



**ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ**  
HELLENIC REPUBLIC



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# Accreditation Report for the Undergraduate Study Programme of:

**Economic and Regional Development**

**Institution: Panteion University**

**Date: 26 June 2021**



Επιχειρησιακό Πρόγραμμα  
Ανάπτυξη Ανθρώπινου Δυναμικού,  
Εκπαίδευση και Διά Βίου Μάθηση  
Με τη συγχρηματοδότηση της Ελλάδας και της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης



Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the Undergraduate Study Programme of **Economic and Regional Development** of the **Panteion University** for the purposes of granting accreditation

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## **PART A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE REVIEW**

### **I. The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel**

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the Undergraduate Study Programme of **Economic and Regional Development** of the **Panteion University** comprised the following five (5) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

- 1. Prof. Konstantinos Serfes (Chair)**  
Drexel University, United States of America
- 2. Prof. Fragkiskos Filippaios**  
University of East Anglia, United Kingdom
- 3. Prof. Nicholas Vonortas**  
The George Washington University, United States of America
- 4. Reader Jannis Angelis**  
KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Sweden
- 5. Mr. Stelios Mastrogiannakis**  
Member of the Economic Chamber of Greece, Greece

## II. Review Procedure and Documentation

The Accreditation review process for the Economic and Regional Development Undergraduate Programme of the Panteion University was held during June 21-26, 2021. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic all our meetings were held through the Zoom electronic platform and our onsite visit was held by viewing a prepared video. The documentation received prior to our virtual meetings adequately described the current programme and practices that are in place. Furthermore, the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel (EEAP) asked for and received copies of all the power point presentations.

On **Monday, 31 May 2021**, the EEAP was informed, via Zoom meeting, by HAHE's Director General, Dr. Christina Besta, on HAHE's mission, standards and guidelines of the accreditation process.

On **Tuesday, 22 June 2021**, the EEAP held a private debriefing meeting to discuss logistics in association with virtual visits and the allocation of various tasks.

On **Tuesday, 22 June 2021**, the EEAP participated in 5 teleconferences with:

- (1) Rector and President of MODIP, Professor Christina Koulouri, and Head of the Department, Professor Ioannis Psycharis. They offered an overview of the Undergraduate Programme (history, academic profile, current status, strengths, and possible areas of concern);
- (2) OMEA & MODIP representatives (Antonis Rovolis, Angelos Mimis, Vassileios Tselios, Ioanna Keramidou, Asimina Christoforou, Georgios Babinas, Vasilius Kefis, Despina Papadimitriou, Dimitra Iordanoglou and Georgios Lykourgiotis). They discussed with EEAP Members the degree of compliance to the Quality Standards for Accreditation, and they described student assignments, theses, exam papers & examination material;
- (3) Teaching staff members (Antigone Lyberaki, Konstantinos Bithas, Sofia-Stella Kyvelou, Stavros Degiannakis, Vasileios Avdikos and Helga Stefannson). They informed the EEAP Members about professional development opportunities, mobility, workload, student evaluations; competence and adequacy of the teaching staff to ensure learning outcomes; link between teaching and research; teaching staff's involvement in applied research, projects and research activities directly related to the programme; and identify possible areas of weakness;
- (4) Six current students of the UGP. The EEAP Members discussed with the students openly and freely. They were informed about satisfaction from study experience, the adequacy of facilities, student input in quality assurance, and priority issues concerning student life and welfare.

- (5) The EEAP Co-Panellists met to debrief on the information gathered during the day and to compare and contrast notes.

On **Wednesday, 23 June 2021**, the EEAP participated in 6 teleconferences with:

- (1) Teaching and administrative staff members (Chrysostomos Stoforos, Angelos Mimis, Dimitrios Ierapetritis, Dimitris Kandianis, Spyros Koutsouris, Andriana Katsadoni, Theodoros Papachrysanthou and Sofia Gkoutoufa) to evaluate, via discussion and on-line tour, whether learning materials, equipment and facilities (classrooms, lecture halls, libraries, laboratories) are adequate for effective learning.
- (2) Ten recent and past graduates of the Programme including a top ranked recent graduate, two Ph.D. students, two Ph.D. graduates, senior managers of Greek companies and a faculty at another Greek University. The EEAP had the opportunity to discuss their experience of studying at the Department and how it helped them in choosing their respective career paths.
- (3) Seven representatives of employer organizations and social partners, including the President of the Economic Chamber of Greece, the President of the Centre for Planning and Economic Research, the mayor of Cholargos-Papagou Municipality, the President of the Municipal council of Kallithea, the Heads of the Managing Authority of the Regional Operational Program of the Attiki and the Northern Regions and a General Director of Alpha Bank. The EEAP had the opportunity to discuss the relations of the Department with external stakeholders and got impressions regarding the employability of the Department students (as interns) and graduates with external stakeholders from the private and the public sector.
- (4) Private debriefing meeting among the EEAP Members to primarily discuss findings up to that point and prepare an oral report.
- (5) OMEA & MODIP representatives (Antonis Rovolis, Angelos Mimis, Vassileios Tselios, Ioanna Keramidou, Asimina Christoforou, Georgios Babinas, Vasilios Kefis, Despina Papadimitriou, Dimitra Iordanoglou and Markos Konstantakis). EEAP members and OMEA and MODIP representatives discussed on various points especially revisiting issues that required further clarification.
- (6) Head of the Department (Ioannis Psycharis). In the "closure" meeting the EEAP offered a short list of findings and preliminary suggestions for possible future improvements and in turn it brainstormed with all present on various responses.

From **24 to 26 of June 2021**, the EEAP worked privately on drafting its Report.

### **III. Study Programme Profile**

The Department of Economics and Regional Development was founded in 1989. It offers undergraduate, Masters, PhD and Post-Doctoral programs. It is one of a number of Economics Departments in Greece and its graduates are registered with the Greek Chamber of Commerce. Each year, approximately 200 students are admitted into the undergraduate program. At most 60 graduates are selected each year for the graduate program and a limited number of students are admitted to the Doctoral Program. The goal of the Department is to provide students with comprehensive studies in Economics and Regional Development Science. The subjects covered in the Department include significant contemporary and current issues in economics such as economic development, international economic and financial crises and how to confront them, the role of international trade and of international organizations and financial institutions, the convergence/investigation of developmental inequalities between countries; the planning and organization of private and public corporations, the policies of the EU, the strengthening of entrepreneurship, the utilization of technology and innovation, the strengthening of dynamic sectors, the activation of social capital, the analysis of regional inequalities, the environment and sustainable development, the investigation of the role of urban centers and metropolises, regional planning and balanced regional development.

The length of the undergraduate program is four (4) years, and it is divided into 8 semesters. Its goal is to sharpen the abilities of its students and encourage their interests so that they learn to work prudently, creatively and effectively. The Department has a vibrant community of professors and students who thrive in an intellectual milieu in which new ideas and avenues are pursued actively. Combining teaching and research, the faculty provide students with a theoretical understanding as well as an empirical involvement in contemporary global issues of economic development.

Students, during their studies at the programme, spend 75% of their time learning theoretical concepts and 25% of their time learning applied concepts in laboratories. Each course is 6 ECTS credits and a student needs 240 ECTS credits to graduate (40 courses). Out of these courses, 34 are compulsory and 6 are elective.

## PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

### Principle 1: Academic Unit Policy for Quality Assurance

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD APPLY A QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AS PART OF THEIR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT. THIS POLICY SHOULD EXPAND AND BE AIMED (WITH THE COLLABORATION OF EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS) AT ALL INSTITUTION'S AREAS OF ACTIVITY, AND PARTICULARLY AT THE FULFILMENT OF QUALITY REQUIREMENTS OF UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES. THIS POLICY SHOULD BE PUBLISHED AND IMPLEMENTED BY ALL STAKEHOLDERS.**

*The quality assurance policy of the academic unit is in line with the Institutional policy on quality, and is included in a published statement that is implemented by all stakeholders. It focuses on the achievement of special objectives related to the quality assurance of study programmes offered by the academic unit.*

*The quality policy statement of the academic unit includes its commitment to implement a quality policy that will promote the academic profile and orientation of the programme, its purpose and field of study; it will realise the programme's strategic goals and it will determine the means and ways for attaining them; it will implement the appropriate quality procedures, aiming at the programme's continuous improvement.*

*In particular, in order to carry out this policy, the academic unit commits itself to put into practice quality procedures that will demonstrate:*

- a) the suitability of the structure and organization of the curriculum;*
- b) the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education;*
- c) the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of teaching;*
- d) the appropriateness of the qualifications of the teaching staff;*
- e) the enhancement of the quality and quantity of the research output among faculty members of the academic unit;*
- f) ways for linking teaching and research;*
- g) the level of demand for qualifications acquired by graduates, in the labour market;*
- h) the quality of support services such as the administrative services, the Library, and the student welfare office;*
- i) the conduct of an annual review and an internal audit of the quality assurance system of the undergraduate programme(s) offered, as well as the collaboration of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU).*

### Study Programme Compliance

#### Findings

The Department has a clearly articulated Quality Assurance (QA) process that is in line with the QA process of the Institution. From the submitted accreditation documentation as well as the meetings with the Institution's and the Department's representatives it was evident that the

Department eagerly applies quality assurance policies as they relate to (a) a well-articulated professionalism for faculty and employees, (b) course sequencing and compatibility, and (c) scientific research findings aiming to appear in top-rated academic journals. In general, the structure and organization of the curriculum are suitable and reflect both theory and application relevance. The Institution and the Department work closely together while the Institutional Quality Assurance Unit (MODIP) offers continuous and substantial support to the Department.

There is a transparent annual review process for the evaluation of individual courses and of the programme as a whole that draws, among other information, on the student course evaluations. Academic members also review the content of their courses frequently trying to integrate new research findings and management practices. There is a specific time framework for the monitoring and evaluation of the programme. The results of this evaluation are discussed, together with student performance, in the general assembly of the Department and recommendations are made for adjustments to specific courses.

The quality assurance process is communicated to all relevant stakeholders, i.e. academic members and students. The results are uploaded on the website of the Department.

Administration services, the Library and all other support services operate at a high professional level and support students in a satisfactory manner. However, the number of administrative staff is considered insufficient to serve the large number of students of the Department.

The Department has made a genuine effort to respond to the results of the previous external panel review seven years ago. It has acted successfully on most recommendations.

### Analysis of Judgement

The EEAP is satisfied with the learning outcomes adopted by the Department. Furthermore,

- The learning outcomes have been clearly formulated and have been published.
- The students are involved through their representatives in the Departmental Councils.
- The achievement of learning outcomes is monitored through examination rules that are clearly defined.
- A published Guide regarding the organization of the programs of study exists and the necessary information is electronically available.
- The ECTS requirements are taken into consideration and implemented.
- There is a periodic evaluation of the programs according to set procedures and criteria aimed at safeguarding their consistency and regular updating.
- The Panel was impressed with the positive attitudes of students interviewed. They all were enthusiastic about the quality of education and attention they receive in the Department.

The recruitment of faculty is done according to the national laws published in the official gazette (ΦΕΚ). These laws are designed to guarantee transparency and to ensure that the candidate with the highest qualifications is hired. During selection procedures all candidates for faculty positions are asked to give a job market seminar to the electoral body and student representatives so that they can be evaluated.

The EEAP is highly satisfied that all faculty members are qualified in the subject areas that they are teaching. Furthermore, faculty members make a special effort to incorporate their research findings into teaching.

### Conclusions

The Department is making a significant effort to comply with the guidelines for Quality Assurance. The EEAP members believe that this effort is bearing fruit, as is mostly evidenced by talking to students, recent graduates and various stakeholders.

### **Panel Judgement**

| <b>Principle 1: Academic Unit Policy for Quality Assurance</b> |          |
|--|----------|
| Fully compliant  | <b>X</b> |
| Substantially compliant  |          |
| Partially compliant  |          |
| Non-compliant  |          |

### **Panel Recommendations**

The research productivity of the Department, including research grants, monographs and books, is at a very good level. Despite all these and given that publications at highly ranked academic journals is very important for the international visibility and ranking of the Department, the EEAP members would like to encourage the faculty to put more emphasis on quality rather than quantity of publications.

## Principle 2: Design and Approval of Programmes

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD DEVELOP THEIR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES FOLLOWING A DEFINED WRITTEN PROCESS WHICH WILL INVOLVE THE PARTICIPANTS, INFORMATION SOURCES AND THE APPROVAL COMMITTEES FOR THE PROGRAMME. THE OBJECTIVES, THE EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES, THE INTENDED PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND THE WAYS TO ACHIEVE THEM ARE SET OUT IN THE PROGRAMME DESIGN. THE ABOVE DETAILS AS WELL AS INFORMATION ON THE PROGRAMME'S STRUCTURE ARE PUBLISHED IN THE STUDENT GUIDE.

*Academic units develop their programmes following a well-defined procedure. The academic profile and orientation of the programme, the objectives, the subject areas, the structure and organisation, the expected learning outcomes and the intended professional qualifications according to the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education are described at this stage. The approval or revision process for programmes includes a check of compliance with the basic requirements described in the Standards, on behalf of the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU).*

*Furthermore, the programme design should take into consideration the following:*

- the Institutional strategy*
- the active participation of students*
- the experience of external stakeholders from the labour market*
- the smooth progression of students throughout the stages of the programme*
- the anticipated student workload according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System*
- the option to provide work experience to the students*
- the linking of teaching and research*
- the relevant regulatory framework and the official procedure for the approval of the programme by the Institution*

### Study Programme Compliance

#### Findings

The Department was founded in 1989. It is the country's oldest Department that offers degrees at the undergraduate, masters and Ph.D. levels in the areas of economics and regional science. In 2013 the Department absorbed its sister Department that was located at Livadia. The goal of the Programme is to offer students comprehensive knowledge in the areas of economics, regional science, statistics and econometrics, so that graduates of the Programme have developed the ability to conduct their own independent research in these areas.

Programme students spend 75% of their time learning theoretical concepts and 25% learning applied concepts in laboratories. A student needs 240 ECTS credits to graduate (40 courses), each course has 6 ECTS credits. Out of these courses, 34 are compulsory and 6 are elective.

The Department has designed and implemented a strategy for assessing its programme of studies, which includes a focus on market demands. The Department is continuously reviewing the structure of similar programmes of globally known educational Institutions aiming to adopt courses which follow contemporary educational trends.

Moreover, the Department houses 2 research institutes, 1 laboratory and 2 research centres. These centres increase the research productivity of the faculty and helps facilitate connections between research and teaching.

### Analysis of Judgement

The EEAP is satisfied with the design and approval of programme. The programme meets Principle 2 and is designed according to the prevailing standards. The structure of the programme is clearly presented in the annual study guide. The Department has established a clear procedure for the revision/reappraisal of its undergraduate programme. The revision process involves various internal and external stakeholders. It is meant to take account of developments in the labour market, current trends in the relevant fields of expertise, the views of students (via the teaching evaluations), etc.

The annual study guide is comprehensive and offers a wealth of relevant information to students attending the programme. Faculty expose students to recent research in economics and regional science, by assigning research articles for presentations, “referee reports”, and/or reproducing empirical results.

### Conclusions

The effort the Department is making to design and approve the programme is commendable. It effectively incorporates feedback from students, and the existence of a number of research institutes and centers enhances the research productivity of the faculty and supports the dissemination of research findings to the students.

### **Panel Judgement**

| <b>Principle 2: Design and Approval of Programmes</b> |          |
|---|----------|
| Fully compliant                                       | <b>X</b> |
| Substantially compliant                               |          |
| Partially compliant                                   |          |
| Non-compliant   |          |

## **Panel Recommendations**

Involve alumni and other stakeholders in the design of individual courses and the programme curriculum.

## Principle 3: Student- centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ENSURE THAT THE UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES ARE DELIVERED IN A WAY THAT ENCOURAGES STUDENTS TO TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN CREATING THE LEARNING PROCESS. THE ASSESSMENT METHODS SHOULD REFLECT THIS APPROACH.**

*Student-centred learning and teaching plays an important role in stimulating students' motivation, self-reflection and engagement in the learning process. The above entail continuous consideration of the programme's delivery and the assessment of the related outcomes.*

*The student-centred learning and teaching process*

- *respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs, enabling flexible learning paths;*
- *considers and uses different modes of delivery, where appropriate;*
- *flexibly uses a variety of pedagogical methods;*
- *regularly evaluates and adjusts the modes of delivery and pedagogical methods aiming at improvement;*
- *regularly evaluates the quality and effectiveness of teaching, as documented especially through student surveys;*
- *reinforces the student's sense of autonomy, while ensuring adequate guidance and support from the teaching staff;*
- *promotes mutual respect in the student - teacher relationship;*
- *applies appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints.*

*In addition:*

- *the academic staff are familiar with the existing examination system and methods and are supported in developing their own skills in this field;*
- *the assessment criteria and methods are published in advance;*
- *the assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. Students are given feedback, which, if necessary is linked to advice on the learning process;*
- *student assessment is conducted by more than one examiner, where possible;*
- *the regulations for assessment take into account mitigating circumstances;*
- *assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and carried out in accordance with the stated procedures;*
- *a formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*

### Study Programme Compliance

#### Findings

The programme of studies covers three cognitive areas: economic science, regional science, and quantitative methods. All students follow the same progress through the compulsory coursework, which comprises 34 out of 40 courses total (240 ECTS). A rough approximation of

time allocation for the average student is that s/he spends about three quarters of his/her time on economic and regional science and a quarter on quantitative methods.

There are no pre-set areas of concentration in the programme. Students are expected to obtain an inter-disciplinary education and figure out on their own a preferred area of concentration with the remaining 6 elective courses. Of these, 2 are taken in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year and 4 more are taken in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of studies. An elective practical training («Πρακτική») is offered in limited numbers, this is due to budgetary considerations beyond the control of the Department. The last General Assembly of the faculty voted to introduce the possibility of a thesis (πτυχιακή εργασία) that replaces 2 elective courses (12 ECTS).

The Department has a formal process of reviewing and annotating its annual undergraduate program of studies also taking into consideration the regular course evaluations by the students. Panel members were shown significant data from a recent survey of students regarding the programme of studies indicating that two-thirds or more of the 656 respondents expressed high satisfaction with both the Department and the programme structure. More than three-fourths would recommend the program to prospective students.

The overall results of the aforementioned survey indicated high satisfaction with the teaching staff and student-centred learning orientation of the Department. Similar views were also expressed by those interviewed by our Panel. Somewhat lesser satisfaction was expressed by survey respondents with the development of specific capabilities and skills, which the EEAP interpreted to refer to the application of learned theories and methods in specific examples in order to develop job-related skills. The EEAP noted that the Department is trying to address this in various ways, including more practical training and use of case studies in the classroom, increased hands-on analysis of real-world data and policies, increased interaction with external stakeholders, development of skills for public presentations, foreign languages, and interpersonal skills.

The Department seemed genuinely interested in promoting student-centred learning practices including lectures, course workshops, seminars, individual or team projects, and the use of the education platform e-class. All undergraduate courses appear to be available in the open e-class platform of the University for asynchronous learning. The platform is also used for the regular evaluation of courses, teaching and examinations, and communications. On average, Panel members were shown survey data pointing out that about three quarters of the students respond positively in terms of satisfaction with the course and the professor. Close to two-thirds responded that courses helped increase their critical thinking.<sup>1</sup>

The Department has a Studies Counsellor advising students on issues related to course content, course selection, and processes of course evaluation and grading. Students can also contact professors directly during office hours or through e-class and email for consultation and advising. It is commendable that both interviewed groups of current students and programme alumni strongly stressed the point that professors make every effort to keep close to students.

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<sup>1</sup> We did not have indications of the share of class participants responding to course evaluation surveys.

The Department has procedures to accommodate students with special learning disabilities as well as care for students with disabilities and their access to different spaces of the University.

Students can consult the University office of professional development as well as attend the “Open Door” days organized by the Department where stakeholders from the public and private sectors are invited to present opportunities for employment.

### Analysis of Judgement

The undergraduate program reflects the stated objectives of the Department to provide a holistic education in economics and regional science and supplement with familiarity with statistical, econometric and regional empirical analysis. Trying to develop the bifurcated focus takes a lot of compulsory coursework with fairly limited space for electives.

The Department has until now followed a generic education across the student body while avoiding to define select fields of specialization. Panel members discussed this openly with the faculty and we were alerted to some real (legalistic) issues regarding graduate professional development. That being as it may, such practice can work well with well-focused individuals who are more or less clear with what they intend to do professionally. One, however, wonders whether it works well with the bulk of students. Having thousands of students to deal with – 1237 active students and a total of 3232 registered students during the academic year 2020-2021 – the Studies Counsellor and the ad hoc orientation advice provided by individual faculty members to those few students that approach them may be insufficient in directing the bulk of the student body. The large (and increasing) numbers of students at v+2 stage may be partly attributed to this relatively hands-off position.

The reported issue of student capabilities and skills development is an important one. We commend the honest recognition of the Department and agree with their intent to redouble efforts to rectify.

### Conclusions

The Department is making a genuine effort to meet the needs of modern student-centred learning. The program has been rationalized since the previous evaluation report of 2014, rationalizing the programme of studies, shortening it, and making the progress of students from one year to the next smoother. Recent student survey results corroborate.

Still, the EEAP finds that there is room for improvement. The faculty body is already considering how to achieve better matching of student skills and needs of prospective employers, starting from the simple skills of developing an effective power-point presentation and reaching the more complex inter-personal skills and specific analytical skills. A redoubling of the efforts to identify the relevant markets for programme graduates and the skill needs of those markets would seem worthwhile. It may also be useful for the faculty to consider areas of concentration that take advantage of the market strengths of the programme in economics and regional studies. This would require a decrease of the core courses that everyone needs to take with a parallel increase of further requirements for specific directions and availability of further electives. Besides the legal issues alluded to earlier, an unknown item here is the teaching

personnel: hiring freezes in the recent past have shrunk the number of teaching faculty – while the number of incoming students has kept increasing, thus raising the student/faculty ratio. A non-insignificant cohort of extant faculty is inching closer to retirement age.

### Panel Judgement

| <b>Principle 3: Student- centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment</b> |   |
|--|---|
| Fully compliant  | X |
| Substantially compliant  |   |
| Partially compliant  |   |
| Non-compliant  |   |

### Panel Recommendations

- Consider the constitution of an advisory board to include stakeholders from both peer academics, program graduates in prominent positions, and representatives of organizations that tend to employ graduates. The advisory board can meet once or twice a year and its members will serve pro bono. The objective of such board is to advise the Department regarding the latest market developments and needs, as well as inform prospective recipients of graduates about the educational developments in the Department.
- Redouble efforts to provide greater skills and applied learning to the student body through the coursework.
- As the oldest and the premier Department in the country offering comprehensive education and research in economics and regional science – undergraduate, graduate, doctoral, post-doctoral – consider the creation of an “Observatory for Regional Development” that will serve as a locus of data collection, study and public awareness of the Greek administrative regions. Link this Observatory to the undergraduate and graduate study programs and engage students in its operations to expose ever larger numbers of them in the peculiarities and needs of regions in the country, thus also helping in the development of analytical skills and in raising familiarity with the subject matter.

## Principle 4: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD DEVELOP AND APPLY PUBLISHED REGULATIONS COVERING ALL ASPECTS AND PHASES OF STUDIES (ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, RECOGNITION AND CERTIFICATION).**

*Institutions and academic units need to put in place both processes and tools to collect, manage and act on information regarding student progression.*

*Procedures concerning the award and recognition of higher education degrees, the duration of studies, rules ensuring students progression, terms and conditions for student mobility should be based on the institutional study regulations. Appropriate recognition procedures rely on institutional practice for recognition of credits among various European academic departments and Institutions, in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention.*

*Graduation represents the culmination of the students' study period. Students need to receive documentation explaining the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed (Diploma Supplement).*

### Study Programme Compliance

#### Findings

New student intake in 2020 - 2021 was 333 of which 204 entered through the national exam system and the balance through other channels. The average base of the entering class through national exams was around the median of economics departments in the country. A very important observation is the very significant gap in the capabilities of the two groups.

The total body of registered students during the last academic year was 3232 out of which more than a third (1237) were active. The number of graduating students every year tends to be smaller than the number of the entering class. Student progress is followed electronically through their class performance and there is effort to care both ends of the distribution.

A small share (7%) of the graduating class in 2020-2021 corresponded to those graduating on time (end of 4<sup>th</sup> year of studies). An additional quarter graduated at v+1. A further third graduated at v+2. Finally, 36% of the graduating class were > v+2 students.

In 2020-2021 there were 20 courses evaluating students only with a final exam. This compares favourably to 42 such courses in 2014, but the number still remains high. The remaining 49 courses used combinations of final exam and other methods (progress tests, projects, etc) for student evaluation.

An annotated detailed program of studies in both Greek and English exists on the website of the Department. The program of studies contains all important information for the incoming and continuing student populations.

The Department participates in the Erasmus+ program supporting mobility. During 2016-2019 there were 48 participating students for studies. A further 16 students participated in practical training. Moreover, 14 students take advantage of bilateral agreements.

The Diploma Supplement is produced electronically for all graduates.

#### Analysis of Judgement

The significant percentage of v+2 graduates the past academic year can be viewed both positively – an indication that the Department does not abandon delaying students – or negatively – many students delay their studies beyond the sixth year (higher percentage than average across universities).

The EEAP notes the significant augmentation of the incoming class with individuals outside the national exams. The gap in the capabilities of the two groups creates pressure on the whole program, lowers average grades, strains facilities, and contributes to the significant number of v+2 registered students. This is, of course, beyond the influence of the Department. It is important perhaps here that even the national exam intake (204) was significantly higher than the request for students of the Department (150). All in all, the Department received well above double the requested number of students during 2020-2021.

Since the last external evaluation of the program in 2014, the program of studies has been rationalized, the total number of courses for graduation have been decreased to 40, and the process of progressing from one level of studies to the next become more logical. (See also Principle #3 in relation to this)

#### Conclusions

Like other Departments of Economics in the country, this Department suffers from the superimposition of excessive numbers of students by the Ministry of Education. This is a general malaise of Greek universities that significantly affects performance and quality of studies.

The Department has tried to rationalize the program, making the transition from one stage of studies to the next more logical.

#### **Panel Judgement**

| <b>Principle 4: Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification</b> |          |
|---|----------|
| Fully compliant   | <b>X</b> |
| Substantially compliant   |          |
| Partially compliant   |          |
| Non-compliant   |          |

### **Panel Recommendations**

- Continue the good effort with formal mobility programs. Consider the possibility to introduce informal practical trainings (e.g., internships) where the students engage with prospective employers to gain experience and applied views of subject matters taught in the programme. To be successful in terms of student uptake, such internships should earn ECTS credits.
- As noted in the previous section, redouble efforts to connect to the market and trigger the interest of students to real world phenomena.

## Principle 5: Teaching Staff

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ASSURE THEMSELVES OF THE QUALIFICATIONS AND COMPETENCE OF THE TEACHING STAFF. THEY SHOULD APPLY FAIR AND TRANSPARENT PROCESSES FOR THE RECRUITMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE TEACHING STAFF.**

*The Institutions and their academic units have a major responsibility as to the standard of their teaching staff providing them with a supportive environment that promotes the advancement of their scientific work. In particular, the academic unit should:*

- *set up and follow clear, transparent and fair processes for the recruitment of properly qualified staff and offer them conditions of employment that recognize the importance of teaching and research;*
- *offer opportunities and promote the professional development of the teaching staff;*
- *encourage scholarly activity to strengthen the link between education and research;*
- *encourage innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies;*
- *promote the increase of the volume and quality of the research output within the academic unit;*
- *follow quality assurance processes for all staff members (with respect to attendance requirements, performance, self-assessment, training etc.);*
- *develop policies to attract highly qualified academic staff.*

### Study Programme Compliance

#### Findings

There are 21 permanent faculty, 3 special teaching personnel, and 4 external/adjunct faculty in the Department. The Department does follow the formalities of the recruitment process of academic members as laid out by law. By discipline and research interest, the faculty cover broadly the fields of Economics, Econometrics, and Regional Analysis. This is consistent with the content of the modules that comprise the degree programme of the Department. There has been limited recruitment of academic members on continuing contracts in recent years. The research profiles of the tenured faculty members are good. They have a satisfactory level of publications, both in quantity and quality, testifying to a healthy level of research activity.

Sabbatical opportunities (for up to 6 months) are offered every three years of service (or for up to 1 year for every 6 years of service) and the Department usually covers the costs for one international conference per year. There is a limited number of Erasmus agreements for teaching mobility currently in place. Training opportunities are usually available for junior staff through funds generated by research projects.

Research feeds into teaching through elective modules or through research projects that give students the opportunity to work with specialized datasets made available to them by faculty. Students evaluate faculty on an annual basis through a survey on teaching effectiveness and

performance for each module. Research active faculty benefit students not only through feeding directly from their research to teaching but also in creating and maintaining a lively atmosphere for learning.

### Analysis of Judgement

The submission by the Department, and our meetings with faculty, suggest that there is an informal framework at Department level of support for academic members to develop their research interests, teaching and more generally their career. A more formal process of annual review of each academic member, perhaps on an individual basis, covering research, teaching, outreach etc. would be beneficial. This should not be in a judgmental framework, or in the context of promotions, but rather in a supporting, mentoring capacity. Such a process would enable all academic members, especially those at earlier stages in their academic career, to develop their research, teaching and outreach to their full potential.

While both the quality and quantity of publications are good with 39 journal papers and 563 citations on average, the Department does not have a defined research strategy that would guide better quality of publications and would create impact in a wider sense than simply measuring academic impact through citations.

The current number of faculty is rather low, and this creates a high student staff ratio which hinders the student's learning experience. The Department has had in the past higher numbers of faculty (up to 31). This has deteriorated rapidly the last few years due to retirements and the relatively slow replacement of posts. The Department is expecting another round of retirements in the next 5 years and there is a significant risk that the student staff ratio will drop even further.

### Conclusions

The Department is fully compliant with Principle 5, but there is a high risk that faculty numbers and their professional development might deteriorate further in the next 5 years unless action is taken.

### **Panel judgement**

| <b>Principle 5: Teaching Staff</b> |          |
|------------------------------------|----------|
| Fully compliant                    |          |
| Substantially compliant            | <b>X</b> |
| Partially compliant                |          |
| Non-compliant                      |          |

## **Panel Recommendations**

As faculty numbers increase and given the existing diversity of research interests in the Department, to consider whether some additional research Centre in the form of an “Observatory for Regional Development” is created to enhance research and outreach activities to the academic and non-academic communities. The Observatory could submit grant applications to the EU to attract funds and become self-sustainable from a financial point of view.

As new faculty are to be recruited going forward, the Department should consider more closely the issue of informal but planned academic member mentoring as well as the development of a coherent research strategy that can guide recruitment of new faculty, curriculum developments and engagement with non-academic communities in order to generate impact.

It is urgent to reconsider the availability of academic posts. The current student staff ratio is not sustainable and will eventually lead to a deterioration of the research performance. The planned retirements over the next five years should be immediately replaced by new posts to avoid a negative impact on the student experience.

## Principle 6: Learning Resources and Student Support

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE ADEQUATE FUNDING TO COVER TEACHING AND LEARNING NEEDS. THEY SHOULD –ON THE ONE HAND– PROVIDE SATISFACTORY INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES FOR LEARNING AND STUDENT SUPPORT AND –ON THE OTHER HAND– FACILITATE DIRECT ACCESS TO THEM BY ESTABLISHING INTERNAL RULES TO THIS END (E.G. LECTURE ROOMS, LABORATORIES, LIBRARIES, NETWORKS, BOARDING, CAREER AND SOCIAL POLICY SERVICES ETC.).**

*Institutions and their academic units must have sufficient funding and means to support learning and academic activity in general, so that they can offer to students the best possible level of studies. The above means could include facilities such as libraries, study rooms, educational and scientific equipment, information and communications services, support or counselling services.*

*When allocating the available resources, the needs of all students must be taken into consideration (e.g. whether they are full-time or part-time students, employed or international students, students with disabilities) and the shift towards student-centred learning and the adoption of flexible modes of learning and teaching. Support activities and facilities may be organised in various ways, depending on the institutional context. However, the internal quality assurance ensures that all resources are appropriate, adequate, and accessible, and that students are informed about the services available to them.*

*In delivering support services the role of support and administrative staff is crucial and therefore they need to be qualified and have opportunities to develop their competences.*

### Study Programme Compliance

#### Findings

The learning resources and support services available to the students are provided either directly from the Department or indirectly by the university. They basically consist of three categories: Physical infrastructure facilities, academic and administrative services and social and other advisory services.

#### *Physical Facilities*

Most of the student related activity is concentrated in the main university campus. The accreditation panel virtual tour of the Department's physical facilities was limited to the main building. The Department's facility arrangements are controlled by the central administration. There is a computer room with a rather limited number of places (only twenty) given the total number of students enrolled.

The programme shares the use of the library on the main campus. The library provides access to various databases, as well as electronic access to publications, books, and academic journals. These facilities seem to fit the needs of the programme.

### *Academic and Administrative Services*

The accreditation panel visited virtually the departmental administration office talked with a representative. They are managing all services associated with student and faculty support, aided by appropriate computer platforms.

The University lacks an IT support department that could service better faculty and students and currently the support is offered by a small number of individuals on a request basis.

### *Social and Other Advisory Services*

Most of these services are run and managed by the university. The students of the Department indicated that they are pleased with the support and accessibility they enjoy. These support services include dining facilities, allowance for housing or possibility for student residence placement at the facility, office of *Advisory and Psychological Support* for personal problems, Career Office providing a variety of services for the placement of graduates, ERASMUS+ Office. Students commented negatively on the high accommodation costs for those students not living in Athens. The wider area of the University has been redeveloped the last few years with an emphasis on short-term accommodation (Airbnb) and this has created a notable increase in rental prices.

### Analysis of Judgement

The EEAP draws attention to the fact that both the Department activity and student population have increased significantly, but the facilities have remained largely unchanged. The possibility of utilizing additional space in the peripheral buildings should be explored. At the moment large modules have to be split in terms of their teaching and this creates unnecessary additional teaching load for faculty.

Students do not have online access to databases, only through physical visits to the library. Students also have to use a proxy server to access online journals and occasionally. This creates access problems such as slow speed and unreliable access. There is also a rather limited access to software platforms. For instance, there is no access to MS Office, a limited number of licenses for STATA, ArcGIS and Eviews, and only SPSS is offered on a site license available to all.

There is an expectation that students will have their own computer (desktop or laptop) and there is a rather limited provision of computers located in laboratories. Students with limited financial background could be severely disadvantaged in their studies.

### Conclusions

The Department managed very well the transition to online learning through the COVID-19 period. A number of practices could remain as blended learning even after the return to face-to-face teaching. There is use of technology in teaching, but this is limited by the availability of stable funding streams. The Department is fully compliant with Principle 6, but there is a risk that the lack of funding disadvantages students with limited financial resources and that the student experience could fluctuate from one year to another.

## Panel Judgement

| <b>Principle 6: Learning Resources and Student Support</b> |          |
|--|----------|
| Fully compliant  |          |
| Substantially compliant                                    | <b>X</b> |
| Partially compliant  |          |
| Non-compliant  |          |

## Panel Recommendations

The Department should develop a more coherent strategy with respect to online and blended learning. This should be linked with a more consistent approach to the development of online material, development of policies for plagiarism and academic malpractice and a platform for accessing online material by students.

The Department should consider upgrading the existing computing facilities and laboratories to service better the large student body.

The University should consider the establishment of an IT department that could support faculty and students in their IT needs and develop a strategy for upgrading all IT systems (such as e-mail facility, access to online journals and databases, access to specialised software).

## Principle 7: Information Management

**INSTITUTIONS BEAR FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR COLLECTING, ANALYSING AND USING INFORMATION, AIMED AT THE EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT OF UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES OF STUDY AND RELATED ACTIVITIES, IN AN INTEGRATED, EFFECTIVE AND EASILY ACCESSIBLE WAY.**

*Institutions are expected to establish and operate an information system for the management and monitoring of data concerning students, teaching staff, course structure and organisation, teaching and provision of services to students as well as to the academic community.*

*Reliable data is essential for accurate information and for decision making, as well as for identifying areas of smooth operation and areas for improvement. Effective procedures for collecting and analysing information on study programmes and other activities feed data into the internal system of quality assurance.*

*The information gathered depends, to some extent, on the type and mission of the Institution. The following are of interest:*

- *key performance indicators*
- *student population profile*
- *student progression, success and drop-out rates*
- *student satisfaction with their programme(s)*
- *availability of learning resources and student support*
- *career paths of graduates*

*A number of methods may be used for collecting information. It is important that students and staff are involved in providing and analyzing information and planning follow-up activities.*

### Study Programme Compliance

#### Findings

The EEAP findings are that information on student admissions, population profiles, academic progressions, success rates and student course evaluations are collected periodically and systematically. An automated plagiarism mechanism which checks on-line submitted pieces of assessment and make similarity reports accessible to the instructors is available and used. In addition, staff use a teaching management system, e-class, to upload material for their courses as well as to communicate with the students for other academic matters through email or on-line access. Career paths of graduated students are followed. The Department has access to individual course statistics for the purpose of facilitating teaching quality issues that may arise that can be used for course improvements as needed.

#### Analysis of judgement

The EEAP finds that the implemented information management is comprehensive and appropriate for providing support to decisions around the programme design and delivery. The

data provided is often manually drawn together, which leaves room for a more automated approach for greater accessibility. Also, while student feedback and experiences are systematically collected, responses are relatively low. Other ways of continuously capturing student course experiences and needs may be added to ensure effective teaching delivery.

### Conclusions

To conclude, the EEAP notes that the information management in use provides with the data needed for successfully managing the programme and its students.

### Panel Judgement

| Principle 7: Information Management |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Fully compliant                     | X |
| Substantially compliant             |   |
| Partially compliant                 |   |
| Non-compliant                       |   |

### Panel Recommendations

Consider creating a holistic information system for the collection of data related to the key performance indicators.

Establish an *Alumni Association* to develop systematic mechanism for the collection of data regarding employment and career paths of its former students, and to better leverage graduates' input to the programme.

## Principle 8: Public Information

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD PUBLISH INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR TEACHING AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES WHICH IS CLEAR, ACCURATE, OBJECTIVE, UP-TO-DATE AND READILY ACCESSIBLE.**

*Information on Institution's activities is useful for prospective and current students, graduates, other stakeholders and the public.*

*Therefore, institutions and their academic units provide information about their activities, including the programmes they offer, the intended learning outcomes, the qualifications awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures used, the pass rates and the learning opportunities available to their students, as well as graduate employment information.*

### Study Programme Compliance

#### Findings

The findings of the EEAP on public information available are that the Department provides study programme and Department information in both Greek and English. The Department's webpages are professionally designed and seem to be updated frequently. They are user-friendly for different reading platforms, such as PCs and tablets and contain useful information for students and those interested to learn about the programme and Department. For instance, they cover staff CVs and research interests, programme structure and various core and elective course outlines. Programme structure and optional courses for each stage of the programme is clearly presented on the website. Contact details for the course teachers are shown. The latter typically include a description of the applicable assessment methods and reading materials. One has to follow the link to the study guide, where detailed and updated information for all courses is available. However, it is notable that the Greek language website contains more information on individual courses, ongoing events etc. Given the international scope and ambition of the programme and department, informing the international community of ongoing activities is advantageous. The university-wide e-Class platform is accessible for all current students and staff using any web browser, through which much administrative and programme information is available. The Department also has presence in social media, e.g., LinkedIn.

#### Analysis of judgement

Given the findings, the EEAP view is that the public information provided is suitable for programme students and stakeholders, but that course specific information could be made more available to the public by providing programme and course specifics currently found in the study guide in a more accessible format. Moreover, the information does not appear to be, at least in part, dedicated to external stakeholders, which makes it more difficult to use the information to generate further support for the programme and individual courses.

## Conclusions

The public information on teaching and academic matters related to the programme and the Department is both comprehensive and suitable for students and other stakeholders. For broader readership, more of the content could also be provided in the English part of the website.

## Panel Judgement

| <b>Principle 8: Public Information</b> |          |
|--|----------|
| Fully compliant                        | <b>X</b> |
| Substantially compliant                |          |
| Partially compliant                    |          |
| Non-compliant                          |          |

## Panel Recommendations

- Ensure that the English website includes information on ongoing and new events that currently is provided in the Greek language site.
- Provide a dedicated alumni part on the web-site for greater involvement by alumni to support the programme, as well as alumni networking and life-long learning.

## Principle 9: On-going Monitoring and Periodic Internal Review of Programmes

**INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE IN PLACE AN INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM FOR THE AUDIT AND ANNUAL INTERNAL REVIEW OF THEIR PROGRAMMES, SO AS TO ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVES SET FOR THEM, THROUGH MONITORING AND AMENDMENTS, WITH A VIEW TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT. ANY ACTIONS TAKEN IN THE ABOVE CONTEXT SHOULD BE COMMUNICATED TO ALL PARTIES CONCERNED.**

*Regular monitoring, review and revision of study programmes aim to maintain the level of educational provision and to create a supportive and effective learning environment for students.*

*The above comprise the evaluation of:*

- *the content of the programme in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up to date;*
- *the changing needs of society;*
- *the students' workload, progression and completion;*
- *the effectiveness of the procedures for the assessment of students;*
- *the students' expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme;*
- *the learning environment, support services and their fitness for purpose for the programme*

*Programmes are reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders. The information collected is analysed and the programme is adapted to ensure that it is up-to-date. Revised programme specifications are published.*

### Study Programme Compliance

#### Findings

There is a procedure in place for the Department's self-assessment of the Study Programme, which is part of its Strategy.

MODIP has adopted a model of continuous and consistent internal monitoring and reviewing of the Study Programme, in cooperation with OMEA, which is responsible for all internal evaluations each year. The faculty, as well as all students, participate in this internal procedure.

OMEA analyses the data gathered with respect to the evaluation of the courses, the teaching methods, and the infrastructure. Based on this, OMEA makes recommendations to be considered and adopted by the Department.

OMEA takes in consideration various quality indicators in accordance with the European framework of quality standards and their relation to the goals set by OMEA.

The Department underwent a revision and rationalization of its study programme in 2014, based on recommendations made by the external evaluation panel, reducing radically the number of elective courses and the workload of students and teachers as a result. It is anticipated that this will improve the quality of the study programme and will give the chance for students to graduate at reasonable time.

The Department has established initiatives for supporting students, such as providing laboratory facilities with the access to databases, housing, transportation allowance, and the opportunity to do an internship with employers in the market to get relevant empirical/practical work experience. In parallel, the Department provides Academic advisor support, invites students to congresses and lectures etc.

The Department also supports students in participating in the ERASMUS programme, by extending the number of partner employers and Universities abroad.

### Analysis of judgement

The Department adopted a model to create a supportive and effective learning environment, that monitors and analyses empirical data and results from the evaluation. This internal evaluation is held annually in line with Student-centered approach and determines all the actions required to achieve the goals set for developing students' scientific knowledge and critical ability and professional skills.

The Department has established frequent communication with teaching staff and provides access to the e-teaching platform and laboratories and academic advisory support etc. to stimulate students' participation and engagement in the education process.

OMEA'S annual report of self-valuation is submitted to MODID for discussion in the Department's Annual General Assembly and other shareholders.

There is an ongoing monitoring by OMEA each year for all courses and teaching methods, according to the objectives of the program at international level.

Students have a positive assessment of the programme and teaching approach, according to their expectations. According to students, the programme provides them with a comprehensive and in-depth knowledge and understanding of all basic subjects on Economics and Regional Science, as well as skills for their career and research.

### Conclusions

The Department is fully compliant with Principle 9 and needs to continue to this path through continuous improvement and enhancement of the learning environment and student & teaching staff support structures and initiatives.

## Panel Judgement

| <b>Principle 9: On-going Monitoring and Periodic Internal Review of Programmes</b> |          |
|--|----------|
| Fully compliant  | <b>X</b> |
| Substantially compliant  |          |
| Partially compliant  |          |
| Non-compliant  |          |

## Panel Recommendations

The Department should continue monitoring and reviewing its programme and work further on refining its strategy. To achieve a continuous improvement of the programme, the Department should be reviewing the content of courses to ensure they are linked to research, and build strong relations with other universities abroad, labour market players (employers, associations etc.) and social institutions.

## Principle 10: Regular External Evaluation of Undergraduate Programmes

**PROGRAMMES SHOULD REGULARLY UNDERGO EVALUATION BY COMMITTEES OF EXTERNAL EXPERTS SET BY HAHE, AIMING AT ACCREDITATION. THE TERM OF VALIDITY OF THE ACCREDITATION IS DETERMINED BY HAHE.**

*HAHE is responsible for administrating the programme accreditation process which is realised as an external evaluation procedure, and implemented by a committee of independent experts. HAHE grants accreditation of programmes, with a specific term of validity, following to which revision is required. The accreditation of the quality of the programmes acts as a means of verification of the compliance of the programme with the template's requirements, and as a catalyst for improvement, while opening new perspectives towards the international standing of the awarded degrees.*

*Both academic units and institutions participate in the regular external quality assurance process, while respecting the requirements of the legislative framework in which they operate.*

*The quality assurance, in this case the accreditation, is an on-going process that does not end with the external feedback, or report or its follow-up process within the Institution. Therefore, Institutions and their academic units ensure that the progress made since the last external quality assurance activity is taken into consideration when preparing for the next one.*

### Study Programme Compliance

#### Findings

The Department submitted the procedure of External Evaluation in 2014 by the external evaluation panel.

MODIP and all stakeholders have acknowledged the importance of the External Evaluation Review and its contribution to improving the Study Programme to achieve its goals and assure the quality of the Study Programme.

The Findings of External Evaluation were particularly positive for the Department's study programme directions, as well as for the relations between the faculty and students. The Department posted the findings on its website too.

#### Analysis of judgement

The Department has been very responsive in the years following the review (2016-2020). The Department has proceeded to implement several of the recommendations made previously. These recommendations included: 1) More clarity of strategy. 2) The link of teaching to the research. 3) Enhancement of international cooperation. 4) Enhancement of the relations and connections with labour market. 5) Reduction of the number of elective courses to reconstruct and simplify the study programme, so that it is more effective and allows for a better distribution of the teaching staff. 6) Improvements to laboratories equipment and space infrastructures. Further work is required to fully implement recommendations 3, 4 and 6 from the above.

### Conclusions

The Department has been effectively responsive to the findings of external evaluation report. The faculty and administrative staff have supported the Department to achieve its goals.

### Panel Judgement

| <b>Principle 10: Regular External Evaluation of Undergraduate Programmes</b> |          |
|--|----------|
| Fully compliant  |          |
| Substantially compliant  | <b>X</b> |
| Partially compliant  |          |
| Non-compliant  |          |

### Panel Recommendations

The Department should continue working on the recommendations of the previous external evaluation panel.

## **PART C: CONCLUSIONS**

### **I. Features of Good Practice**

- The Department has a well-defined market niche in the area of regional science.
- The combination of regional science with economics offers the department strong attraction for prospective students and research in the domestic and international scene.
- Faculty is easily accessible to current and former students and are passionate about their subject areas.
- The Department has a well-organized research infrastructure through a set of research institutes and research centers. These are well-integrated with curriculum development and research grants.

### **II. Areas of Weakness**

- Insufficient level of stakeholder engagement in designing and developing the programme.
- High student-to-faculty ratio.
- Student access to IT physical infrastructure, databases and necessary software is limited.
- Lack of a well-defined research strategy that could increase the number of publications in high impact academic journals and guide the engagement with students, academic and non-academic audiences.

### **III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions**

- Mobilize resources to enhance infrastructure.
- Constitution an advisory board to include stakeholders from both peer academics, program graduates in prominent positions, and representatives of organizations that tend to employ graduates.
- Consider the creation of an “Observatory for Regional Development” that will serve as a locus of data collection, study and public awareness of the Greek administrative regions.
- Develop an institutionalized alumni strategy.
- Continue and complete the implementation of the recommendations from the 2014 evaluation panel.

#### IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: **1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, and 9.**

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: **5, 6, and 10.**

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are: **None.**

The Principles where failure of compliance was identified are: **None.**

| Overall Judgement       |          |
|-------------------------|----------|
| Fully compliant         | <b>X</b> |
| Substantially compliant |          |
| Partially compliant     |          |
| Non-compliant           |          |

## The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

**Name and Surname**

**Signature**

- 1. Prof. Konstantinos Serfes (Chair)**  
Drexel University, United States of America
- 2. Prof. Fragkiskos Filippaios**  
University of East Anglia, United Kingdom
- 3. Prof. Nicholas Vonortas**  
The George Washington University, United States of America
- 4. Reader Jannis Angelis**  
KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Sweden
- 5. Mr. Stelios Mastrogiannakis**  
Member of the Economic Chamber of Greece, Greece