

Estonian Higher Education Accreditation Centre

Evaluation of Research in Public Administration


Institutes evaluated

Tallinn University of Technology
Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences, Faculty of Humanities


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Expert Team

Prof. Jarmo Vakkuri
Faculty of Public Administration
University of Vaasa
P.O. Box 700
FIN-65101 Vaasa
FINLAND
Tel. +358-6-3248420
E-mail: jarmo.vakkuri@uwasa.fi




Prof. Jonas Hinnfors
Department of Political Science
Göteborg University
Box 711
S-40530 Göteborg
SWEDEN
Tel: +46 317734672
E-mail: jonas.hinnfors@pol.gu.se



Prof. Ernő Zalai (Chairman)
Corvinus University of Budapest
Fövám tér 8
H-1093 Budapest
HUNGARY
Tel/Fax: +36 1 2175 773
E-mail: erno.zalai@bkae.hu



Prof. Jari Stenvall
Faculty of Business and Tourism, Dean
University of Lapland
P.O. Box 122
FIN-96101 Rovaniemi
FINLAND
Tel. +358 16 341 2637
E-mail: jari.stenvall@ulapland.fi



Part I

General Overview

At the request of the Estonian Higher Education Accreditation Centre, Tallinn (EHEAC), the evaluation team (hereafter named the "Team") visited the Institute of humanities and Social Sciences of the Tallinn University of Technology in Estonia, carrying out research activities in Public Administration.

The expert team

- Prof. Jarmo Vakkuri, University of Vaasa, Finland;
- Prof. Ernő Zalai, Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary;
- Prof. Jari Stenvall, University of Lapland, Finland;
- Prof. Jonas Hinnfors, Göteborg University, Sweden.

The Team was provided in advance with a self-assessment report from the institution, prepared by the members of their research groupings.

After a brief orientation meeting at EHEAC, the Team visited the institution over one day. At these meetings staff members of the various Chairs presented their work. During these presentations as well as during the subsequent discussions additional information about the research activities was provided. This included additional documents such as copies of published papers.

Approach to the evaluation

The Team was asked to:

1. Judge the activities of research and development in the units evaluated and the research topics implemented by them to ensure the governmental funding for internationally recognised research and development.
2. Identify deficiencies in the activities of research and development unit.
3. Give recommendations on the development concerning research and development and research areas to the state of Estonia.

The Team received the following materials: A working schedule, principles and criteria for evaluation of the research units, evaluation guidelines for the ranking of research units, and a self-evaluation report created by the Department.

On a first evaluation point, the *quality of the research activities* was considered. This assessment is largely based on the records of scientific publications.

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Excellent | <i>The majority of the submitted works are at a high international level and virtually all others at a good international level.</i> |
| <i>Excellent to good</i> | <i>At least one third of the submitted works are at a high international level and many others at a good international level, these together comprise a clear majority.</i> |
| Good | <i>The majority of the submitted works are at least at a good international level and virtually all others at a fair international level</i> |
| <i>Good to satisfactory</i> | <i>At least one third of the submitted works are at a good international level and many others at a fair international level, these together comprise a clear majority</i> |
| Satisfactory | <i>The majority of the submitted works are at least at a fair international level</i> |
| <i>Satisfactory to unsatisfactory</i> | <i>A minority of the submitted works are at a fair international level</i> |
| Unsatisfactory | <i>None, or virtually none, of the submitted works are at a fair international level</i> |

Regarding the grading of the research activities, the Team was instructed by the EHEAC to reserve the term **excellent** for groups, which were found to be among the best 10% of the European groups in the corresponding field. Similarly, the term **excellent to good** should be used if the evaluated group was found to be among the best 25 % of corresponding European groups. The full scale comprised 7 levels, in addition to the highest ones the grades are **good**, **good to satisfactory**, **satisfactory**, **satisfactory to unsatisfactory**, and **unsatisfactory**.

Secondly, the *over-all capability* of a research unit was evaluated based on a the combined assessment of the following criteria (each graded in three levels):

| | Grade 0 | Grade 1 | Grade 2 |
|--|--|--|---|
| Originality/novelty of past and ongoing research activity | descriptive, no novelty | some novelty/originality | original/novel |
| The strategy and perspective of research | no or bad strategy, no or unclear perspective for further research | fair strategy and perspective for further research | clear strategy and very perspective for further research |
| Multidisciplinarity and relevance for other research areas | no multidisciplinarity, no relevant for other research areas | some multidisciplinarity, some relevance | good multidisciplinarity, good relevance for other research areas |
| The competence of research groups and their capability for development | low competence | there is competence, but no young postgraduate and postdoctoral students | there is competence and postgraduate and postdoctoral students |
| National and international co-operation | no particular national and international co-operation | some national/international co-operation | good or tight national/international co-operation |
| Success in applying for funds and grants | no particular success | fair success | applying successfully for grants and funds |

Excellent - 12-10 (total grade), **Good** - 9-7 (total grade), **Satisfactory** - 6-4 (total grade) and **Unsatisfactory** - 3-0 (total grade).

As the result of this assessment one of the four grades **excellent, good, satisfactory** or **unsatisfactory** was given for the group.

Thirdly, the *implementation opportunities* for the research results and their importance for the Estonian society were commented.

Finally, on a fourth evaluation point *the critical comments and recommendations* were asked to given by the expert team.

Part II General Comments

This evaluation takes its point of departure from the generally acknowledged requirements of research at an international mid to high level. We have paid less attention to the quantity of pages published. Our main concern is the quality of the venues of publication. The reason for this is simple. There is a vast amount of pages being published world-wide and only a small minority of them are being read. To make any mark whatsoever, the members of the department have to display their research in those venues that are attractive to the serious and well respected international scholars.

Part III Evaluation of institution

The Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences (IHSS) was established in 1992 and currently consists of five academic chairs. In the classic European tradition, these chairs are independent academic units responsible for research and teaching in the chair's designated area and are generally headed by full elected professors.

IHSS chairs are:

- 1) **Public Administration and European Studies**, headed by professor Rainer Kattel; other members are professor Wolfgang Drechsler (Technology Governance and Public Management, $\frac{1}{4}$), professor Erik S. Reinert (Technology Governance and Development Strategies, $\frac{1}{4}$), Tarmo Kalvet (researcher, $\frac{1}{2}$), Michael Kull (researcher, $\frac{1}{2}$), Veiko Lember (researcher), Gabriel Hazak (docent; retires 2006), Aare Laanemäe (docent; retires 2006), and Margit Suurna (assistant). In Fall Term 2006, Carlota Perez and Jan Kregel will join the chair as extraordinary professors (both in the field of Technology Governance, $\frac{1}{4}$). Professor Drechsler is running for the chair of Governance at IHSS in Spring Term 2006. In the case of successful elections (which is very likely), he and Michael Kull will move to that chair.
- 2) **Regional Policy**, headed by professor Sulev Mäeltsemees; other members are Jaanus Kiili (docent), Mikk Lõhmus (lecturer) and Agu Uudelepp (lecturer);

- 3) **Philosophy**, headed by professor Ülo Kaevats (retires 2006); other members are Roomet Jakapi (senior researcher), Leo Näpinen (docent), Margus Mägi (lecturer), Indrek Meos (lecturer), Vahur Mägi (lecturer);
- 4) **Psychology**, headed by professor Mare Teichmann; other members are Tiiu Kamdron (lecturer) and Liina Randmann (assistant).
- 5) **Governance**, created in Spring Term 2006 on the basis of a long-vacant Public Law chair, will first be filled during this term; professor Drechsler has applied. From the chair of Public Administration and European Studies, the following fields of research and teaching will be moved into this chair: Public Ethics, Public Law, European Studies and general Governance issues.
- 6) **Technology Governance**, this chair will be created in 2007.

Senior Faculty:

Wolfgang Drechsler, Professor of Technology Governance and Public Management; applied, Professor and Chair of Governance, from 2006 – PA, Technology Governance, Local Government

PhD (University of Marburg), Diploma German Post-Graduate School of Public Administration Speyer. Drechsler previously taught at the Universities of Marburg, Gießen, and Frankfurt/Main, all Germany, and as Visiting Professor in Lund, Sweden and now in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; since 1993, he has taught at the University of Tartu. He has served as Advisor to the President of Estonia, as Executive Secretary with the German Wissenschaftsrat during German Reunification, and, as an APSA Congressional Fellow, a Senior Legislative Analyst in the United States Congress. He received the 1997 Estonian National Science Award, Social Science category; the 2001 Alena Brunovská Award for Teaching Excellence in Central and Eastern Europe; the 2002 Outstanding Alumnus Award from Bridgewater College; in 2004, the Maarjamaa Rist, Estonia's Order of Merit; and in 2005, the German Federal Merit Cross.

Ülo Kaevats, Professor of Philosophy – PA

PhD (Vilnius State University). Kaevats served for many years (1989-1992, 1995-2000) as Editor-in-Chief of the *Estonian Encyclopaedia*, the main national work of reference; earlier, he worked as a research fellow at the Estonian and the USSR Academies of Sciences, mostly in the History of Sciences field. Between 1992 and 1995, during the beginning and reestablishment of independent Estonia, he served as Secretary of State (*Riigisekretär*; the most senior civil servant with Constitutional rank) of the Republic. With a strong History of Science background, Kaevats specialises at TUT in the Philosophy of Science and the Philosophy of Technology.

Rainer Kattel, Professor and Chair of Public Administration and European Studies; Head of IHSS – PA, Technology Governance

PhD (Tartu). After several research positions at the University of Tartu, Kattel was elected, in 2002, aged 28, to a full professorship at TUT. Since 2004, he has also been the Head of the Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences. He is one of the protagonists of the Estonian

innovation strategy and policy (especially as concerns Biotechnology and ICT); he has been a member of the Innovation Policy Council, Research and Development Council of the Republic of Estonia since June 2003, as well as a member of the Estonian Biotechnology Expert Group of the Ministry of Economic Affairs. Internationally, he has worked mostly as a consultant for the UNDP (e.g. national development plans of Moldova and Kazakhstan). Since 2002, Kattel has also been Senior Research Fellow at Estonia's leading public policy think-tank, PRAXIS. His critical regular opinion pieces in the national daily, *Eesti Päevaleht*, have gained him a general national audience as well.

Jan Kregel, Professor of Technology Governance and Public Finance, from 2006 – Technology Governance

PhD (Rutgers). Kregel currently serves as Chief of the Policy Analysis and Development Branch of the Financing for Development Office of UNDESA, the United Nations' Department of Economic and Social Affairs, from which he will retire this year. Until 2004, he was High Level Expert in International Finance and Macroeconomics in the New York Liaison Office of the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), being in essence its chief economist. For many years, he held the Chair for Political Economy at the University of Bologna. He was on the faculty of Johns Hopkins SAIS, whose Bologna Centre he co-directed in the late 1980s, and he is a Visiting Professor at the University of Missouri at Kansas City. He is a Life Fellow of the Royal Economic Society in London and is counted as one of the leading post-Keynesian economists today. His main area of interest is finance.

Sulev Mäeltsemees, Professor and Chair of Local Government; Dean of the Faculty – PA, Local Government

PhD (Tartu). Among other employment, Mäeltsemees worked as Director of the Department of Social Infrastructure and Regional Economics of the Estonian Academy of Sciences' Institute of Economics from 1986 to 1992. He worked at TUT from 1978 to 1986, and again since 1997. In 1992 and 1993, during the times of "heavy transition", he was Chairman of the Tallinn City Council, and from 1993 to 1997 the Director of the Estonian Institute of Public Management, the state's central in-service training agency for civil servants. During this time, he also worked as Senior Advisor to the Estonian Minister of Regional Affairs. Mäeltsemees' main areas are Municipal Autonomy, Public Management Reform, and the Management of Local Government. He is generally held to be the father of Municipal Autonomy in Estonia.

Carlota Perez, Professor of Technology Governance and Socio-Economic Development, from 2006 – Technology Governance

Perez, who currently resides in the United Kingdom, is Honorary Research Fellow at SPRU, University of Sussex, and Adjunct Senior Research Fellow at the United Nations University's Institute of New Technologies, Maastricht, The Netherlands. Currently, she is Visiting Senior Research Fellow at the Cambridge Endowment for Research in Finance (CERF), University of Cambridge. Perez has held posts in the government of Venezuela, first in the Institute of Foreign Commerce in relation with the technology aspects of the North-South Dialogue (1975-1977), later as founding Director of Technology in the Ministry of Industry (1980-1983). She is perhaps most famous for her development of the concept of the "Techno-Economic Paradigm Shift".

Erik S. Reinert, Professor of Technology Governance and Development Strategies – Technology Governance

MBA (Harvard) PhD (Cornell). In 1972 he founded a small industrial firm (color sampling) in Italy, which he developed into the leading European firm of its kind. After selling it to pursue his scholarly and policy interests, Reinert became Director of Research of the Norsk Investorforum; he also held a part-time position at The Centre for Development and the Environment (SUM), a research institution established by the University of Oslo. Leaving this position in 2000, he became the Executive Chairman of The Other Canon Foundation, a small centre and network for heterodox economics research. Reinert's research interests and publications focus around the theory of uneven development and the history of economic thought and policy. As a consultant, Reinert's emphasis is on industrial and economic policy, the preconditions and management of innovations, and the relations between financial and production capital.

Mare Teichmann, Professor and Chair of Psychology – PA

PhD (Behterev Institute Leningrad). Teichmann also serves as Visiting Professor of Music and Culture Management at the Estonian Academy of Music. A member of many boards and councils, especially in the academic self-administration of her special area of Work and Organisational Psychology, her current positions include membership in the WHO Quality of Life Board, chairwoman of the WHO Estonian Quality of Life Centre, and Estonian representative, Member of European Network of Work and Organisational Psychology. Her main area of research is Occupational Stress and Quality of Life (including Occupational Life Quality).

IHSS is governed by a board of which all full professors are *ex officio* members. In addition, the board includes a representative from the Faculty of Economics and from the Department of Public Administration, University of Tartu (Kristiina Tõnisson, head of the Department). IHSS is managed by a Director in charge of the academic and support staff. Since 2004, Rainer Kattel has been Director of IHSS.

General Comments

1. The five chairs of the Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences (IHSS) have rather different responsibilities. The main educational task of the chairs of Philosophy and Psychology is to provide services in terms of general courses in their respective subject areas potentially for all students and faculties at TUT. These chairs have a small number of qualified staff, whose research follows the traditions of academic freedom, pursuing their special research interests. This tradition seems to change slowly. The chair of Psychology, for example, conducts applied research that fits into Public Administration, although not always into its core competence. They should revise their teaching and research profile if they are to be integrated more organically into the PhD program in PA, as it is planned.
2. The size of the full-time employed senior staff has not yet reached the critical level that would be needed for a research unit that works as a team and focuses on pertinent issues of public administration.
3. The institute has made great efforts to alter this situation, especially following the appointment of Prof. Kattel. They have recently recruited a leading expert in the field, Prof.

Drechsler, and have promises to employ part-time three more internationally renown experts in the relevant fields of PA research.

4. The Institute has also taken measures to make up for the low number of internal staff by means of involving younger researchers, mainly PhD students and developing networks both within and outside Estonia.

5. In order to enhance research in the area of PA, the Institute has established an international (so far annual) periodical of their own, the Halduskultuur, and Working Papers in Technology Governance and Economics Dynamics. Both are promising steps forward.

6. The quantitative indicators of research have shown a steady growth in the past view years, but the publications are very unevenly distributed among the staff, both concerning their number and the relevance of their topics for public administration, the theme of the PhD program of the institute.

7. As to the quality of the publications, the list of the best publications of the last few years and the comprehensive list of publications of the faculty members show that their level was very uneven. Only a minority of them were published in refereed international journals relevant to PA discipline, and the quality of the papers and the venues of their publications on the whole is still not close enough to the corresponding European standards. The staff seems a little too much focused on publications numbers. Although several of the publications are indeed 'peer-reviewed' very few publications have made it into international refereed journals with 'normal' articles. Short contributions and conference-based edited volumes can be very valuable as such but our distinct view is that there would be much to gain from reducing the number of annual publications in favour of a few well-prepared articles.

8. The average score of the level of research and publications of the evaluated group falls into the satisfactory category, with exceptions in both directions. There are promising exceptions to the overall criticism, publications that are clearly among the best 25 % of corresponding European groups. This part of the research activities of the institute should be used as an example for the whole institute. There are, on the other hand many that are below the satisfactory level.

9. The unit has been innovative in creating collaborative relationships with policy-related organisations, such as PRAXIS. In many respects such collaboration may result in creative academic research in the field of PA.

Evaluation of Research Activities

The Team of evaluators judged the overall quality of the research to be satisfactory

Evaluation of Overall Capability

The Team of evaluators judged the overall capability of the research to be good

| | Grade |
|--|-------|
| Originality/novelty of past and ongoing research activity | 1 |
| The strategy and perspective of research | 1 |
| Multidisciplinarity and relevance for other research areas | 1 |
| The competence of research groups and their capability for development | 1 |
| National and international co-operation | 1 |
| Success in applying for funds and grants | 1 |


Part IV

Conclusions and Recommendations

The general tendency of building up a stronger research unit is promising. The Institute has started to restructure its staff. Senior researchers with excellent research record have been or are being hired and promising young scholars have joined the faculty, all focussing on research directions that fall into interrelated areas that will increase the forces of synergy and the team spirit and capacity of the research unit. The evaluation team felt that these promising tendencies provide sufficient guarantees to judge the overall capability of the research unit approaching a good level.

Recommendations:

1. The size of the full-time employed senior staff should be increased in order to reach the critical level needed for a research unit that works as a team and focuses on pertinent issues of public administration.
2. The process of renewing the faculty should therefore be continued and implemented. New younger scholars and internationally renowned scholars in relevant PA fields (e.g. management of public finances) would further increase the quality of research in the future.
3. Research priorities should be consolidated into a few areas so as to release better the forces of synergy. The selected priorities (e.g., technology governance, local government, history and theory of public administration) seem to offer promising areas of concentration.
4. The culture of international research orientation should be extended to other parts of the research activities of the institute. At the moment, there are indications of high quality international PA research, but the overall quality is still uneven.
5. Related areas of research (psychology, philosophy) within the institute should be more systematically integrated into the core areas of PA research.



Prof. Jarmo Vakkuri



Prof. Jonas Hinnfors



Prof. Ernő Zalai (Chairman)



Prof. Jari Stenvall

Tallinn, 19 May 2006