



Investește în oameni!

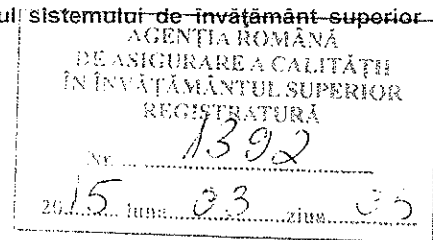
Proiect cofinanțat din Fondul Social European prin Programul Operațional Sectorial Dezvoltarea Resurselor Umane 2007 – 2013

Axa prioritară 1 „Educația și formarea profesională în sprijinul creșterii economice și dezvoltării societății bazate pe cunoaștere”

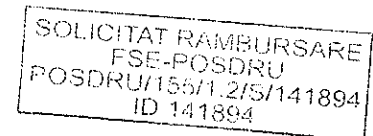
Domeniul major de intervenție 1.2 „Calitate în învățământul superior”

Titlul proiectului „Dezvoltarea și consolidarea culturii calității la nivelul sistemului de învățământ superior românesc - QUALITAS”

Contract POSDRU/155/1.2/S/141894



REPORT of the foreign evaluator for the National University of Arts Bucharest



I. INTRODUCTION

1. This report contains the findings and opinions of a foreign expert participating in an external evaluation of the National University of Arts Bucharest (Romanian acronym UNARTE). In the report, I refer only to the selected issues due to, among others, the unavailability of a lot of source materials in English.
2. The evaluation was undertaken by the panel of experts commissioned by the Romanian Quality Assurance Agency in Higher Education (further ARACIS). The external evaluation was conducted in line with the methodology and procedures provided by ARACIS (see: *Methodology of external evaluation, standards, reference standards and the list of performance indicators of A.R.A.C.I.S.*). The established evaluation criteria are generally consistent with the spirit of the European Standards and Guidelines. While evaluating the quality of a university of such a rich history operating in different institutional and policy regimes, an informal system of academic values and ways of assuring high quality of education, as well as artistic and scientific creation, which was developed during a historical process, should be taken into consideration. While expressing my opinions, I tried to take into account my previous international experience in the evaluation of foreign universities.
3. According to ARACIS methodology: “*The purpose of the external institutional evaluation is to identify and certify the way higher education institutions meet public interest, as well as the measures taken for quality improvement, in the ... teaching and learning processes ...*”.
4. The site visit took place on 19 – 21 February 2015. The evaluation team consisted of 12 people. I have met with so numerous panel of experts for the first time in my career of an quality assurance expert evaluating of foreign universities. The working language of the visit was Romanian. The representatives of the university effectively interpreted talks into English. It should be emphasized that the majority of teachers and the students I met spoke fluent English.
5. Before the visit, the chairman of the panel had not assigned any special tasks to be accomplished by the foreign expert. The expert met with the main stakeholders of this institution: its leaders, the rector, the vice-rector, the authors of the Self-Assessment Report, the deans, the heads of departments, the representatives of various academic bodies, the academic teachers, the students, the employers, the graduates, and the



- representatives of the administration. Most of the meetings were individual. There were only 3 meetings (with students, alumni and employers), in which the team participated. The expert team also visited the teaching and research infrastructure, including classrooms, workshops, and studios.
6. It seems that the foreign expert would have been more useful if his tasks had been specified more precisely, the panel had worked as a team, and the language of the visit had been English.
 7. About a month before the visit, I had obtained the extensive (80 pp.) Self-Evaluation Report (SER) with annexes. Slightly later, I had obtained additional materials (unfortunately, a substantial part had been written in Romanian) sent by the Vice-Rector of the university. Furthermore, in the process of formulating the opinion, the materials posted on the website of UNARTE and information and opinions received during the meetings with various stakeholders were used. As soon as during the visit, the expert was informed that all the departments and, which must be commended, the students sent their own reports to ARACIS.
 8. The self-evaluation report is an essential source of information about the university and its quality management system. It is dominated by a factual description, but lacks an analysis of the facts and their critical evaluation. In fact, it is hard to find out the main challenges, with which the university deals nowadays, and how the university develops activities improving quality. Some information can be considered as completely unnecessary (e.g. about the university's bank account), others, e.g. the quality management system, teaching and learning could have been more extensive. It was explained that, in accordance with the ARACIS's procedure, the SER must include only the factual description. It seems that this is a denial of the idea of the SER and diminishes the value of this report as a tool of reflections on the level of development of the university. In my opinion, ARACIS should rethink the SER template.
 9. Information about the composition of the authors team was not provided. The expert was informed that the SER had been prepared by the working group consisting of two people – the Vice-Rector, professor Eugen Alexandru Gustea, and the chairwoman of the Senat Quality Evaluation and Assurance Commission (QEAC) dr. Mirela Dauceanu. It was explained that due to the short period of works, academic teachers, students and doctoral students were not included in this group. However, all departments prepared information about their activities. The expert recommended that, in future, the above mentioned partners were included in the working group on the self-evaluation report. The report is written in good English, but sometimes introduces unclear terms or changes the terminology (e.g. “study taxes” instead of “tuition fees”, “Quality Commission” or “Commission for Quality Assurance” instead of “the Quality Evaluation” and the Assurance Commission”).
 10. I would recommend deeper self-reflection during writing such reports in future. The SWOT analysis commonly used in external quality assurance would be a useful tool. The SER also lacked in aggregate statistical information characterizing the university, the educational process, and conducted research. Such disaggregated data were included in the appendices. Therefore, I suggest that future reports were supplemented with aggregated data for at least the last 5 years.
 11. The visit was well organized and conducted in a friendly atmosphere. I thank all the representatives of the university, with whom I had the opportunity to talk, for openness in presenting their positions, patience, and matter-of-factness in clarifying doubts. Thanks to these talks, I received the deepened picture of the functioning of the university. I would like to thank in particular the Rector Cătălin Bălescu and the Vice-Rector Eugene Alexandru Gustea, and the Chairwomen of the QEAC dr. Mirela

Dauceanu who were outstandingly helpful in providing materials and explanations. I thank all interpreters, for their priceless help. I thank the President of ARACIS for inviting me to the expert panel.

II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT UNIVERSITY

12. UNARTE is the oldest and largest art school in the field of visual art in Romania. It was founded in 1864 by ruler Alexandru Ioan Cuz as *School of Belle Arte*. Then, in various historical periods, it changed the organisational structure and the name. Since 2002, it has functioned as the National University of Arts Bucharest. It functions in accordance with the Law on Higher Education (LoHE) of 2011. UNARTE is a public higher education institution.
13. The above mentioned law formally guarantees the university autonomy and fundamental academic freedoms. The detailed presentation of the principles of functioning of the university, its value systems, goals, organisational structure, etc. are written in the document entitled Carta UNAB. The actual autonomy is limited by the requirements formulated by numerous public institutions operating in higher education, e.g. ARACIS and other agencies. Article 217 of the Act lists 9 such institutions.
14. It is also worth noting that the university operates in a rather unstable institutional and legal environment (frequent changes of legal regulations, ministers), visible demographic decline in the country, and persistent economic difficulties resulting in reduction of expenditures on higher education.
15. In its structure, three faculties were distinguished (Fine Arts, Decorative Arts and Design, Art History and Theory), and departments within them, a school for doctoral studies directly subordinated to the vice-rector, as well as 6 research centres. The Doctoral School prepares its graduates for a scientific and research work and a professional career. In addition, 24 support units were separated in order to facilitate the process of education, scientific development and artistic activities.
16. UNARTE offers education in three cycles (bachelor, master, and doctor) in the visual arts. Bachelors programmes were accredited by ARACIS in 2010 r.
17. It enrolls, in total, circa 1469 students (1012 in the first cycle, 355 in the second cycle and 102 doctoral students), and employs 197 teachers of which 118 are full-time academic staff. All of them are holding Ph. D degree and 10 persons holds the title of full professor. The statistical data for 2010/2011 - 2014/2015 quoted in the SER show that the university have not recorded a decline in the number of students in recent years. On the contrary, the number of the students is increasing in many majors. Full-time studies are the dominant form of education. The smaller, but increasing number of students pay for their studies: first cycle – 381, second cycle – 45 and third cycle - 31.
18. The university does not offer post-graduate non-degree programmes.
19. Talks with all the representatives of the university showed strong commitment to and the pride of studying and working in UNARTE, which is considered a prestigious university in the Romanian educational market and the part of the national cultural identity.
20. The previous evaluation of the university made by ARACIS in 2010 resulted in the „high confidence” rate and granting accreditation for 2010-2015. The expert was informed that all the recommendations had been implemented. The *European University Association* expert team also conducted the external institutional evaluation of UNARTE in 2012-2013. The general undertone of this team's Report is also positive.

III. STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

21. The UNARTE's mission emphasised that the university has the ambition to not only develop the national artistic culture and its values, but also to participate in contribution to the development of the modern culture and the world civilisation. Education, artistic and scientific activities are to be carried out at an international level. The co-operation with European partners was emphasised. The set of core academic values and objectives is the element of the university's mission. The records quoted in the English version of the SER show that the formulated mission is quite generic and universal. I would encourage a deeper analysis of the national and European context, in which the university operates in order to develop a more detailed vision of its academic position in Romania and Europe in the 21st century. The reader of the Mission and Strategy should know by what this university is distinguished from its competitors, what are its comparative advantages over competing European universities, and what are its goals. The available English materials do not mention about the vision of the university.
22. The university's management is aware of the need to modify the Mission and the development of the vision. The Rector emphasised the necessity to develop new ways of the communication of contemporary artists with recipients of art. According to him, strong emphasis on practical training and the desire to be a university open to international co-operation are the feature of UNARTE distinguishing it from other art schools in Romania and Europe. During talks with the expert, the students said that they had chosen this university because it offered studies of specialisations not conducted at other higher education institutions, and provides a high quality of education. It seems that the above-mentioned features could be the basis of creation of a UNARTE's own niche on the education market.
23. The mission was materialised in the form of the medium-term Strategic Plan of the University 2012-2016. The interviewed members of UNARTE knew the fundamental mission and the strategic objectives of the university. The Strategic Plan for 2012 – 2016 is consistent with the mission of the university, and the adopted objectives and tasks are realistic. More specific tasks are included in annual strategic action plans. In the Rector's Activity Report for 2014 shown to the expert, the objectives planned for this year and the completed tasks are listed.
24. These documents do not address sufficiently one of the key topics developed in the EHEA, which is the student-centred learning. Therefore, it is advised to pay more attention to the issue of the student-centred learning in the new Strategic Plan, especially in the situation when decrease in the number of students as a result of demographic processes can be expected.
25. The Self-evaluation report does not indicate, how monitoring of the implementation of the Strategy is organised and which criteria are used. The discussions on the implementation of the Strategic Plan seem to suggest that the university has not developed an appropriate system yet. The above mentioned rector's annual report is a rather statement without elements of an analysis. I encourage to regularly revise the strategic plans and to determine measurable criteria and indicators of the progress in their implementation.
26. In conclusion, it can be said that the Strategic Plan is, overall, fit for purpose. One might suggest that the annual plans should present the latest changes in the university

- and its environment, as well as the degree of realisation of goals and objectives included in the medium-term Strategy.
27. For now, works on the new version of the strategy for the period after 2016 have not begun yet. The Rector informed that such activities will be undertaken. At the same time, he expressed scepticism about the need for a long-term strategy (beyond the 4 - year rector's term). Great uncertainty about the fundamental parameters determining the external financial and institutional conditions, under which the university will operate, was his argument. However, it should be noted that the long-term, systematically revised strategy is one of the risk management tools.
 28. Achievements of the graduates in the labour market show that the implemented strategic tasks in the field of education are compliant with the priorities of the Romanian higher education and the labour market's needs. Artistic and scientific achievements of the university's teaching staff confirm the leading role of the university in research carried out in the area of visual art.
 29. The Senate consisting of representatives of the scientific and teaching staff and the students is the highest body of the academic authorities, and is headed by its President. Three committees – the Ethics Committee, the Quality Evaluation and Assurance Commission (QEAC), and the Disciplinary Committee – operate within the Senate. One may wonder whether the number of senators (40 people) is not too high for such a small university. Settlement of many, possibly conflicting proposals and decisions in such a large group can reduce the efficiency of the university management. My interlocutors explained that the number of members of the Senate is a consequence of the legal regulations because of which representatives of all departments are also the Senate's members. It was also emphasised that the inclusion of a high number of employees in the university's management processes positively affects their acceptance of goals and objectives of UNARTE.
 30. The university is managed directly by the rector, who, pursuant to the new Law on Higher Education of 2011, was elected in direct elections by all academic teachers and the representatives of the students and other employee groups. Undoubtedly, it strengthens its accountability and position in the management structure of the university. The Minister for Higher Education approves the election of the Rector and can also recall him.
 31. The Administration Council helps the Rector. It consists of the rector, 2 vice-rectors, deans, and the administrative director.
 32. This structure is replicated at the level of faculties, which are managed by the deans (appointed by the rector after consultations with the professors councils) and the professors councils. Within the faculties, the departments and the small department councils were created. The above mentioned short description shows that a relatively large number of teachers is engaged in the organisational activities of the university, but not in the same time in artistic, scientific and teaching ones. The interlocutors questioned on this occasion did not see any major problems with the burden with the organisational work.
 33. The Senate and the professors councils make the strategic and current academic decisions, and the rectors and the deans – the implementing ones. The faculties and the departments within them have rather a limited autonomy.
 34. In all academic bodies, the students' representation is guaranteed. It is also worth noting the participation of external stakeholders in the Senate. This increases the chances of better matching of students' education to the labour market's needs.
 35. Analysing the structure of the university management, the significant changes introduced by the Act LoHE of 2011 should be taken into consideration. The separation

- of the authority power like the Senate from the executive one represented by the rector and the deans was one of the most important changes. The Rector does not chair its meeting and, like the deans, is not its member.
36. Distribution of power and responsibility between the different centres always causes some tensions in relationships between them. The management structure outlined above requires from the Rector outstanding skills of co-operation with the Senate, the Administrative Council, as well as the deans. The President of the Senate has many formal and discretionary tools that could impede the efficiency of the implementation of the Rector's decisions. The talks with the university leaders and the representatives of the collective bodies showed that co-operation is good in general. This also applies to such sensitive issues like the distribution of funds among the various units of the university. They assured me that this is done under the principle of consultation at various levels.
 37. It can, therefore, be concluded that the university management structure matches its specificity and development objectives. As the expert was informed, in the near future, significant changes are not expected. Deepening its flexibility towards broader interdisciplinary education (and research) with the participation of domestic and foreign partners could play a greater role.
 38. The university is funded primarily by public funds. The level of funding ensures ongoing funding, but may be insufficient in the event of a possible collapse in the demand for UNARTE's services. Although the data for the last years show the increasing number of UNARTE's students, but demographic processes are unfavourable. The university, which is an art school, is deprived of opportunities of obtaining funds from research grants like other universities. A quite difficult macroeconomic situation can also reduce the level of funding from the state budget. Therefore, it is necessary to diversify the sources of funding and to increase the share of the funds from private sources.
 39. All the talks conducted by the expert show evidently that the modest financial resources received by the university and freezing the employment level in the public sector make the realisation of many planned projects difficult, or even impossible. The magnitude of the problem is evidenced by e.g. the lack of own lawyer. Binding budgetary grants to the number of students forces the university to increase the student population, which is not always possible without the investment in the infrastructure. Moreover, it may also not encourage the improvement the quality of education. Quite late approval of the university budget by the ministry is one of the major sources of uncertainty in the university management. In practice, the rector for many months does not know how much funds he will be granted in a given year. In addition, there is no possibility of transferring surplus earned in a given year for the next years. Undoubtedly, this situation should be changed, but it requires changes of public finance regulations.
 40. It should be noted approvingly that there is the risk management policy. Pursuant to the state requirements, 18 general and as many as 55 specific procedures, consisting in the internal control system, were developed. Over 240 risks were identified. In 2013, the Chamber of Accounts of the Municipality of Bucharest audited the university in terms of the implementation of these procedures. Potentially, these tools (including the risk identification) slightly reduce the risk of being trapped into problems during the financial and demographic turmoil.
 41. The university leaders demonstrated the good recognition of weaknesses and threats to the further development of the university. Despite the difficult external conditions and very limited financial resources, they were able to guarantee the conditions for education quality at a high level.

IV. INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

42. In 2013, the Quality Management System (QMS) developed on the basis of the standards ISO 9001:2008 and the aforementioned internal control system was implemented. The university has obtained the ISO 9001 and the Romanian Society for Quality Assurance, as well as it is recognised by the International Certification Network. The task of the university management is the orientation and evaluation of all forms (units) and areas of activities through the outcomes.
43. According to the SER, the developed procedures include four components: quality planning, quality control, quality assurance, and quality culture. My interlocutors of the Quality Evaluation and Assurance Commission had certain difficulties in clear identification of these components in the particular procedures. It seems that the first two components of the system are much more developed than the others. The issues of the quality control was particularly exposed in the Manual of Quality Management.
44. A closer analysis of this system leads to the conclusion that, in regard to academic issues, many solutions indirectly refers to the ESG. One might, therefore, conclude that a hybrid quality assurance system functions in UNARTE. However, it should be emphasised that, in the SER (part C) and in the Manual of Quality Management, there is no direct reference to the ESG.
45. Appreciating these achievements, it should be noted, nonetheless, that among external quality assurance experts, great scepticism about the usefulness of the ISO system for the development of a culture of quality is expressed, especially if its implementation is not result of the internal needs of the university. This system does not take into account the specifics of the higher education sector. My interlocutors asked about the motives of its implementation pointed mainly at the national requirements and the importance of this system for the external control authorities, especially financial control authorities.
46. The QA organisational structure is based on the quality committees (at the level of the Senate, the faculties, and the departments), as well as the executive power (the rectors, the deans, and the directors of departments). The expert was informed that the President of the Senate did not formulate specific expectations to the QEAC, which would constitute a part of the action plan.
47. The lack of institutional support for the development of a quality system in the form of the university quality unit is somewhat surprising. The quality committees, like the rector and the deans, work in a 4-year term. The lack of a unit systematically collecting previous experience in the quality system and employed professionally prepared specialists may hamper the development of quality culture.
48. Following the structure of the Part I of the ESG, I was interested in whether the university's quality assurance and improvement system covers all key areas of the university's activities and the determinants of the quality of teaching and learning, as well as whether appropriate quality procedures covering all cycles of education were developed. Within the QMS, the quality policy and the procedures for quality assurance were developed. The procedures and main approaches are described in the Manual of Quality Management. At the declarative level, continuous efforts to improve quality within education, research and artistic activities are emphasised. The SER lists ten objectives associated with this area, including the development of the culture of quality.
49. The culture of quality must have roots and support in the academic community. Although the share of students was guaranteed in the works of the quality committee,

but the talks conducted in the university show that knowledge about quality assurance issues (including such concepts like the quality assurance, quality enhancement, and quality culture) is not high within the academic community. The knowledge about the general objectives and principles of the university quality improvement system is relatively low. The benefits brought by the new system to the teaching and learning were not identified correctly. According to some interlocutors, the quality assurance system contributes to a greater transparency in the functioning of the university, a better measurement of the performance outcomes, and increases the accountability of the university in the opinion of the external stakeholders.

50. Thus, the university management should develop better ways of promotion of the key solutions in this area of the university activities than hitherto.
51. It should be noted, however, that the system is at the early stages of operation and the SER is only announcing the development of an appropriate methodology and tools for achieving its objectives in the annual actions plans. The reports of the Rector for 2013 - 2014 do not show that such an action has been undertaken in that period.
52. External stakeholders issue receive scant attention in the SER as to their function in relation the Strategic Plan and decision-making processes. The SER does not show that the university maintained strong contacts with the employers, social partners, and the graduates and other stakeholders. What was emphasised was their participation in some academic bodies. The conducted talks, including these with the employers, show a slightly different picture, namely that there is a rich network of contacts between the UNARTE's employees and the employers built on the principle of individual initiatives. However there is no systematic platform of the university's co-operation with the external stakeholders. An alumni association has not been established. It should also be emphasised that the employers have expressed a high level of satisfaction at the skills and competence of the university's graduates. Both the employers and the graduates pointed a small number of jobs for graduates of art majors. Therefore, the intensification of this co-operation is a condition of a better matching of the offered qualifications structure to the labour market's needs.
53. The QEAC is obliged to develop periodic (semester/annual) reports on the extent to which the quality standards set out in the UNARTE's development strategy and evaluate the QMS periodically. What is more, a periodical evaluation of the contribution of each member of the academic community in improvement of the management of the university is to be conducted.
54. The reports presented to the expert show that the members of the Quality Commission review the students' semester exhibitions and, on this basis, they assess the quality of the works presented there.
55. The experience of professors participating in exchange programs, especially ERASMUS, is used in comparisons with similar quality systems in foreign universities.
56. The committee has not yet conducted a comprehensive review of the functioning solutions and has not proposed substantial changes of the quality assurance system yet.
57. In summary, it can be concluded that:
 - a. the internal quality assurance system is at the initial stage of development,
 - b. it covers the main areas of the university's activities, although there is the lack of some procedures, and the other elements could be much better developed (see: the next part of the Report),
 - c. it seems to be well rooted in the teachers' community, at least none of my interlocutors did not question its usefulness, which often happens during talks with the academic staff,

- d. the formal quality assurance system is supported by the sense of teaching staff's responsibility for the high quality of education, which was demonstrated in talks; foreign expert saw some evidence of informal quality assurance practices, that create a sort of quality assurance cycle, but this rather depends on individual actors, and is not the part of an integrated system.
- e. there are no developed monitoring and a comprehensive analysis of its advantages and disadvantages; there are not many examples of structural improvement in education, research, and other areas based upon results generated by the IQAS.

V. TEACHING AND LEARNING

58. UNARTE developed its own rules of admissions for studies, programmes of studies for individual majors taking into account, among others, the tertiary educational structure and ECTS points assigned to individual cycles (incidentally, some interlocutors, including the students, criticised the division of the artistic studies programme into two short cycles), and the ARACIS's requirements of the proportion of theoretical and practical classes. The university has developed its own procedure of conducting final examinations.
59. Qualifications offered by the degree courses are consistent with the UNARTE's mission statement and strategy, as well as key regulations concerning higher education in Romania. Key paperwork regulating education, as well as the SER are consistent with guidelines and provisions in place at the EHEA and corresponding EU legislation. The ECTS was implemented, learning outcomes defined and linked to the National Qualification Framework, credits attained at other universities are fully transferable, a diploma supplement is issued, education quality is systematically verified by an external accreditation committees and emphasis is put on the internationalisation.
60. Students make a self-assessment of their learning outcomes proposing grades, which, according to the lecturers, are often lower than the ones actually awarded. The learning outcomes achieved at the end of the studies are verified by the system of examinations, thesis review, and artistic achievements presented in public. According to the QEAC's report, its members review the semester students' exhibitions, assess demonstrated skills and competencies and, on this basis, formulate proposals of changes of the teaching methodology and the education process. Undoubtedly, this can be considered an example of a good practice. The received information also shows that the university does not invite the external examiners nor reviewers to verify the achieved learning outcomes. The financial regulations preventing from funding the work of external examiners are the main reason. The high quality of education is confirmed by numerous awards received by the students and graduates at national and international exhibitions and contests.
61. The university is encouraged to develop a methodology for the assessment and recognition of non-formal learning outcomes. This would attract new learners interested in partial supplement of their qualifications acquired outside higher education.
62. The university does not conduct systematic monitoring of its graduates' careers and does not have comprehensive information about the suitability of the acquired learning outcomes for the labour market. In the university, there is no specialised Careers Centre-type unit providing the students with the knowledge about the preparation to



VII. RESEARCH AND ART.

77. UNARTE as a higher education institution ranks research projects very high in their strategic goals guided by research programme and requirements of the Law of Higher Education. Among others, it stipulates that research should comply with priorities of the European Research Area, and research results should filter through into didactics. UNARTE has high ambitions to create "... a competitive framework in the direction of 'World-Class Research University'."
78. The research activities is coordinated by the vice-rector with the participation of the Scientific Council subordinated to the Senate, and the Department of Research. Two of the research centres mentioned in section 14 were accredited by the Romanian National Council of Scientific Research in Higher Education. Research priorities were developed, and research teams participate in national and international projects. The students and the doctoral students participate in the research.
79. The scientific achievements monitoring system was developed at the level of the university, the faculties, the departments, the research teams and researchers. However, as the QEAC members explained, the evaluation of this system is not in the scope of its activities.
80. The actual effort, however, apart from driving declared strategic goals, is rather modest. In the last classification of the Ministry for Higher Education and Research, the university was qualified to the group B – a teaching and research university. The expert does not know the methodology of this ranking, but, perhaps, the category B results from insufficient attention to the artistic achievements and the use of the same evaluation criteria of the research performance like in the case of typical research universities.

VIII. LEARNING RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT

81. UNARTE has its own buildings ensuring basic conditions of educations and artistic and research activities. The university has a library in which there are 46,000 volumes as well. The library ensures free access to international journals and databases. Unfortunately, the students do not have direct access to the book collection, and the library is open only for 5 days a week.
82. The talks conducted during the site visit show that everybody is affected by the lack of enough space for the education and research process, and the presentation of their achievements. This year, the university will resign from renting the space for their own gallery due to the high costs. The students are not satisfied from the dormitories (e.g. the lack of kitchens).
83. The students and the Staff have access to specialised software used in the education and research of art schools. In the university, there is the Wi-Fi system available for the students and the staff. The students criticised the fact that they have to finance the materials needed to make their artistic projects on their own.
84. At the university, there is no student club. Health services are provided by other universities, but are criticised by the students. In the corridors, there were no copy machines.

85. There is no systematic evaluation of the infrastructure conducted by the QEAC. The SER announces the creation of such system, but only for the research infrastructure. It is recommended to introduce a specific procedure in this area of the university.
86. The SER does not provide complete information about drop-out rates, student progression and success rates, including employability of the graduates, the students' satisfaction at their programmes.
87. The UNARTE's student population profile is changing towards greater participation of part-time students, and the age composition of the student population is diverse as well. Therefore, the university should become more responsive to the students' learning needs.
88. The students had concerns related to the quality of the UNARTE's administration services, but they do not have the opportunity to express them in the system of anonymous surveys. I would suggest, like in the case of other universities, introduction of such a system.
89. During talks with the expert, the Rector declared that the improvement of material infrastructure is a priority in the policy of the current term of the university authorities. According to the expert, no significant improvement of the conditions of providing education may cause an outflow of candidates for the studies in favour of universities offering better infrastructure. Such a situation will not, for sure, encourage foreign students to arrive there.

IX. INTERNATIONALISATION

90. At the level of declarations and provisions included in various documents, UNARTE pays a great attention to international co-operation. This applies, in particular, to research and artistic activities, as well as, to the less extent, education.
91. The list of signed co-operation agreements is relatively long and includes, above all, European universities. UNARTE is also a member of the networks of art schools. It is not clear, however, which of these institutions have the status of a strategic partner of UNARTE.
92. The students and the staff are involved in foreign exchange, mainly within the ERASMUS and the ERASMUS PLUS programmes. In the current year they co-operate with 62 foreign partners. The provided data for 2015/2016 show that 72 students and 12 teachers are visit foreign university. As in many universities of the former communist countries, the number of incoming students (12) and teachers (10) is much lower.
93. The limited offer of courses in foreign languages and insufficient knowledge of foreign languages among the students and the teachers may be one of the reasons. This academic year, UNARTE is conducting only one course in a foreign language.
94. In the field of education, there are no advanced forms of international cooperation, like joint and double degree programmes.
95. The expert was informed that the further development and deepening of international co-operation is at risk, as a result of the legal regulations limiting expenditures on these objectives.

X. INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND PUBLIC INFORMATION.

96. UNARTE has not developed specific policy and procedure of collecting internal information, as well as a public reporting system. Generally, this area of its function is less developed than others. UNARTE lies behind most European universities.
97. There are several distinct subsystems of education and research information collection, but they are not integrated with each other, so that they could facilitate making quick decisions or analytical works.
98. Not all information relevant to the institutional performance are collected, and not all available information is analysed as well. For instance, there is the lack of analysis of the phenomenon of drop-out by programme, the graduates' employment, the effectiveness of cooperation with external stakeholders. There was no analysis of the functioning of the internal information system of the university.
99. The university internal communication, including the collection of information about the educational process's outcomes, uses traditional forms. The chapter VIII of the Rules of Internal Organization lists only two forms of communication such as letters and faxes, omitting so a common tool like e-mails. The professors communicate with the students via e-mails, which are created on non-university web platforms. Apart from the leadership of the university and the faculty, UNARTE does not offer the teachers and the students its own e-mail addresses or websites.
100. The students do not have access to the syllabus in an electronic form. Coursework and exam grades are entered into paper course records and examination protocols, and collected in the electronic system. However, in the opinion of some students, the system is complicated, search for relevant information is time-consuming, and the guide to the IT system would be needed. In order to obtain a UNARTE's document, the students have to write a request for its issue.
101. The rector's annual reports are an important form of his communication with the academic community. The QEAC also develops its own reports. However, these reports are not published on the website, so that their impact on the environment of the university is limited. The expert was informed that the SER will be published on UNARTE's website.
102. The university uses modern forms of communication with the public, such as websites, as well as Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn websites. The university's lecturers are active in the public media. Despite many talks, the expert was not able to determine, who ultimately decides what and how to publish information, or who is responsible for the principle of its "production" in the particular university units. It seems that this responsibility rests with the Rector.
103. The website, including its English version, provides many important information about the university by means of the publication of key documents describing the areas of the university's activities and artistic works. Its structure is clear. However, not all icons are active, some pages are under construction, and others are not updated. For example, the exploration of the English version of the website shows that in 2008-2015 only one research project was conducted. There is no French version, of which knowledge is fairly common among older generations. There is no information about the quality assurance system, which would be a good tool of building accountability of and trust to the university.
104. In the light of the talks with the UNARTE's leaders, many of the criticisms raised by the students and the graduates are due to the low level of their knowledge about the functioning of the university. Therefore, the real system of communication with the

academic community and the university's environment requires significant improvement, even if there are formal channels of dialogue.

XI. FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

105. In the light of the analyses of documents, information and evidence collected during the visits, as well as the observations, I have no doubt that UNARTE's level of education is high. The long tradition, superb teachers, and the implemented internal quality assurance system are its bases. It was amicably confirmed by all the stakeholders, and, most importantly, the students, the graduates, and the employers. Critical remarks in the report are not the fundamental criticism, but rather are to illustrate the UNARTE's leaders weaker aspects of the university's functioning. In my opinion, the National University of Art deserves for the "full confidence" rate.
106. At the same time, the following recommendations might be subject to consideration:
- The introduction of the SWOT analysis as a tool of the quality management.
 - The supplementation of the future self-assessment reports with the analysis, apart from the presentation of the facts.
 - More precise determination of the future UNARTE's place in the European education market, the European Research Area, and the labour market as well. The revised Mission and Strategy supplemented with a vision of the development of the university should clearly indicate the distinctive features of UNARTE. These documents should identify the role of the university. In reconsidering its mission, the university should try to identify a niche for itself in the education and labour markets.
 - UNARTE should actively and systematically co-operate with the employers in order to determine the demand for specialists. The employers should also be regularly consulted on matters relating to changes of the studies' programmes.
 - UNARTE is strongly advised to set-up a unit dealing with the graduates' career planning, collecting information about their position in the labour market, as well as active search for vacancies. The foundation of the alumni association must be considered essential.
 - It is necessary to intensify efforts (including political lobbying) in order to improve the infrastructure of the university.
 - The university should develop a plan of diversification of incomes lessening its dependence on subsidies from the state budget.
 - It is necessary to develop the university's information policy. The university should continue its digitalisation operation in more vigorous way. Integration of the existing subsystems information collection into a single system for its efficient use in the management of the university. Rules of informing the public about the conducted education, research and artistic activities, as well as their results should be developed.
 - The internal quality assurance system should be regularly monitored and subjected to a comprehensive analysis from the point of view of its completeness, the impact on particular areas of activity, especially education, the degree of acceptance by the academic community, the ability to recognise threats, and, above all, usefulness to build quality culture. More reflection is needed on the long-term goals and effectiveness of the IQAS.



- The university could be a national leader in conducting discussions on the specifics of building a quality culture in art schools. I suggest to organise annual conferences, such as a Quality Forum, during which good practices would be presented, and experience would be exchanged.

I am aware that the implementation of all the recommendations and suggestions in the current external conditions may not be possible. It, indeed, demands both legislative changes and increase of expenditures for the university's funding.

Date: 28.02.2015

ETS – FOREIGN EVALUATOR EXPERT

Name Mieczyslaw Wacław Socha

Signature: 