



## **The self-evaluation report Pan-European University for the academic year 2021/2022**

The self-evaluation report is a key document reflecting the state of the current situation at the Pan-European University with respect to the further development of the institution. Internal members of the Pan-European University's academic community from different faculties and at different levels of management participated in the production of the self-evaluation report. Stakeholders included all members of the academic community, i.e. students, academic and support staff, and external stakeholders.

The Pan-European University is interested in improving itself. Therefore, it produces regular evaluations of its activities. The self-assessment report for improvement considers the internal and external environment of its functioning and serves as a basis for more efficient functioning and quality improvement. Within the internal environment, the strengths and weaknesses of the college's functioning are monitored. Within the external environment, opportunities, and threats to the functioning of the college are monitored. Its focus is a SWOT analysis based on data collected from internal and external stakeholders.

The starting point for the development of the SWOT analysis was a quantitative assessment of all its components. The data collected from the questionnaire survey, the expert assessment and the indicators from the internal quality system served as a basis for the SWOT analysis.

The overall result is that the positive aspects of the internal and external environment outweigh the harmful aspects of the internal and external environment. The ratio of positive aspects to harmful aspects reached 1.99:1 in the final evaluation. There are 1.99 positive aspects for every negative aspect.

In the internal environment, strengths slightly outweigh weaknesses by a ratio of 1.26:1. There are 1.26 positive aspects for every negative aspect.

In the external environment, opportunities slightly outweigh threats by a ratio of 1.73:1. There are 1.73 opportunities per threat.

The Pan-European University seeks to deepen its strengths in the internal environment. A few strengths have been identified. The individual approach to students was positively evaluated, which allows for a favourable student-to-academic staff ratio. The overall good atmosphere at the faculties is perceived positively from the questionnaire survey among students and staff. Students and academic staff positively rate the organisation of the teaching process as above standard, which is supported by the teaching environment that was rated as culturally appropriate.

The questionnaire survey showed that the strength of the Pan-European University is the standard level of the study content, which includes the application of the latest knowledge to the relevant study area. The teaching process using study literature, which is provided by the university's own academic library, is positively seen also. The students ranked the methodological readiness of the academic staff, and the ability to present the material in an interesting, comprehensible, and illustrative way, using modern teaching methods, among the



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strengths of the Pan-European University. This assertion is supported by the fact that many academic staff are highly qualified based on their years of service in higher education.

The opportunity for academic staff to be involved in fulfilling the mission of the Pan-European University is evaluated positively and is therefore ranked as a strength. Academic staff also perceive the regular evaluation of workplace activities over a given period to be positive, which helps to achieve the goals set out in the long-term plan and mission of the Pan-European University.

In the questionnaire survey, the academic staff expressed their opinion on the scientific capacity of the Pan-European University, which they consider to be standard and comparable to the scientific capacity of public universities in the Slovak Republic. Therefore, we can evaluate this fact as a strength.

Preparing students for practical life is also seen as positive, as evidenced by the low unemployment rate of Pan-European University graduates. This quality preparation for practical life is effectuated by the high number of economic experts and good cooperation with external economic operators. It is positively evaluated in the questionnaire survey and reflects the link between teaching and practice. In addition, the quality of education based on open and honest communication between students and academic staff was identified as a strength in the questionnaire survey, and the human and moral attitude of academic staff towards students was also perceived positively. The high level of professionalism of academic staff is also perceived positively. In the questionnaire survey, the strict adherence to the learning assessment policy set out in the Academic Regulations was also ranked among the strengths of the Pan-European University. It is also concluded that the guidance of students to adhere to ethical and moral principles in their studies was also seen positively.

The students expressed their views in the questionnaire survey on the satisfaction of cultural and sporting interests and needs of students during their studies, which they consider to be sufficient.

Regarding leadership, effective management with a clear hierarchy with the prompt and flexible provision of information to students and staff was positively evaluated in the questionnaire survey. It was also found in the questionnaire that internal stakeholders have a positive perception of the development of the University community and that staff and students identify with the University. At the Pan-European University, students have access to all information related to their position and tasks, e.g. studies, study stays, and the like. This fact was also assessed from the questionnaire. Students and graduates alike expressed that they have a positive perception of the well-adjusted administrative activities within their studies. Open and honest communication—as fundamental keys to quality building involving supervisor-subordinate communication—was identified as a strength of the University in the questionnaire survey. Academic staff positively perceive the support from management aimed at increasing the success rate of academic staff activities, actions, and projects. Therefore, we add this fact to the strengths of the Pan-European University. This fact is supported by the academic staff's confirmation that they are satisfied with their routine job tasks and relevant competencies. The strength of the Pan-European University is the acceptance of suggestions from employees at the level of the University (decentralisation of managerial competencies) regarding managerial



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decisions. The questionnaire investigation revealed that the strengths can be included in the adaptation of working hours for the personal and professional development of academic staff. Related to this is the expressed satisfaction with the teamwork conditions, which was confirmed by academic staff. In the questionnaire survey, creating the conditions for the internal and external mobility of academic staff and for hosting foreign guests is considered a strength by academic staff, which facilitates the execution of the internationalisation process.

The availability of information related to the position and roles of members of the academic community (study, work, or management activities) is ranked as a strength in the questionnaire survey. The application of equal opportunities in terms of gender, age, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, religion, and disability, which can be considered as elements of protection against intolerance and discrimination, is also positively regarded. This constitutes one of the basic moral principles of the functioning of the University. This principle is also applied to personal development opportunities and endorsed by academics themselves.

In the questionnaire survey, Pan-European University graduates indicated that the school's brand has been built up over many years with its outreach abroad. They also expressed the opinion that they perceived the knowledge acquired during their studies positively. In the questionnaire survey, graduates and students were also content with the quality of school facilities and amenities, which contribute to the quality of education.

The weakness of the Pan-European University, expressed in the questionnaire survey, is the lack of internal accommodation options for students. Students were equally critical of the lack of support for students in the form of incentive scholarships from the University resources and the lack of financial support for students' cultural and sporting interests and needs. Insufficient implementation of the measures resulting from the questionnaire analysis on the quality of the study process was evaluated as a weakness by the students. Concerns about the lack of anonymity of student complaints and the absence of a student parliament are also assessed as weaknesses by students. We also consider the small number of study programmes offered in English to be a weakness. Another related weakness is the low number of students from Western European countries, which is evident from the indicators evaluated. The low involvement of graduates in university life was also assessed as a weakness. When it comes to assets and school properties, the lack of full barrier-free access to buildings and other aids for students with specific needs can also be considered a weakness.

The SWOT analysis evaluated the lack of central planning of scheduling actions and lower flexibility of operational adjustment of the University information system as weaknesses. Another identified weakness related to study is the lack of flexibility in the modification of courses within the curricula, which causes several difficulties. The low level of flexibility in expanding the book collection was also regarded as a weakness.

The low number of internal staff represents a weakness in the self-evaluation of the Pan-European University. In the teaching and research process, we can also assess the lack of involvement of scholars from prestigious universities. Academic staff also consider the lack of support in arranging research stays and internships to be a weakness. Due to its legal form, the Pan-European University has limited funding opportunities as a motivational tool for staff, which was also assessed as a weakness. In the process of ensuring quality teaching, the uneven



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age composition of staff in some fields of study, and the lack of provision for the career development of staff in certain fields of study, can also be considered a weakness.

This is followed by weaknesses in obtaining grants and projects. The evaluated indicator shows insufficient opportunities for funding scientific research projects from the internal resources of the University, which results in the need to obtain research funds from external sources. However, a weakness is the low success rate in obtaining funding from grant schemes. This weakness may also be related to a lower level of synergy between faculties at the level of research projects. Academic staff perceive the lack of building a support structure for project administration and the lack of information about current calls for projects from the University as a weakness.

The Pan-European University seeks to take advantage of opportunities in the external environment. The flexibility of teaching according to the needs of the labour market, provided by external scholars, was evaluated by the questionnaire survey as an opportunity from which the University can benefit. This provides an opportunity to make the involvement of practice experts in the educational process more attractive, which contributes to improving the quality of education. This is followed by another opportunity, which is to raise awareness among graduates about the functioning of the Pan-European University Alumni Club, which will contribute to linking the teaching process with the experience of graduates gained in practice.

In the questionnaire survey, the opportunity to increase synergy with practice by participating in scientific research projects and increasing participation in projects with an interdisciplinary focus funded from external sources was identified as an opportunity, which will help to link research with practice. Participation in schemes to support top researchers from abroad is seen as another opportunity that will contribute to the attractiveness of the University in a wide range of areas. Linked to this opportunity is the involvement in support schemes geared towards recruiting scholars from prestigious universities, which would provide the University with additional funding to engage them in the University's activities. Another opportunity for the Pan-European University is its participation in the development of international study programmes, which will make the school more attractive in the international environment.

The opportunity is to be involved in the creation of legislation whereby the Pan-European University can effectuate the involvement of private universities in grants and scientific research projects funded by public sources, which is currently not possible for private schools under the current legislation. Related to this is the opportunity to call for the creation of a central platform for the registration of announced grant schemes and research projects managed centrally for all universities.

Obtaining financial support from public sources to increase accessibility to cultural and sporting interests and the needs of students was evaluated as an opportunity in the external evaluators' expertise. Another opportunity exists that is related to student support, which is to set in motion the possibility of obtaining state support for students with specific needs by private universities, which is not possible currently.

The Pan-European University assessed from the questionnaire survey that further legislative changes may threaten the position of private universities in the Slovak Republic's education



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system by reducing the quality of private universities in the Slovak Republic and compromising their competitiveness.

Academics evaluated the conditions of the new accreditation system based on the assessment of the quality of the higher education environment, which contributes to the diversification of quality in higher education institutions in the Slovak Republic, as a threat due to the lack of clear rules.

The existing low level of interest of practice experts to work in the academic environment due to rigid rules is also assessed as a threat, which emerged from the views of the surveyed academics and practitioners. The surveyed scholars also identified as a threat the differential support of private universities and public universities in the area of financing of educational and scientific research activities by the state. The discriminatory regulations, which also govern the habilitation and inauguration procedures based on the scientific-pedagogical degree and the artistic-pedagogical degree, are also evaluated as a threat by the surveyed experts. This threat is also related to the lack of scientific and pedagogical staff with mandatory qualifications in the Slovak labour market. The addressed experts evaluated the discrimination of private universities as a threat with regard to educational process support and state aid requirements, which are very difficult to receive under the Slovak legislation.

In the questionnaire survey, students expressed that they considered the low level of support for private university students by the state to be a threat.

The SWOT analysis showed the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the Pan-European University. The overall result of the SWOT analysis showed that the positives outweigh the negatives of the Pan-European University. The Pan-European University should focus on maintaining its strengths and mitigating its weaknesses. In doing so, it should establish an effective and regular review process that would help to identify weaknesses at the University and improve the quality of studies. The Pan-European University should also strive to influence the external environment to eliminate threats as much as possible and try to take advantage of opportunities.

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