



EUA-Institutional Evaluation Programme

**BRNO UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY  
BRNO, CZECH REPUBLIC**

***FOLLOW-UP EVALUATION REPORT***

*April 2011*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This report is the result of a follow-up evaluation of the Brno University of Technology (BUT) in Brno, Czech Republic. EUA's Institutional Evaluation Programme (IEP) originally evaluated BUT during the academic year 2004-05 with the report submitted to the University in September 2005.

In April 2010 the University requested that IEP carry out a follow-up evaluation. The request was made by the Rector of BUT, Professor Karel Rais, who was Vice-Rector and responsible for the self-evaluation process during the original evaluation.

The Steering Committee of the IEP appointed the following as members of the evaluation team for the follow-up evaluation of BUT:

- Alojz Kralj, former Rector, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia, as team chair
- Lothar Zechlin, former Rector, University of Duisburg-Essen, Germany
- Karl Agius, MSc. student, University of Malta, Malta
- Dionyssi Kladis, Professor, University of the Peloponnese, Greece, former Secretary for Higher Education in Greece, as team coordinator

Professors Alojz Kralj and Lothar Zechlin participated in the IEP evaluation team that conducted the original evaluation of BUT.

The single follow-up site visit to BUT took place from 18 to 21 January 2011.

## **INSTITUTIONAL EVALUATION PROGRAMME AND FOLLOW-UP EVALUATION PROCESS**

The Institutional Evaluation Programme (IEP) is an independent membership service of the European University Association (EUA) which offers evaluations to support participating institutions in the continuing development of their strategic management and internal quality culture.

In line with the EUA's Institutional Evaluation Programme as a whole, the follow-up process is a supportive one. There is no prescribed procedure, and it is for the institution itself to set the agenda in the light of its experience since the original evaluation. The institution is expected to submit its own self-evaluation report, which will describe the progress made, indicating where possible the barriers to change.

The rationale is that a follow-up evaluation can assist the institution in evaluating the changes that have been made since the original evaluation: What was the impact of the original evaluation? What use has the institution made of the original evaluation report and recommendations? How far has it been able to address the issues raised in the report? The follow-up evaluation is also an opportunity for the institution to take stock of its strategies for managing change in the context of internal and external constraints and opportunities.

As in the original evaluation, the follow-up process is also guided by four key questions, which are based on a 'fitness for (and of) purpose' approach:

- What is the institution trying to do (and why)?
- How is the institution trying to do it?
- How does it know it works?
- How does the institution change in order to improve?

Monitoring the impact of the recommendations presented in the original report, and assessing the changes that have been made since the original evaluation in the light of these recommendations, are among the primary aims of the follow-up process. However, since the overall evaluation process is dynamic and not static, the follow-up evaluation should also take into account contextual changes, reforms and new developments, both within the institution and within its wider environment, and adapt its recommendations accordingly. Furthermore, the follow-up process can also review and give feedback on any problems that may have occurred in the implementation of the original recommendations.

Finally, follow-up evaluations provide valuable information on the relevance and the adequacy of the Institutional Evaluation Programme itself, indicating areas of consolidation and improvement that would benefit all EUA's members.

## **THE FOLLOW-UP EVALUATION PROCESS IN BUT**

### **1. Introduction**

The evaluation team received a 30-page Self-Evaluation Report (SER) for the follow-up evaluation. The SER focused on the developments and the progress made by BUT following the recommendations addressed to the University in the original evaluation report.

The SER was followed by the Long-Term Plan 2011-2015 of BUT, and by appendices with statistical and other data. The evaluation team appreciated the work done in the SER and considered it an honest and critical analysis of the current situation and developments since 2005.

As the SER pointed out, and as was explained in many of our meetings, the original evaluation process was regarded as very helpful to BUT and was followed by significant initiatives towards the implementation of many of its recommendations. These will be analysed in the main part of the present report.

During the single follow-up site visit, the evaluation team had the opportunity to discuss issues with many of the key actors in BUT and with the main stakeholders, in particular:

- with the senior leadership
- with representatives of the Senate
- with the Deans of all (eight) Faculties
- with the Self-Evaluation Steering Group
- with the Quality Assurance staff
- with representatives of students
- with central office staff members
- with international researchers and international graduate students
- with outside partners.

There were also intense and in-depth discussions with the Rector of the University, Professor Karel Rais, and the Vice-Rector, Professor Petr Stepanek. All the meetings and discussions were efficiently organised by Mr. Stanislav Skapa, who was the liaison person with the evaluation team.

On the last day of the follow-up visit, the chair of the evaluation team, Professor Alojz Kralj, presented the team's oral report to an audience consisting of the leadership of the University, together with many of the members of the university community who had participated in the meetings with the evaluation team during the follow-up visit. This oral report constituted the basis of the present evaluation report, which also takes account of all the written information received, of interviews with various actors in the Institution and with external partners, and of the evaluation team's own observations during the follow-up visit.

The evaluation team wishes to express its gratitude to the people of BUT for the openness and willingness with which they discussed the issues raised during all our meetings. Finally, the evaluation team would like to express its sincere thanks to the Rector of the University, Professor Karel Rais, for his generous hospitality.

## **2. The main findings of the follow-up evaluation**

### **2.0 Introductory remarks**

As has been said above, the follow-up evaluation is based in principle on the recommendations of the original evaluation conducted in 2005 (“the original evaluation report”). In terms of methodology, this means that in this report we will first focus on the main changes at the University since 2005, looking in this regard also at changes in the external context, and then we will look in more detail at some “forgotten issues” from the 2005 recommendations. However, the follow-up evaluation is more than simply connecting the past to the present. It must also look to the future. In that sense, the institution’s expectations for the future and its capacity for change will be at the centre of the follow-up evaluation, together with the enhancement of quality culture within the University.

The main findings of the follow-up evaluation are presented in the following nine sections of the present evaluation report. At the beginning of each section the main issues that were stressed in the original evaluation report are briefly presented, followed by the changes that have subsequently been made. The evaluation team then comments on any recommendations that have not been implemented (“forgotten issues”), analysing the reasons for this and presenting new approaches for the future which take into account the changed conditions and the new higher education context (institutional, national or European) in which BUT operates.

As regards specifically the national context, the evaluation team would highlight one specific issue which reduces the ability of Czech universities to plan their route to the future. This relates to the current uncertainty in Czech higher education as regards expected reforms at national level. It seems that policy continuity is not a reality. This can be seen in the way the White Paper on Tertiary Education presented by the Ministry of Education two years ago (January 2009), was withdrawn after the political change in 2010. The uncertainty around reform was clearly present in all our discussions with key actors in the University.

The Self-Evaluation Report for the follow-up evaluation was received by the evaluation team only two weeks before the site visit. This short time reduced our ability to go deeply into the problems described in the SER, or to analyse the overall situation. Furthermore, the evaluation team considered that important statistical data were lacking. We therefore asked for additional data during our site visit, which we received after this had been completed. This implies subsequent analysis of the data, which did not leave enough scope for us to carry out an in-depth analysis. Overall, our feeling was that there was not enough quantification in the SER. This seemed strange to us, not least since there is a central unit for data collection in BUT, and we were informed both in the SER and in our various meetings that it is functioning well.

## **2.1 Strategic planning and management**

The original evaluation report stressed the issue of strategic planning, putting emphasis on the need for a clear vision statement, for prioritisation of objectives and for an effective action plan for their successful achievement.

Since then, BUT has developed a strategic plan for the period 2011-2015. It is called a “long-term plan”, although the 5-year period 2011-2015 implies rather a “mid-term plan”. However, we believe that with this document BUT is not undertaking a classic systematic strategic plan, but rather an incremental plan. Much of it flows from the long-term plan of the Ministry of Education, but it also takes substantial account of input given by BUT’s Faculties. In that sense, the long-term plan 2011-2015 can be seen as influenced by two procedures functioning in opposite directions: one top-down (input from the Ministry of Education) and one bottom-up (feedback from the Faculties). The long-term plan 2011-2015 seems to us essentially a sum of smaller objectives which cannot easily be synthesised; as a result, it is neither transparent nor easy to find out where the heart of the institution lies, i.e. what is the element which defines the identity of BUT and distinguishes it from other universities in Czech Republic and elsewhere.

Another consequence of the way this plan has been drawn up is that the University is unable to set concrete priorities. Clearly, the three priorities mentioned in the long-term plan 2011-2015 (i.e. “quality and relevance”, “openness”, “efficiency and financing”) cover – when analysed – the whole spectrum of the activities of a modern university; but for this reason they cannot be considered a real prioritisation of objectives.

For the evaluation team it is questionable whether BUT, or indeed any university in the Czech Republic, can create a really long-term plan based on its own central institutional priorities, given the independence, autonomy and power of the Faculties under the Czech model of higher education. However, even under these conditions, a concrete vision statement is required as the basis for any strategic plan. The long-term plan 2011-2015 does not contain such a vision statement. From our discussions, particularly with the Rector and his team, we perceived that the vision of BUT is to be among the top 500 universities according to the QS (Quacquarelli Symonds) World University Rankings. The evaluation team has doubts whether this is a reasonable goal, given the criticism around ranking initiatives. However, if BUT insists on this aim, it should, first, make strategic decisions as to the priorities to be set and pursued in that context, and secondly, develop in parallel an effective action plan to ensure that these priorities are achieved. Developing such an action plan requires effective coordination and steering from the leadership of the institution, as well as setting up the operational structures and procedures that achieving the plan will require. In this context the evaluation team appreciates the fact that BUT has established a central unit for data collection and an overarching university information system, both of which are necessary if an action plan is to work. Similarly, the appointment of a Vice-Rector for strategic development is evidence that BUT is aware that the processes related to strategic planning and management need to be improved.

## **2.2 Quality assurance**

The original evaluation report stressed the need to establish an internal Quality Assurance (QA) system which would ensure quality improvement while at the same time creating a strong quality culture within the University. In the mean time, the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) for quality assurance in higher education have been adopted as one major development in the European Area of Higher Education since 2005, and these offer a framework for the establishment and functioning of internal QA systems in European universities.

The evaluation team had many discussions on quality issues during the site visit to BUT. First of all, respondents underlined the current difficulties as regards institutional level initiatives, again because of the independence and autonomy of Faculties in Czech Republic: this means that primary responsibility for QA lies within the Faculties. However, the evaluation team appreciates the establishment of a QA unit in BUT and considers it a significant step towards improving quality culture throughout the University as a whole, including within the individual Faculties. The overarching university information system (see above) can also be regarded as an important support mechanism for QA procedures overall, although, as the SER points out, it is not used by all Faculties, which raises the question of whether tax-payers' resources are in fact being efficiently used.

One of the tasks of the QA unit is to prepare guidelines for proper implementation of the QA procedures within the University. However, the feeling of the evaluation team was that the ESGs were not fully and genuinely implemented in BUT. This was something that was consequently stressed in our Oral Report. Almost one month after the end of the site visit to BUT, the evaluation team received an additional note from the Rector of BUT with regard to the compliance of internal BUT QA procedures with the ESGs. This note shows that BUT is aware of the importance of complying with the ESGs. However, in our view there are still problems with their implementation. Our recommendation here is that BUT should approach the implementation of the ESGs with a view to compliance not only with the standards for each of the seven points of chapter 1 of the ESGs (which refer to internal quality assurance), but also with the guidelines associated with each standard. Both elements should be taken into account by BUT in structuring and operating its own internal QA system. The consideration of such a compliance exercise leads inevitably to the conclusion that the ESGs are not yet fully and genuinely implemented in BUT, and that further improvement is needed here.

Effective quality management, as a starting point for quality improvement, is of course essential. BUT has started implementing the international standard EN ISO 9008. The evaluation team questions whether ISO is the right tool for quality management in universities, but of course it is up to BUT to decide. In any case, we would like to stress here that adequate resources are essential for effective quality management in a university. Furthermore, particularly in the area of quality management, the evaluation team considers that a benchmarking network with other universities (in the region and beyond) could offer significant information as well as ideas for improvement.



Our last point on QA issues is related to student questionnaires for the assessment of the quality of the study process. This was one of the key recommendations of the original evaluation report, but it seems that little has been done so far. The procedure is applied only in some Faculties (partially through electronic questionnaires) and it is not managed or coordinated centrally (again because of the independence and autonomy of the Faculties). The evaluation team has two main conclusions here: a) the questionnaires are only partly implemented and the participation of students is low and b) where they are used, there are no visible consequences. From our discussion with the students, it was clear that the absence of visible consequences is one of the reasons for the low interest, engagement and commitment of students, which leads to the low participation rate. Conversely, from the opposite point of view, the low student participation rate is used as an excuse to avoid visible consequences. This is a vicious circle. The team suggests the consultation of students in specific focus groups constituted by the QA unit as a way to address this problem.

### **2.3 Governance and leadership**

The primary recommendation in the original evaluation report was that the centre of gravity of BUT's governance should move towards the centre of the institution. Five years later, this appears to be practically impossible in the current Czech model for higher education. The evaluation team understands that there are four centres of power in BUT: the central leadership (Rector and Vice-Rectors), the Academic Senate, the Board of Trustees and the Deans of the Faculties. In addition, the Academic Senate operates in practice as a federation of the Faculties, since it comprises representatives (staff and students) from all Faculties in equal numbers. However, the other two centres of power (central leadership and Deans) cannot be members of the Academic Senate. It is interesting to notice here that neither members of the teaching staff nor students are strongly interested in being elected as representatives in the Academic Senate. Both consider it more important to be elected to the Academic Senates of the Faculties. For the evaluation team it is not clear where overall power and responsibility lie. It rather seems that there is not a single "overall" power, but that the seat of power varies with the topics to be handled. It is interesting to mention that in our meetings we heard two opposite views regarding the Academic Senate of BUT; first that it is a powerful body, but secondly that it has only limited power.

The evaluation team believes that in this decentralised governance environment BUT should establish appropriate internal structures and procedures for effective and efficient governance. This requires that BUT ensure horizontal and vertical balance in governance matters. In the horizontal dimension this would include: integrated and cooperative actions as between Rectorate, University Senate, Board of Trustees and Scientific Council. In the vertical dimension this implies a carefully calculated alignment between central level and faculty level. The actual balance will vary according to the topics at issue. Thus the centre of gravity will be not be the same for issues related to financing as it will be for issues related to teaching or to research.

In such a decentralised governance environment, efficient leadership at institutional level becomes much more demanding and challenging. For example, improving cost-efficiency through synergy gains becomes a necessity for the central leadership, while at the same time

adding to the overall accountability of governance. These challenges will also require central leadership to work on specific policies, such as the establishment of an effective and University-wide communication policy, or the enhancement of transparency, data collection and accountability in decision-making. Such measures will not only have consensus support, but they will also encourage the commitment and active involvement of the university community in supporting policies and measures.

## **2.4 Financing**

The original evaluation report stressed the need for BUT both to generate income from sources other than the state budget and student fees, and to make optimal use of existing resources, including every effort to reduce expenditure and improve the cost/benefit ratio.

In this regard, the evaluation team notes with satisfaction that BUT has been very successful in attracting national and EU structural funds for development. Nevertheless, diversification of income from different sources should be enhanced. In particular, income from national and international competitions should be increased. The evaluation team notes that little has been done in the area of fund raising. The original evaluation report recommendation that there should be a University Fund Raising Committee is still valid. To that end, the central leadership of BUT should reflect on the need to create a general platform with industrial partners, with a view not only to developing closer links but also to fund raising and donations.

As to the need for optimal use of existing resources, the evaluation team notes with satisfaction the initiatives taken by BUT's central leadership to remove activity duplication and improve efficiency (mainly with regard to student services and R&D, and partially in administration through the establishment of the unified Information System). However, the evaluation team strongly believes that the best way to optimise existing resources is through the establishment and operation of a central mechanism for the allocation and management of resources. This would allow the internal allocation of the budget to be reconsidered according to a new balance.

## **2.5 Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning issues were at the heart of the original evaluation report. The evaluation team notes with satisfaction that significant progress has been achieved since then.

In a technical university the balance between theoretical and practical study elements is always a crucial issue when considering student work-load. This is also an issue for BUT. However, the evaluation team realises that things are improving. In our meeting with students' representatives we noted that they are satisfied with their practical training in industry; they no longer complain about a heavy theoretical load during first years of studies. As the SER points out, and as we were informed during our discussions with BUT's leadership, the balance between theory and practice has been improved through a gradual re-accreditation process which takes greater account of practical aspects. The evaluation team appreciates the efforts in that direction and the improvement achieved. However, we believe that BUT should keep the

issue of balance between theory and practice under permanent review, not only for academic reasons but also to evaluate the relevance of studies to the needs of the workplace. In that context, the evaluation team considers the establishment of Study Programme Councils in the Faculties to be a significant step forward, and it urges the University and the Faculties to further enhance the role and input of industry stakeholders within them. At the same time, the evaluation team believes that BUT should encourage industry in order to offer more internship opportunities to students.

The need to change the Educational Paradigm, shifting from teaching-oriented approaches to learning-oriented ones, was also raised in the original evaluation report. As the SER points out, significant progress has been made since then, although a teaching-oriented system is still applied in technical specialisations. We were informed that elements of student-centred learning have been incorporated in many study modules, using modern work methods for students (problem solving, team project work and others). A shift from older to newer teaching methods is important for a modern university. It primarily requires change in the attitudes of academics, with continuous efforts on their part; but it also requires the active involvement of students in the new learning environment.

This must be accompanied by a change in the structure and organisation of studies. The evaluation team continues to recommend modularisation of studies on the basis of learning outcomes, supporting the shift towards student-centred learning. Modularisation is also important for improving inter-disciplinarity of studies. Inter-disciplinarity nowadays is a key issue for modern universities, and the evaluation team believes that its enhancement should be among the BUT priorities both for studies within the same cycle and in moving from the 1st to the 2nd cycle (including through bridging courses). Special attention should be given to the latter case, as we were informed that students from technological Faculties do not generally change direction between Bachelor and Master and that such changes are only seen in Management and Business. Furthermore, in order to enhance inter-disciplinarity, BUT should also enlarge the opportunity for students to take short courses in other universities, and to have these integrated into the student's ECTS record.

With regard to the other key issues stressed in the original evaluation report, the evaluation team notes with satisfaction the establishment of an Institute of Lifelong Learning. This is an initiative which both strengthens the educational profile of BUT, enhances its links with society and creates another possible source of income. On the other hand, it appears that other recommendations have been more difficult to implement, for example those suggesting the merger of language departments or departments of Physics or Mathematics. This was important both for educational purposes (the need to create a critical mass of teaching staff in related areas, enhancing research initiatives and activities) and for economic reasons (the need to avoid parallel activities in the same fields). Again, it seems that this problem is related to the independence and autonomy of Faculties.

## **2.6 Research**

The key research issues emerging from the original evaluation report focused on the need to improve the conditions for high quality research activities within the University, and on the need to strengthen its position in the international competition for research funding.

The evaluation team is happy to note that BUT has made significant steps since the original evaluation. The significant increase in the number of scientific publications, and the success in raising research funding, are solid evidence for that progress. Furthermore, the evaluation team has been informed that seed and reward money from the University budget is now provided to support promising research initiatives and outstanding achievements, while at the same time joint efforts with other HEIs in Brno have been undertaken, primarily through the establishment of a Centre of Excellence, aiming at larger EU grants. These undertakings are also good examples of BUT's endeavour to make progress.

For the evaluation team, it is clear that the best way for BUT to enhance its reputation and visibility, regionally, nationally and internationally, is through high quality research. BUT should therefore intensify and systematise its research policies, partly in order to cope with the growing international competition, but also in order to build stronger links with its regional and national technological environment. The latter need was clearly expressed during our meeting with representatives of local/regional industry. In that context BUT should further increase its R&D activities for economic enterprises. Rules and templates for R&D contracts are required, but they must be different for public- and for business-related funding. Another issue here is that of intellectual property protection, which must also be arranged appropriately. Some representatives from industry, have expressed their opinion in our meeting with them, that *"BUT does not have a real and sufficiently elaborated policy for the intellectual property protection"*. They also mentioned that these activities are not equipped with the appropriate persons (e.g. lawyers) to manage it. The evaluation team has considered these comments, compared to the information received from the University, and agreed that transparency and an all contained regulation for the intellectual property protection could be beneficial and supporting for enhancing the university-business cooperation.

As regards internationalisation, BUT should ensure that the existing Research Support Office should stimulate and assist in preparing proposals for competitive EU funding. The evaluation team recalls one of the recommendations of the original evaluation report, which stressed the need to strengthen international acceptance of PhD graduates, through joint PhD programmes, use of external referees, publication of results of PhD research in international refereed journals and participation in international conferences. We were informed that these lie in the responsibility of the independent Faculties. However, the evaluation team believes that they should all be part of the institutional research policy, and be incorporated into the strategic plan of the University.

## **2.7 Teaching staff**

Three issues were stressed in the original evaluation report. The first was that teaching overload due to duplication of courses and fragmentation should be reduced; the second was that teaching staff should be enabled to spend time in a foreign university; and the third was

that staff development should be ensured through pedagogical training and through sabbatical leaves.

As mentioned earlier in this report, reducing duplication of teaching activities is among the priorities of the central leadership of BUT, but the practical responsibility lies with the independent and autonomous Faculties. This may look like a technical issue, but in fact, it is related to the need to provide teaching staff with more time for research. Regarding sabbatical leaves, the evaluation team urges BUT to consider measures to enable longer leave for teaching staff to go abroad. Such measures not only contribute to staff development but they also help improve the international profile and connections of teaching staff. Maintaining a critical mass of teaching staff so that leavers can be substituted in their teaching duties will also require attention. This is in part related to financial means but it is equally a matter of collegiality. Finally, the evaluation team underlines again the need for pedagogical training, which should focus on younger members of teaching staff but should not be restricted to them. The new reality, involving new teaching and learning approaches (“student-centred learning”), requires the active involvement of all members of teaching staff. We appreciate that some measures have already been undertaken in that direction, but we have to note that they are addressed mainly to the younger staff and that they are optional.

## **2.8 Internationalisation**

Issues related to internationalisation have already been touched upon in other sections of the present report. In this section, we focus on issues related to international mobility (outgoing and incoming) of students and staff. The need to improve this mobility (through motivation, through support measures, through measures to improve current conditions and through a systematic information policy) was also raised in the original evaluation report. What we see now is that the number of international students, especially in 2nd and 3rd cycles, has significantly increased. We are also pleased to hear that there are no recognition problems with mobile students when returning to BUT. And we also take note of the recognition of international short courses integrated in the ECTS system.

However, the evaluation team believes that efforts should be reinforced. A systematic approach for informing the university community about European developments (EU higher education and research initiatives, new programmes, funding announcements, scholarships, Erasmus, Bologna) should be set up. And we should take account of the fact that staff awareness is also a requirement for effective student guidance. The existence of an Office for External Affairs is a significant step, but it must be further supported if it is to play its crucial role in implementing and coordinating a systematic information policy on international affairs and opportunities. We appreciate that developing and implementing a central, institutional-level, policy on internationalisation will be difficult, because of the independence and autonomy of the Faculties. We understand that some initiatives have been rejected by Faculties (e.g. the proposal for establishment of a central Foreign Languages Department). However, the evaluation team strongly believes that internationalisation is a policy issue which has to be handled in a manner which is transparent, focused, rational and cost-effective - and hence managed at institutional level. We therefore urge the central leadership to continue its efforts in that direction.

## **2.9 Links with industry and business**

In the section 2.5, earlier in this report, we mentioned the role of stakeholders from industry and business in fulfilling the need to link theory with practice in the study programmes of BUT. This role is ensured through the participation of stakeholders in the Study Programme Councils of some Faculties where they can have an influence to the curricula, but also by offering more internship opportunities for practical training to the students. Representatives from industry and business participate also in the Board of Trustees of the University, but they believe that they have restricted possibilities to influence things in BUT, as they consider the Board of Trustees a rather weak body.

The evaluation team considers improvement of links between BUT and industry/business as particularly important. It is interesting to note here that, during our discussions, the representatives of industry and business said that, quite reasonably, they have different approaches regarding vision than the academics; however, they believe, that they can associate their long-term vision with the one of the universities. The evaluation team believes that this is true. And, for that reason, we believe that BUT should reinforce its relationships with industry and business and be more active and not reactive in this relationship. To that direction, we urge BUT to create a structural body responsible for regular meetings with industry and business. We further believe that a general platform with industrial partners should be set at central level with various aims (e.g. for getting feedback for alumni, for graduate employment, tracking of their success and fund-raising, but also sponsoring donation etc.)

### **3. Conclusions**

From the above analysis, it is clear that BUT has made significant progress since 2005 in implementing many of the recommendations of the original evaluation. The establishment of a QA unit and of an overarching information system, the establishment of a Research Support Office and establishment of an Institute of Lifelong Learning are among the recommendations implemented, together with BUT's success in attracting national and EU structural funds for development, in raising research funding, in increasing the number of scientific publications, in balancing theoretical and practical parts of the studies, and in increasing international mobility of students and staff.

In the present report, we have tried to outline issues that have not been implemented and to analyse the reasons. We approached these "forgotten" issues from a different perspective, taking into consideration the changes in context, the difficulties that BUT has encountered in their implementation, but also the current environment within and around BUT, and its future plans.

In this concluding section of the follow-up evaluation report, we want to raise once more the issue of the internal structure of HEIs in Czech Republic, and specifically the independence and autonomy of the Faculties. This independence is the main reason given by BUT that many of the 2005 recommendations have not been implemented. We understand that this is a legal issue, and that it has to do with the tradition of higher education in Czech Republic (as in some other countries). In this regard, the evaluation team would like to repeat here, as its concluding remark, that the central leadership of BUT should make every conceivable effort and take every possible measure to reinforce the integrated nature and operation of the University, and to reduce the negative impacts which flow from the segregation of the Faculties.

## **ENVOI**

The evaluation team would like once again to express its sincere thanks to the people of BUT for the excellent arrangements provided to make this visit a challenging but delightful experience. At the same time, the evaluation team wishes to thank BUT for its generous and overwhelming hospitality.

The evaluation team was positively impressed by the commitment and engagement of all the people in BUT, especially of its leadership. The evaluation team is convinced that the initiatives undertaken by BUT's leadership are driving the University in the right direction, and it strongly urges the leadership to continue on this course.