarbu, kad į baigiamojo darbo gynimo vertinimo komisiją būtų įtrauktas asmuo iš kitos institucijos.
7. Dar labiau didinti socialinių dalininkų indėlį į programos planavimo procesą, galbūt kasmet, tinkamu laiku organizuojant „apvalaus stalo“ susitikimus, kuriuose su programą įgyvendinančiais darbuotojais būtų keičiamasi nuomonėmis ir informacija.

8. Kurti strategiją, kaip padidinti stojančiųjų į šią programą skaičių, arba, bendradarbiaujant su kitomis katedromis, pradėti įgyvendinti tvaresnę programą, pagal kurią bus rengiama daugiau visuomeninės geografijos ir susijusių dalykų absolventų, kurių poreikis darbo rinkoje neabejotinas ir nuolatinis.

<...>

Paslaugos teikėja patvirtina, jog yra susipažinusi su Lietuvos Respublikos baudžiamojo kodekso¹ 235 straipsnio, numatančio atsakomybę už melagingą ar žinomai neteisingai atliktą vertimą, reikalavimais.

Vertėjos rekvizitai (vardas, pavardė, parašas)

¹ Žin., 2002, Nr.37-1341.