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Institutional Evaluation Programme

*Performance in Research, Performance in Teaching – Quality, Diversity, and
Innovation in Romanian Universities Project*

"Alexandru Ioan Cuza" Police Academy

EVALUATION REPORT

April 2013

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Performance
in Higher Education





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1. Introduction

This report is the result of the evaluation of "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" Police Academy. The evaluation took place in 2012 and 2013 in the framework of the project "Performance in Research, Performance in Teaching – Quality, Diversity, and Innovation in Romanian Universities", which aims at strengthening core elements of Romanian universities, such as their autonomy and administrative competences, by improving their quality assurance and management proficiency.

The evaluations are taking place within the context of major reforms in the Romanian higher education system, and specifically in accordance with the provisions of the 2011 Law on Education and the various related normative acts.

While the institutional evaluations are taking place in the context of an overall reform, each university is assessed by an independent IEP team, using the IEP methodology described below.

1.1. The Institutional Evaluation Programme

The Institutional Evaluation Programme (IEP) is an independent membership service of the European University Association (EUA) that offers evaluations to support the participating institutions in the continuing development of their strategic management and internal quality culture. The IEP is a full member of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and is listed in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR).

The distinctive features of the Institutional Evaluation Programme are:

- A strong emphasis on the self-evaluation phase
- A European perspective
- A peer-review approach
- A support to improvement

The focus of the IEP is the institution as a whole and not the individual study programmes or units. It focuses upon:

- Decision-making processes and institutional structures and effectiveness of strategic management;
- Relevance of internal quality processes and the degree to which their outcomes are used in decision-making and strategic management as well as perceived gaps in these internal mechanisms.



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The evaluation is guided by four key questions, which are based on a 'fitness for (and of) purpose' approach:

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

1.2. "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" Police Academy's profile

"Alexandru Ioan Cuza" Police Academy is an autonomous public institution of higher education, the only one of its kind in Romania, dedicated to the formation, training and education of the future employees of the Ministry of Home Affairs (previously the Ministry of the Interior); consisting of police, border police, gendarmerie and fire officers, together with historians specialising in state archive and research work. Established in 1992, its organisation and functioning are set up in the University Charter approved by the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sport and the Ministry of the Interior.

The establishment, organisation and functioning of the institution are based on the need to adapt higher education specific to the Ministry of Home Affairs to the developments and trends in higher education of the joint security forces the academy belongs to; in line with the national and European amendments and staff training required to perform specific missions related to public order and national safety.

The current organisation of the academy is in a stage of transition from the previous university system to a modern one in line with the requirements of the Bologna Process. The academy's legal framework is regulated by the 2011 National Education Act no. 1 and the management contract between the rector and the Senate.

In the academic year 2012-2013, 215 teaching staff are employed at the academy, 149 of which are tenured positions. The teaching staff consists of 62 professors, 34 readers/lecturers, 74 senior lecturers and 45 teaching assistants. There are 1 582 students enrolled in Bachelor studies, including 1 121 men and 461 women.

1.3. The evaluation process

A self-evaluation group was established by the academy to coordinate the self-evaluation process. The group was led by Professor Stefan Pruna (Deputy Rector) and comprised of sixteen members drawn from the faculties, central services and the National College of Internal Affairs. The self-evaluation process consisted of planning and distributing tasks, collecting data and coordinating responses, preparation of a SWOT analysis, and finalising the



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report content. Each member coordinated the responses and feedback from their respective areas.

The team noted that there was no student representation and limited representation from academic staff on the self-evaluation group. Teaching staff and students with whom the team met displayed limited or no knowledge of the self-evaluation process, including an involvement in that process.

At the first visit, the team found that the self-evaluation report (SER) had not been prepared in accordance to the format outlined in the "Guidelines for Institutions. May 2012." As a consequence, a request was made to the academy to forward a revised report in line with the guidelines, together with supporting documentation identified by the team.

The original SER of the academy was sent to the evaluation team in November 2012. The visits of the evaluation team took place from 27 to 28 November 2012 and from 11 to 13 March 2013 respectively. In between the visits the academy provided the evaluation team with the revised SER and the requested supporting documentation.

The evaluation team (hereinafter named the team) consisted of:

- Professor Gulsun Saglamer, former Rector, Istanbul Technical University, Turkey, team chair
- Professor Rainer Leisten, former Vice-Rector teaching and student affairs, University of Duisburg-Essen, Germany
- Mr Mateusz Celmer, quality assurance experts pool, European Students' Union, Republic of Poland
- Ms Donna Bell, higher education consultant, Ireland, team coordinator

The team wishes to thank the Rector, Professor Gheorghe Popa and his team, all academic and administrative staff, students and beneficiaries who generously gave their time and freely shared their views on the issues affecting the academy. Particular thanks go to Deputy Rector Stefan Pruna and Professor Laurentiu Giurea (academy liaison person) for their kind attention to our needs and the organisation of the visit.



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2. Governance and institutional decision-making

2.1 Strategic planning

According to the SER, the missions of the academy are teaching and research. A major goal is the achievement of the highest academic and practical competencies by graduates.

The team was told that following the appointment of the current rector in April 2012, a management plan has been developed articulating the rector's mandate over a four-year period. The plan covers the major areas of institutional development, training, scientific research, inter-university cooperation and quality management.

A management contract is used as the mechanism to implement the objectives set out in the management plan. Progress is monitored through Board of Administration meetings and the rector's annual report to the Senate.

During the second visit, the team heard that the management plan and the management contract had been presented to staff. It was also pleasing to note that 30% of the strategic objectives had been achieved including improved internal communication and the establishment of protocols with universities in the European Union.

2.2 Decision-making and university structures

The conceptual framework for governance and management at the academy is outlined in the Rector's management plan:

"...my managerial act will rely on respect towards the law, loyalty towards the institution, honesty, transparency, fellowship and responsiveness to people's problems." (p9)

Participative management, delegation of competences and consultation on major decisions are critical components of that framework.

The team acknowledges the major constraints under which the academy is operating, specifically an undersized budget, restrictions on employing staff, frequent legislative changes and strong regulation both internally and externally. It is further acknowledged that the academy differs from the type of institution generally evaluated under IEP. Although the academy has the status of an autonomous higher education institution, the environment in which it operates is highly structured and highly regulated.

The team was told that the governance function is carried out by the Senate, consisting of 25 members, including six student representatives. The Administration Board oversees the



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operational management of the academy and includes the rector, deputy rectors, deans, the general administration manager and a student representative. Faculty councils oversee the operational activities at faculty level and include student members. All bodies are structured according to the specific rules and regulations prescribed by law.

Discussions with Senate representatives confirmed that the election of the rector and Senate members is based on the procedures outlined in Law no. 1. Senate meetings are held each month or as required. The strategic management processes outlined in section 2.1 of this report were validated. The Senate decides the extent to which the management contract has been accomplished based on a review of the rector's annual report. It was noted that there is a positive relationship between the rector and the Senate based on cooperation, consultation and feedback. It was interesting to note that student representation on the Senate is restricted to Bachelor level students as prescribed by the law.

The team was told that there is a very integrated decision-making process at faculty level that facilitates an awareness of and resolution of issues. For example, the rector and deputy rectors are guest members of the faculty councils.

The team concluded that the academy has a strong organisational culture, a feature of which is the highly structured relationships that exist between the academy and its beneficiaries. Further commentary on these relationships is provided in the teaching and learning, and service to society sections of this report. The team also concluded that formal and informal processes combine in an efficient manner to facilitate a responsive approach to decision-making.

2.3 Management of financial and human resources

A major strategic priority for the academy is to gain significant additional income by increasing its academic performance, diversifying its activities and exploiting its material and human resources efficiently.

The team was told that an undersized budget and the resultant budget constraints are major challenges for the academy. Eighty-five per cent of the academy's budget is funded by the state and 15% is generated from its own resources including retained income, fee-paying courses, interest, donations and sponsorships. It was noted that the state budget is not flexible as funds are allocated as line items. The team heard that it is not possible to carry forward funds, prompting the need to use all funds within the allocated time period. It was stated that effective planning is crucial in this challenging environment.

From a strategic planning perspective, the quality of human resources is of extreme importance to the future of the academy. A point of difference for this institution is that many of the staff in the faculty of police and the faculty of firefighters and some of the staff in



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central services are serving officers and are paid accordingly. It was further noted that academic staff have similar criteria for promotion as their counterparts in civil universities.

The team heard that due to an emergency government ordinance, all positions have been blocked. In the case of administrative staff, it is only possible to recruit one staff member for every seven vacancies. Legal constraints have also impacted on the ability of the academy to recruit young teaching personnel externally.



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3. Teaching and learning

A major strategic objective for the academy is to deliver educational programmes based on comprehensive training with an emphasis on the transmission of the knowledge needed to develop specific skills in line with the requirements of the public order and national security sectors. The input of beneficiaries is critical to ensure that graduates can readily adapt and integrate into the workplace environment.

Further objectives include:

- Improvement of curricula and study programmes and aligning them with those of other European police colleges and some of the prestigious European universities;
- Diversification of the educational offer and harmonisation of course content;
- Improving the dissemination of knowledge by using e-platforms and modern electronic mechanisms such as online courses and assessments.

The team was told that the teaching and learning activities of the academy take place in three faculties (police, firefighters and archivists), a doctoral school and the national college of internal affairs. It was noted that the faculty of police is the largest faculty with over 90% of the total student enrolment. The team found that the faculty of archivists is a point of difference for the academy because it is closer to the model of conventional university work.

It was noted that vocationally-oriented Bachelors programmes are provided in the three faculties. With respect to the curriculum, these programmes are split into academically-oriented subjects on the one hand and physical as well as technical instructions on the other. There are also opportunities to staircase to Masters programmes with an emphasis on professional and continuing education. Masters programmes are currently administered through the faculties. However, the team heard that a decision has recently been made to re-centralise the management of Masters programmes. Commentary on the doctoral school is included in the research section of this report. It was noted that the National College of Internal Affairs was established in 2008 as a postgraduate educational institute to provide training at strategic level in the field of home affairs, and the continual training of Ministry of Home Affairs personnel and other relevant beneficiaries.

The team found that the academy operates a highly competitive admissions procedure based on an entrance examination as prescribed by legislation. It was noted that although there has been a decrease in the number of admissions in recent years due to demographic changes, the practice is to select one out of every five to six applicants. The team was told that study programmes are developed using a “bottom-up” process in consultation with beneficiaries and go through committee processes at department and faculty level prior to approval by



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Senate. The team heard that all new study programmes and major revisions are subject to external evaluation by ARACIS before they can be delivered.

The team noted the commitment of the academy to shift from teacher-centred to student-centred education in line with the developments in the European Higher Education Area. The team was told that the teaching activities of the academy are developed on the premise of students as partners in the educational process, with a focus on the development of formative and creative skills. The general impression gained by the team is that there is a willingness to improve teaching and learning and to offer the best possible educational opportunities to students.

The team supports the efforts of the academy to realise the objective of student-centred education. It was concluded that a strategy of developing flexible curricula would enhance this objective by strengthening the capability of students to be able to question, develop analytical skills, and gain a passion to continue the learning process. In this positive context, it is recommended that:

- The academy innovate flexible curricula in order to foster student-centred learning, incorporating project-based, problem-based, place-based, practice-based systems with interdisciplinary collaboration.

Discussions with teaching staff confirmed that the legislative restrictions on hiring new staff are impacting on workload. The team was told that this challenge is being addressed by managing workload e.g. using the time available when students are on practicums. It was acknowledged that professional development opportunities are available within resource constraints, including courses for new teachers to develop teaching skills (training for trainers). There are also opportunities to attend workshops and conferences, and to participate in bilateral exchanges (as discussed in the internationalisation section of this report). The team concluded that the contribution of experienced academic staff is a major strength for the academy and is pleased to note that this factor is acknowledged by senior management.

The team noted that students were generally positive about their experiences at the academy. It was noted that students have good relationships with teaching staff, with issues often resolved informally, and that access to staff is available through scheduled office hours. Incentives are provided for high levels of academic performance such as time off and access to scholarships. Activities for students are provided through subject clubs and sports clubs. The team was told that students from the faculties of police and firefighters are accommodated in dormitories and have meals on site. It was noted that it is planned to provide internet access in the dormitories in response to student feedback.



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During the first visit, the team had the opportunity to tour the library. It was noted that the library has a stock of almost 174,000 publications and 4 900 specialist journals. The team was told that the publications in the library are adequate to meet the research needs of graduate and postgraduate students. The team concluded that there is limited access to online resources to support the research capabilities of students. This finding is endorsed by feedback from students confirming their desire for increased access to internet in dormitories and on campus.

Meetings were held with beneficiaries (future employers of the academy's graduates) during both visits. Details of the personnel with whom the team met are provided in the service to society section of this report. The team noted the feedback from beneficiaries confirming their input into the design and revision of curricula, and involvement in practicums including the evaluation of practicum outcomes. The team was told that beneficiaries also play a major role in the evaluation of graduates. It was noted that these processes are contributing to the continuous improvement of study programmes and the quality of graduates. The team found that the academy's close collaboration with beneficiaries is an indicator that the teaching and learning activities of the academy are working. In order to further strengthen these relationships, it is recommended that:

- The academy continues to cooperate with beneficiaries to graduate students ready for their professional life and capable of developing themselves in a rapidly changing environment.

In summary, the team found that the academy is making every effort to educate Bachelor graduates in the fields of police, firefighters and archivists, according to the requirements of beneficiaries, both in relation to professional training and scientific education. The work being done to educate professional and scientific Masters graduates is also acknowledged.



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4. Research

The academy is strongly committed to increasing research activities with an emphasis on scientific research. Improving research quality and the management of resources are critical to the achievement of this objective.

The team was told that the academy hosts a doctoral school organised according to the law, which oversees paid full-time doctoral programmes in the fields of law, and public order and national security. The objective is to develop authentic research, knowledge, competencies and cognitive abilities. It was noted that the school is operated by a director and the doctoral school board, and that research activities are coordinated through the faculties.

The team heard that the doctoral school aims at shaping a reference framework for doctoral studies and the promotion of common procedures and principles to ensure the quality of doctoral studies. Doctoral studies have two mandatory parts:

- A training programme based on advanced postgraduate studies;
- A scientific research programme.

It was noted that the majority of doctoral coordinators are academic staff from the National College of Internal Affairs. Synergies exist in the form of an overlap between the college's study programmes and the topics for the first month of doctoral studies. The team was told that graduates from the National College of Internal Affairs frequently staircase to doctoral studies. It was interesting to note that of the 219 doctoral students currently enrolled, 104 are employees of the Ministry of Home Affairs.

The team heard that a centre for scientific research and community programmes has been established as part of the doctoral school. The major functions of the centre include:

- promoting cooperation with other universities and research institutions in Romania and overseas;
- promoting both funded and non-funded research projects;
- developing research reports on the work of the academy;
- holding national and international conferences and workshops;
- keeping a record of mobility programmes (Erasmus).

It was noted that research is also supported through the publication of journals and conference proceedings across all faculties, and the operation of student research clubs.

The team concluded that research structures are not fully developed as yet and there is insufficient funding available for research activities. These findings are based on the desire of



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the academy to contribute to resolving operational issues amidst issues relating to the standard of research activity and an acknowledgement that raising the standard will take time. The team supports the commitment of the academy to strengthen research activities in the context of a challenging economic and social environment and recommends that:

- The academy provides adequate quantitative and qualitative capacity for research.

The team further concluded that there is limited cooperation for research at international level, as confirmed by the strategic objective to increase the international visibility of research.

The team found that the majority of research topics relate to practical applications. This finding was confirmed through feedback from academic staff, postgraduate students and beneficiaries e.g. the opportunity to conduct research designed to improve legislation, promoted by the Ministry of Home Affairs. It was interesting to note that teaching staff have a preference for applying for EU funding over Romanian funding as the EU funding application requirements are easier to manage.

Postgraduate students referred to the practice of beneficiaries proposing research topics, culminating in a negotiation process between beneficiaries and students to confirm topics and to ensure an appropriate mix between theory and practice. The team supports the commitment of the academy to work closely with beneficiaries to develop research topics that address practical issues, and recognises these efforts as an indication that the research activities of the academy are working. In order to strengthen these efforts further, it is recommended that:

- The academy follows closely the developments at European level related to research funding such as innovative doctoral programmes.

An opportunity to be aware of is the Horizon 2020 Marie Curie Programmes, a project to fund innovative doctoral programmes from 2014.

The team noted the feedback from postgraduate students that they would like support to assist them to apply for external funding. The team contends that a support mechanism would contribute to assisting academic staff and students to tailor proposals according to the expectations of funders, thus increasing the possibility of successful outcomes. It is therefore recommended that:

- The academy establishes a unit to inform, motivate and guide academics and students to design new proposals for external funding.



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The team noted that postgraduate students expressed a desire to have the opportunity to continue their studies at post doctorate level but there are no programmes currently available. The team supports this proposal as a mechanism to further the studies of graduates and to strengthen research activities. With this context in mind, it is recommended that:

- The academy installs post-doctorate activities.



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5. Service to society

Major strategic objectives in relation to service to society are to strengthen the role of the academy in the socio-economic environment, the establishment of centres of excellence (in partnership with stakeholders), the development of specialist programmes for trainers, the provision of complementary and short-term flexible programmes, and the development of academic programmes in partnership with beneficiaries.

The team was told that the academy had established a centre for human rights to provide training for trainers within organisations that needed this expertise. Other initiatives included consulting activities with local police and cooperation links with the community. Students from the faculty of police are involved in prevention activities including projects relating to traffic safety. The faculty also hosts an open day for high school students. The faculty of archivists hosts sessions for high school students to demonstrate what the work of an archivist involves. The faculty of firefighters provides consultancy services to the community such as workshops and scientific sessions.

During the course of both visits, the team met with five beneficiary representatives from the general inspectorate of police, border police and the general inspectorate for emergency situations. The team was told of the close working relationship between the academy and these bodies including cooperation in relation to curriculum issues and research as discussed in the earlier sections of this report. The team was interested to hear about the partnership between the academy and beneficiaries, as articulated in the management plan, to promote the professions as attractive occupations, particularly amongst high school students and in society in general. It was also noted the feedback that beneficiaries who would otherwise be interested in a teaching post at the academy are deterred by the relatively low salaries due to the convention to pay staff according to their rank as serving officers.

The team heard about several projects with beneficiaries including an initiative to combat computer fraud and joint projects between the faculty of firefighters and the general inspectorate for emergency situations. The team supports the project work being done by the academy in partnership with beneficiaries and recommends that:

- The academy continues to work with beneficiaries towards realising the projects that have already been initiated.
- The academy takes a leadership role in defining best practices to serve the needs of society and encouraging staff, students and beneficiaries to design new projects to address those needs.



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The team concluded that the beneficiaries were generally positive about their relationships with the academy. All parties have in common an ongoing commitment to work together towards continuous improvement in the quality of graduates.



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6. Quality culture

The principles of the quality management system are the continuous improvement of services and processes, and engendering confidence and trust amongst students, staff and beneficiaries that quality requirements have been met or are being addressed. The inclusion of quality management as a strategic goal in the management plan is evidence of the academy's commitment to sustainable continuous improvement. It was noted that the policy programme and guidelines for putting policies into practice are specified in the quality management book.

The team was told that the academy's system of quality management was implemented in 2005. The quality management system was initially certified in 2005 in line with standard SR EN ISO 9001:2001 and recertified in 2009 in accordance with standard SR EN 9001:2008. It was noted that the academy had established a commission for quality evaluation and assurance, which has an advisory function and reports to the Senate. The group consists of nine members, comprising of four academics, one student, one graduate and three beneficiaries. The team was told that the feedback of these groups is crucial towards continuous improvement of the implementation of quality management procedures. During the second visit, the team met with members of the technical service office, which reports directly to the rector. The role of this group includes the design of methodology and processes and controlling the quality of educational processes to ensure that standards are achieved.

The team was told that academic staff are evaluated on four levels (self-evaluation, peer evaluation, students' evaluation and department director's evaluation), in accordance with the principles and procedures established by the academy. Evaluation processes are administered by the faculties and coordinated by the commission for quality evaluation and assurance.

It was noted that peer evaluation aims at maintaining a collegial environment between academic staff and the development of a working environment that fosters strategies to address current issues. The focus of the student evaluation process is the improvement of course content, teaching, learning and assessment methods. It was further noted that the evaluation process ensures the confidentiality of student's questionnaires in order to encourage open feedback. The team was told that questionnaires are processed at departmental level and any issues raised are discussed with academic staff with a view to making improvements.

The team heard that following an institutional evaluation by ARACIS in 2009, the academy had received a "high trust" rating. The evaluations are conducted on a five-yearly basis. It was noted that the academy also has its own internal audit practices covering the major areas of



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academic activity to ensure that standards are met and as a mechanism for accountability. The team was pleased to note that improvements are made through the technical service office following proposals arising from the controls carried out. A further role of this office is to identify best practices of other universities and incorporate those that meet the needs of the academy in consultation with the appropriate department or faculty.

The team found that students are represented on all key decision-making committees, with a focus on presenting and resolving student issues. Numerous examples were provided to demonstrate actions taken to close the feedback loop, e.g. in relation to feedback from students' evaluations, making changes to study programmes to introduce new concepts or subject matter to meet emerging needs. A further example was given of conducting a needs analysis for an introductory law class, which resulted in an extra-curricula workshop leading to the award of an international legal certificate.

The team concluded that the quality culture of the academy is a relative competitive advantage. A system of hierarchical decision-making structures, and advanced and closed-loop quality management processes exists at both the individual and institutional levels. It was further concluded that the links between the academy and its beneficiaries towards the continuous improvement of processes is a strength, specifically the design of study programmes, student practicums, and the evaluation of practicums and graduates (refer to the commentary in the teaching and learning section of this report). The overall finding is that the academy has effective quality management systems in place. The team encourages the academy to continue in this direction in the future.



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7. Internationalisation

The expansion of international cooperation is a strategic priority for the academy, consistent with the University Charter, the management plan and the acts passed by the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sport. The team notes that a strategy has been devised to address this priority (with input from the faculties), through the office for international relations, which is led by a deputy rector.

The team was told that the academy had signed cooperation partnerships with similar institutions in Europe and throughout the world, including France, Germany, Austria, the Republic of Poland, Russia and the United Kingdom. A noteworthy example of cooperation is the academy's membership of the Frontex Partnership of Academies. The goal of Frontex is to promote, coordinate and develop European border management in line with the EU fundamental rights charter applying the concept of integrated border management. In order to develop training materials, including common training standards, Frontex has established a network of fifteen member states. The training centres in these states host Frontex-organised courses both theoretical and practical as well as training development conferences. The aim of these programmes is to facilitate effective cooperation during joint operations and to foster a common sense of European "border-guardianship" with a set of shared values and practices.

It was noted that the activities the academy is involved in includes participation in working groups established by CEPOL (European Police College) and the recent organisation of a conference in Bucharest for the Association of European Police Colleges. It was further noted that the faculty of firefighters provides the secretariat for the European Association of Firefighters.

The team was informed that an Erasmus office had been established within the doctoral school to facilitate opportunities for student mobility. It was noted that there are limitations to mobility opportunities due to inconsistencies in curricula e.g. one of the postgraduate students with whom the team met from the faculty of archivists had completed a history course in a university in Poland for which she has not been awarded any credits. The academy is working towards finding partner universities for the Erasmus programme with compatible study programmes.

The team concluded that there is scope to increase the mobility of researchers and internationalise research opportunities. The recommendation in the research section of this report to establish a unit to support researchers to submit successful proposals for external funding should assist to increase mobility opportunities. The team was told that mobility opportunities are also being sought with civil universities as not all police academies are classified as higher education institutions.



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The team noted that language skills represent a further barrier to mobility, and that this issue had been identified as a weakness in the SWOT analysis. Actions taken by the academy to address this issue include the provision of courses for teaching staff to improve fluency in languages and a facility to deliver courses in English, German and Russian in the border police department. It is also planned to identify academics proficient in English who can teach in that language.

In relation to bilateral exchanges for students, the team was told that the academy is expecting five students from Norway and five academy students will go to Norway. The same number of students has also participated in an exchange with Denmark. It was noted that within the faculty of firefighters, exchanges occur in the fourth year of the Bachelor degree. It was noted that only one student had participated in 2012, whereas previously four or five exchanges had been available. In terms of foreign students enrolled in study programmes at the academy, the team was told that within the faculty of firefighters there are five students from Moldova and ten students from Palestine currently undertaking a preparatory year to study language.

Staff with whom the team met from the faculty of archivists reported that three staff had gone on exchanges to the Republic of Poland and one staff member to the Czech Republic. Within the same faculty, staff had participated in workshops in Ankara to discuss historical relationships between Romania and the Ottoman Empire, and study visits to the Czech Republic and Germany. The team also heard that teaching staff in the faculty of firefighters had participated in exchanges with France and the Republic of Poland.

The team heard that theses are published in Romanian, the rationale for which (from the students' perspective) is to assist supervisors who do not speak foreign languages. It was noted that students expressed a desire to be able to publish theses in other languages. The team contends that by granting this request, the academy may attract foreign students to undertake postgraduate studies if the facility is made available for them to publish theses in other languages.

The team acknowledges the efforts of the academy to expand internationalisation, as evidenced by the increasing number of cooperation partnerships and the commitment to provide opportunities for students and staff to improve fluency in foreign languages. The team found that there are limited opportunities for student and staff mobility. Inconsistencies in curricula and language skills are the major barriers to mobility. It was further concluded that international activities tend to be of a short-term nature and have a limited impact.

Based on the above analysis and the desire of the team to support the academy to expand internationalisation, it is recommended that:



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- The academy increase the quantitative size of elective courses in the curriculum to enable students to access the Erasmus programme more effectively.
- Consideration is given to lowering the barriers with respect to content when accepting equivalence of course from abroad.
- The academy increase the mobility of researchers and internationalise research opportunities to incorporate the strategy of establishing partnerships with civil universities.
- The academy give priority to the provision of foreign language courses, including courses in English to attract more students from abroad.
- The academy provide the opportunity to submit theses in foreign languages.



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8. Conclusion

In conclusion, the evaluation team praises the Police Academy of Bucharest for its commitment to teaching quality and its aspiration to further develop its research culture and international activities. While it is acknowledged that the academy is working in a very rigidly defined environment, it is apparent that there is a strong commitment to creating a capacity for change, as evidenced by the strategies outlined in the management plan. The team hopes that the outcomes of this evaluation, based on the IEP philosophy of enhancing the continuing development of strategic management and institutional quality culture, will make a positive contribution to the development of strategies to support continuous improvement.

In summary, the team wishes to highlight the recommendations contained in the body of the report in relation to the following four areas.

8.1 Teaching and learning

- The academy innovates flexible curricula in order to foster student-centred learning, with a focus on project-based, problem-based, place-based, practice-based systems with interdisciplinary collaboration.
- The academy continues to cooperate with beneficiaries to graduate students ready for their professional life and capable of developing themselves in a rapidly changing environment.

8.2 Research

- The academy provides adequate quantitative and qualitative capacity for research.
- The academy follows closely the developments at European level related to research funding such as innovative doctoral programmes.
- The academy establishes a unit to inform, motivate and guide academics and students to design new proposals for external funding.
- The academy installs post-doctorate activities.



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8.3 Service to society

- The academy continues to work with beneficiaries towards realising the projects that have already been initiated.
- The academy takes a leadership role in defining best practices to serve the needs of society and encouraging staff, students and beneficiaries to design new projects to address those needs.

8.4 Internationalisation

- The academy increases the quantitative size of elective courses in the curriculum to enable students to access the Erasmus programme more effectively.
- Consideration is given to lowering the barriers with respect to content when accepting equivalence of course from abroad.
- The academy increases the mobility of researchers and internationalises research opportunities, to incorporate the strategy of establishing partnerships with civil universities.
- The academy gives priority to the provision of foreign language courses, including courses in English to attract more students from abroad.
- The academy provides the opportunity to submit theses in foreign languages.