



2017 - 2018

Annual Report
Department of Economics



Department of Economics
Annual Report 2017 – 2018
June 2018

Epoka University
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Welcome Note

Dear prospective students,

We welcome you on behalf of the faculty, staff and students of the department of Economics at Epoka University. Established in 2008, the department is engaged in equipping undergraduate students with critical thinking and preparing them to face public debates in interdisciplinary fields of study. We are highly committed to prepare leading students equipped with skills and abilities to overcome the challenges of the “21st Century” and meet societies’ needs.

Our graduate students are guided to deepen in the research, to absorb modern theoretical and quantitative methods to be applied in their future career. We as department care about our students from their first day at Epoka University till they employ in the labor market.

Lastly, we invite all the students interested in economics to be part of our department sharing together the leading and supporting spirit.

Assoc. Prof. Dr Eglantina Hysa

Department of Economics Chair

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I. Introduction of Department

Established in 2008, the department is engaged in equipping undergraduate students with critical thinking and preparing them to face public debates in interdisciplinary fields of study.

1.1 Vision and Mission

Vision: The Department of Economics aims at the qualification of students with general knowledge alert to the challenges in economy, and able to work in the administration of local and foreign private companies.

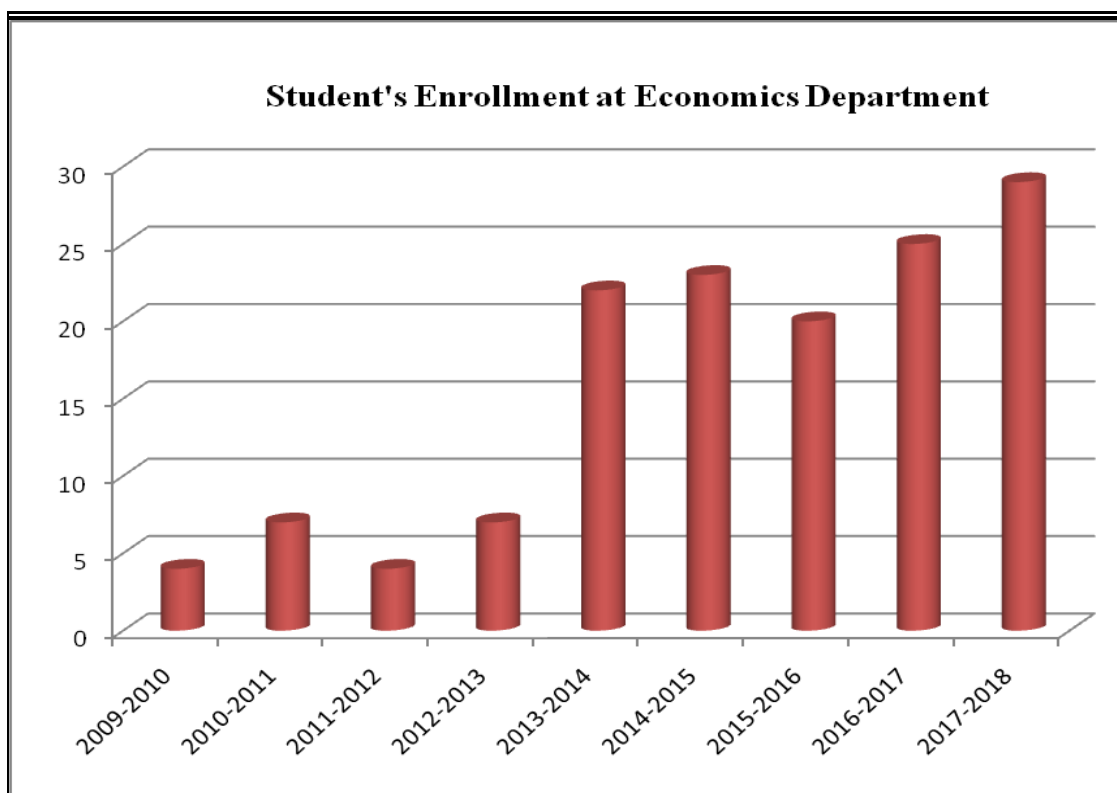
Mission: The mission of the Department of Economics consists of three interrelated components:

1. providing the highest quality instruction to our undergraduate and graduate students;
2. conducting leading-edge research in economics;
3. providing leadership and service to our professional communities.



1.2 About Us

The degree conferred upon the completion of the undergraduate program is "Bachelor of Arts in Economics". The students graduated from this department will be able to serve in the public administration, in the private sector and in non-governmental organizations. The system of attendance is full time. Detailed information on the courses offered in the semester schedules is included in the academic plan. The list of departmental must elective and free-elective courses is provided in details in the academic catalogue, including the theoretical lessons, recitation lessons, credits, equivalent credits according to ECTS credit system, and workload of each course. The list of courses offered each semester by our department and academic catalogue correlate together. The objective of this department is to fulfill the need for qualified members in this field, and to prepare skilled people to work in different sectors related to economics. In addition, the vast demands from high-school applicants have been an influent factor for the establishment department.



1.3 Program Accreditation

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education has accredited Master of Sciences and Bachelor in Economics programs for six years, the maximum duration of accreditation ASCAL).

More information regarding the accreditation of programs in Economics department can be found in the following links:

Bachelor in Economics:

https://www.ascal.al/media/documents/rvj/PS_2647_568.pdf

Master of Sciences in Economics:

<http://epoka.edu.al/mat/aeqi/RVJ-Msc-Ekonomiks-Epoka.pdf>

PhD in Economics (Profile Economics, Profile Banking and Finance)

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B1LHffI8HomWQkpMOG8xdkZzNU0/view>

1.4 Strategic Planning

Established in 2008, the department is engaged in equipping undergraduate and graduate students with critical thinking and preparing them to face public debates in interdisciplinary fields of study. Economics department offers the three cycles of study as Bachelor's, Master's and Doctorate (PhD) degree programs.

2. Context: Based on the provision of the Law no. 80/2015 “On Higher Education and Scientific Research in Higher Education in the Republic of Albania” and in the framework of the conduct of the Institutional Review (Re-accreditation) of Epoka University as well as the beginning of the preliminary work on the drafting of the 2018-2022 Strategic Plan of Epoka University, Economics Department prepared its Strategic Plan for 2017-2022.

4. Sources: This strategic plan foresees that the department will draw upon the human, financial, and material resources of the department and the University, investing in the improvement of its staff, and exploring grant funding and sponsorship for research and other activities.

5. Achievements from the last period: The Department of Economics has seen a number of achievements since its inception in 2008. The bachelor study program was accredited in 2011

and the master of science and PhD study programs in 2016. The number of students enrolled in the department has shown an increasing trend.

Priority Areas– Themes

Theme 1: Provide a high-quality environment for teaching and learning.

The Economics Department provides an outstanding education to a great many students, consistently ranking the graduates in the top of the Epoka university ranking. At the same time, almost all the graduates from bachelor programs continue further master studies and a considerable number of them follow a master degree abroad Albania. Rapidly growing application numbers, rapidly growing market need for research, and good position of Epoka University in Albania all speak to the high standing that the department has with external constituencies. Departmental resources, however, are not in line with the current scale and success of our program, nor with our aspirations. The department will need to take some further steps in the next five years to acquire the support it needs to build upon its top-tier status.

Specific goals for the Theme 1

Goal 1.1. Attract high-quality and diverse academic staff.

Goal 1.2. Increase the participation of academic staff in trainings in their areas of expertise.

Goal 1.3. Extend the global reach of the department by expanding international activities in teaching, learning, and research.

Goal 1.4. Continue providing leadership at the university level for investments in high-performance computing facilities, visualization and networks.

Goal 1.5. Ensure that our instructional technologies are modern and versatile, particularly when used in an active-learning environment or when used for distance and distributed learning.

Goal 1.6. Increase the productivity of our faculty and staff by making greater use of information technology.

Measures in order to reach mentions goals under Theme 1.

Measure 1.1. Increase the faculty size by minimum two new members until 2022.

Measure 1.2. Increase by 25% the number of trainings received by the academic staff relevant to their areas of expertise.

Measure 1.3. Provide annual faculty development training sessions on active-learning teaching methods for faculty members and graduate teaching assistants.

Theme 2: Recruit, educate and graduate a high-quality and diverse undergraduate student body.

Since 2009 the students' enrolments for the economic department of Epoka University have substantially increased. Starting from 2013, the department has been involved in students' exchange. In 2013-2014 academic year there have been 2 incoming students, in 2014-2015 academic year there have been 3 incoming students, whereas in 2015-2016 academic year there have been 1 incoming students and 6 outgoing students. Diversifying the class and creating additional opportunities for international experiences will remain priorities for the department.

Specific goals for the Theme 2

Goal 2.1. Increase by Undergraduate Student Enrollment and Success

Goal 2.2. Increase Retention and Graduation Rates for Undergraduate Students

Goal 2.3. Increase Diversity

Goal 2.4. Equip our undergraduates with skills that will put them in high demand for internships.

Measures in order to reach mentions goals under Theme 2.

Measure 2.1. Open two new profiles under the department of economics.

Measure 2.2. Increase by 25% B.S. degrees awarded

Measure 2.3. Increase by 10 % the annual percentage of students involved in international experiences.

Measure 2.4. Increase by 50% the number of graduating students who have had a co-op or internship

Measure 2.5. Advisory meetings with interested students on graduate studies.

Theme 3: Recruit, educate and graduate a high-quality and diverse master student body.

Since 2013 the department has recruit some graduate students but their number is not very satisfactory. To draw even with other highly-ranked peers and to support a rapidly expanding research portfolio the department needs to grow its graduate student population, particularly at the Ph.D. level. The department needs to greatly increase its resources for graduate teaching assistantships. As for its undergraduate students, diversifying the graduate student population and creating additional opportunities for international experiences are priorities.

Specific goals for the Theme 3

Goal 3.1. Increase Graduate Student Enrollment and Success

Goal 3.2. Increase Retention and Graduation Rates for Graduate Students

Goal 3.3. Offer research opportunities that feature applications to critical national needs, cross-disciplinary knowledge and global economic skills.

Goal 3.4. Increase our competitiveness for domestic graduate students.

Goal 3.5. Seek more externally funded fellowships for our graduate students.

Measures in order to reach mentions goals under Theme 3.

Measure 3.1. Increase by 10% recruits from other universities, state and regional public administration, and international institutions.

Measure 3.2. Increase the number of prospective graduate students that visit the open days on campus.

Measure 3.3. Increase by 10% funding available to support students as research assistants.

Measure 3.4. Refine once in two years content and presentation of graduate program to help with recruiting.

Theme 4: Recruit, educate and graduate a high-quality and diverse PhD student body.

Even though the PhD students' enrolment in economics department started in 2012-2013, their number through years is still modest. In the last year university offered to the PhD students funding opportunities for their research. In the next five years we should do more to attract students and researcher. The department will, unquestionably, be a major contributor to the university's goal of making advancement in the fields of economy and increasing the number of projects, conference participations and research publications.

Specific goals for the Theme 4

Goal 4.1. Engage in interdisciplinary research, especially through the other departments and research centers of Epoka University.

Goal 4.2. Engage in multi-organizational and multi-national research.

Goal 4.3. Encourage faculty, staff and students to be active in their professional communities.

Goal 4.4. Encourage faculty, staff and students to share the results of their scholarship with a broad audience.

Measures in order to reach mentions goals under Theme 4.

Measure 4.1. Include service activities in merit, tenure, promotion and other evaluation deliberations at the department level.

Measure 4.2. Increase by 10% funding opportunities for new and current activities.

Measure 4.3. Continue to provide departmental support for research and creative activities.

Measure 4.4. Increase by 25% common publications and presentations with PhD students.

Measure 4.5. Maintain the strength and breadth of disciplines in the department by recruiting strong faculty in targeted areas of economics.

Theme 5: Provide a high-quality environment for research.

Academic staff of economics department has shown a good performance in conference participations, paper publications and other academic activities. There are a lot of published

paper and researches by a collaboration of academic staff and the students from the three cycles of study. However, the department needs to make some efforts to support the staff to increase the research productivity and to encourage faculty publication in highly ranked journals.

Specific goals for the Theme 5

Goal 5.1. Encourage and support faculty to increase research productivity and quality.

Goal 5.2. Attract and retain quality faculty and strengthen the reputation of the department.

Goal 5.3. Incorporate the three main pillars, teaching, research and contribution to society by increasing the social activities that include academia, businesses/NGOs and governmental bodies.

Goal 5.4. Orient thesis topics/research topics toward the concrete needs and gaps in the Albanian market and beyond.

Measures in order to reach mentions goals under Theme 5.

Measure 5.1. Recruit PhD qualified faculty and faculty holding academic titles such as “Assoc. Prof. Dr.” or “Prof. Dr.”.

Measure 5.2. Reduce teaching loads by 25% for faculty with high levels of research productivity and graduate student direction.

Measure 5.3. Develop and implement faculty professional development plans for faculty with low research productivity.

Measure 5.4. Increase by 10% faculty participation in research institutes.

Measure 5.5. Increase by 25% faculty participation in multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary activities.

Measure 5.6. Continue to support travel to professional meetings and conferences.

Measure 5.7. Increase by 25% the number of agreements with different economic actors such as governmental institutions, businesses, etc.

1.5 Economics Department Program Offerings

- ❖ Engaged Faculty
- ❖ Many Electives
- ❖ Problem Based Learning/Student-centered learning
- ❖ More Career Opportunities
- ❖ Internationalization

- Education in English
- Study abroad
- Foreign lecturers
- Foreign students

❖ Employability and Career Assistance:

- Recent Graduates have continued their studies at:
 - ✓ Master at Goethe University (Frankfurt Germany)
 - ✓ Charles University (in Prague Czech Republic)
 - ✓ Master at EU Business School (Germany)
 - ✓ London School of Economics (London, England)
 - ✓ University of Edinburgh (in Edinburg, Scotland)
 - ✓ University of Barcelona (in Barcelona, Spain)
 - ✓ Bonn University (in Bonn, Germany)
 - ✓ International Football Business Institute (in Brussels, Belgium)
 - ✓ Epoka University (in Tirana, Albania)
- Internship opportunities and workplace companies for actual and graduated students:
 - ✓ KPMG, Deloitte & Touché, Bank of Albania, General Directorate of Taxes, Vodafone, TEB Bank, Raiffeisen Bank, Tirana Bank, NOA, Univers Reklama, Intesa Sanpaolo Bank, Tirana Business Park., INSTAT, Telekom Albania, Netherlands Embassy in Albania

BA in Economics

The Department of Economics aims at the qualification of new staff with general knowledge alert to the challenges in economy, and able to work in the administration of local and foreign private companies. The degree conferred upon the completion of the undergraduate program is Economist/ Bachelor of Arts in Economics with educational workload which is 120 credits or 180 ECTS credits for three years. The system of attendance is full time. Students enrolled for the

first time in economics department on 2009-2010 academic year. As other universities in Albania, Epoka is an institution of higher education based on the Bologna system.

M.Sc. in Economics

The students graduated from economics department for Master of Science degree will be able to serve in the public administration, in the private sector and in non-governmental organizations. The system of attendance is full time. To earn the M.Sc degree, students must complete in total 120 ECTS credits from their coursework and a Master thesis. Also the program is taught in English and students enrolled for the first time on 2013-2014 academic year.

Ph.D. in Economics

The Ph.D. degree is awarded in recognition of the recipient's qualifications as a general economist and of the ability to make scholarly contributions in fields of specialization. The full-time PhD course lasts for a minimum of 6 terms (three years), up to a maximum of twelve terms (six years). Typically, the first year is devoted to the core courses in micro theory, macro theory, econometrics, seminars, and workshops in fields of your special interest. Formal work on the dissertation begins in the second year; students are encouraged to get a head start on their thesis by research and writing in a second-year course or seminar. Students enrolled for the first time in economics department for Ph.D. degree on 2012-2013 academic year.

1.6 Economics Department Staff

Academic Staff

FULL TIME ACADEMIC STAFF

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Eglantina Hysa
Head of Department

Prof. Dr. Güngör Turan
Lecturer

Dr. Naqeeb Ur Rehman
Lecturer

Dr. Timothy Hagen
Lecturer

Ph.D(c)Mirela Alhasani
Lecturer

M. Sc. Nihat Cengiz
Lecturer

M. Sc. Erjon Gjoci
Lecturer

Ph.D(c)Arjona Çela
Research Assistant

PART TIME ACADEMIC STAFF

Dr. Marsela Luarasi
Lecturer

- **Administrative Staff**

Department Coordinator

Ms. Erisa GERBETI

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egerbeti@epoka.edu.al

Faculty Administrator

Mr. Tekim PEZA

Tel: +355 4 2232 086 Ext: 1610

tpeza@epoka.edu.al

1.7 Research areas for the Economics Department

Labor Economics and Social Work: Explore ways to decrease the unemployment rate in Albania and in region. The main focus of finding solution to unemployment is given to the university graduates and the required skills they need to adapt to the labor market. Additionally, the department extends their related research in the inclusive and equal labor markets by integrating marginalized groups in the economy.

Team: Prof. Dr. Güngör Turan, Assoc. Prof. Eglantina Hysa, Dr. Timothy Hagen, Msc. Erion Gjoci, Ph.D(c)Arjona Çela

Human Development and Growth: Explore strategies for effective economic development in lower- and middle-income countries and for improving the well-being of marginalized individuals, families, and communities in all countries. This field focuses on economic policies and outcomes that are typical of developing countries and interventions that may improve the well-being of the inhabitants of such countries.

Team: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Eglantina Hysa, Dr. Timothy Hagen, Prof. Dr. Güngör Turan, Dr. Naqeeb Ur Rehman, Dr. Patrice Kandolo Kabeya, Ph.D(c)Arjona Çela

Economics of Innovation and Institutional Growth: Innovation is a key driver of economic growth. In particular, innovation strategies such as investment in knowledge based assets (e.g., R&D, IPRs and university-industry linkages) significantly improve the economic performance of several countries in the world. More specifically, this research field investigates the impact of innovation on firms' productivity (micro level) and economic growth (macro level) using quantitative analysis.

Team: Dr. Naqeeb Ur Rehman, Prof. Dr. Güngör Turan, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Eglantina Hysa, Dr. Patrice Kandolo Kabeya

Optimizing Language Instruction for Academic Purposes (OLIAP): Explore effective teaching methods in foreign languages, including in English and other languages offered at Epoka.

Team: Dr. Timothy Hagen, Ms. Mirela Alhasani, other foreign language instructors within university

II ACADEMIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS

2.1 Undergraduate Program

2.1.1 Undergraduate Curriculum

Department of Economics Bachelor Program - 3 Years

FIRST YEAR	
Introduction to Economics I	Introduction to Economics II
Introduction to Business	Management and Organization
Introduction to Law	Introduction to Research Methods
Essentials of Organizational Behavior	Introduction to Accounting
Math. for Economics and Business I	Math. for Economics and Business II
<i>Core English OR</i> <i>Developing Reading and Writing Skills</i>	<i>Business English OR</i> <i>Developing Reading and Writing Skills</i>
SECOND YEAR	
Microeconomics I	Microeconomics II
Statistics I	Statistics II
Macroeconomics I	Macroeconomics II
Business Law	Labor Economics
Elective I/II	Elective I/II
ELECTIVE COURSES FOR SECOND YEAR	
Financial Accounting I	Public Finance
Marketing I	Financial Accounting II
Fundamentals of Corporate Finance	Financial Management
Research Methods in Social Sciences	Marketing II
Government, Politics and Public Policy in Albania	Management Information Systems
Turkish I	Turkish II
French I	French II
German I	German II
Italian I	Italian II

THIRD YEAR

Econometrics I	Monetary Theory and Policy II
Monetary Theory and Policy I	Graduation Project Final Comprehensive Exam
International Economics I	International Economics II
Elective I/II/III	Elective I/II

ELECTIVE COURSES FOR THIRD YEAR

History of Economic Thought	Econometrics II
Banking Operations and Services	Game Theory
Economics of Innovation	Fiscal Policy
Financial Institutions and Markets	Natural Resources and Environment Economics
Total Quality Management	Managerial Accounting
Consumer Behavior	Operations Research
Operations Management	Capital Markets Law
Human Resource Management	Management of Financial Institutions
Cost Accounting	Customer Relationship Management
Internet and Social Media Marketing	Strategic Logistic Management
Marketing Research	Branding and Brand Management
Supply Chain Management	International Marketing and Management of Multinational Enterprises
Turkish III	Knowledge Management
French III	Loan Management and Credit Analysis
E-Marketing	Bank Accounting and Reporting
Information, Technology and Political Power	Quantitative Techniques in Finance
Regional Development and Governance	Crisis Analysis and Management
	State and Local Government
	Global Governance

Total Credits Required in Degree Program is 180 ECTS Credits

2.1.2 Graduation Project Topics

Bachelor Thesis Topics	Student	Supervisor
<i>Foreign Direct Investment and Economic Growth: Case of Western Balkan Countries</i>	Alba Zenunaj	<i>Assoc. Prof. Dr. Eglantina Hysa</i>
<i>Exchange Rate Pass under the Inflation Targeting Regime, An Empirical Study for Albania</i>	Amela Dalipaj	<i>Prof. Dr. Gëngör Turan</i>
<i>Determinants of Foreign Direct Investments (FDI), An Empirical Study for Albania</i>	Edrina Tusha	<i>Prof. Dr. Gëngör Turan</i>
<i>The Impact of Macroeconomic Indicators on Unemployment Rate: Western Balkan Countries Case</i>	Eneda Vladi	<i>Assoc. Prof. Dr. Eglantina Hysa</i>
<i>The Relations Among Human Capital, Education, Unemployment and Economic Growth in a Small Transition Country: An Empirical Study of Albania</i>	Greis Rama	<i>Prof. Dr. Gëngör Turan</i>
<i>Foreign Direct Investment in Western Balkan Countries</i>	Haidi Alla	<i>Dr. Naqeeb Ur Rehman</i>
<i>Free Trade and Gravity Model: Case of Albania as Part of Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA)</i>	Nerajda Feruni	<i>Assoc. Prof. Dr. Eglantina Hysa</i>
<i>Interest Rate Pass-Through under Inflation Target Regime, An Empirical Study for Albania</i>	Suada Dajçi	<i>Prof. Dr. Gëngör Turan</i>
<i>Labor Market Dynamics and Unemployment in a Transition Economy: An Empirical Study of Albania</i>	Tea Rada	<i>Prof. Dr. Gëngör Turan</i>
<i>Factors Affecting Economic Growth: Case of Albania</i>	Xhoel Kushta	<i>Assoc. Prof. Dr. Eglantina Hysa</i>
<i>Determinants of Economic Growth: An Empirical Study for a Small Transition Economy of Albania</i>	Zenepe Murrizi	<i>Prof. Dr. Gëngör Turan</i>

2.1.3 Student Master Placement

University	Country/City
Charles University	Czech Republic, Prague
University of Barcelona	Spain, Barcelona

<i>University of Edinburgh</i>	Scotland, Edinburgh
<i>London School of Economics</i>	England, London
<i>Bonn University</i>	Bonn, Germany
<i>International Football Business Institute</i>	Brussels, Belgium
<i>Epoka University</i>	Albania, Tirana
<i>Master at Goethe University</i>	Frankfurt Germany
<i>Master at EU Business School</i>	Germany
<i>International Football Business Institute</i>	Brussels, Belgium

2.2 Graduate Program

2.2.1 Graduate Curriculum

Department of Economics Master Program -2 Years

FIRST YEAR	
Academic Reading and Writing	Time Series in Econometrics
Applied Microeconomics	Applied Macroeconomics
Elective I/II/III	Elective I/II/III
ELECTIVE COURSES FOR FIRST YEAR	
Mathematical Economics	Albanian Economy II
Albanian Economy I	Development and Growth II
Development and Growth I	Agricultural Economics
Environmental Economics	International Monetary Policy
International Political Economy	Auditing
Economic Integrations and EU	Strategic Analyses on Business
International Business	Advertisement Management and Creativity
International Finance	Bank Management
Financial Analysis	Border Politics and Immigration Policies
Environment and Security	Politics of Development: Middle East & Africa
Conflict Resolution & Diplomatic Language	Politics of Development: Eurasia & Far East
Advanced Financial Econometrics	International Politics of Environment

Understanding Public Policy

SECOND YEAR	
Research Methods in Economics	Thesis
Managerial Economics	
Elective I/II/III	
ELECTIVE COURSES FOR SECOND YEAR	
Advanced Monetary Theory and Policy	Leadership
Contemporary Issues in Economic Development	Operations Management
Game Theory for Political Sciences	Strategic Marketing
Albanian Banking System and Central Banking	International Accounting and IFRS
Advanced Managerial Accounting	

Total Credits Required in Degree Program is 120 ECTS Credits

2.2.2 Master Thesis Topics

Master of Sciences Thesis Topics	Student	Supervisor
<i>The Impact of Remittances on Economic Growth of Western Balkan Countries. An Empirical Analysis</i>	Denisa Zekthi	Dr. Nageeb Ur Rehman

2.2.3 Department of Economics PhD Program -3 Years

FIRST YEAR	
Advanced Research Methods	Advanced Econometrics
Elective I	Elective I
Elective II	Elective II
ELECTIVE COURSES FOR FIRST YEAR	
Finance Theory and Management	Advanced Credit Analysis and Management
Accounting Theory	Knowledge Management
Strategic Management	Development Economics
Entrepreneurship Perspectives	International Monetary Policy and Theory
Open Economy: Theory and Application	Labor Market Studies

Advanced International Economics

Game Theory

SECOND AND THIRD YEAR

Thesis

III Our Students

3.1 Students' Enrolment in 2017-2018 Academic Year

In this academic year 37 students started year their studies in Economics Department.

ECONOMICS DEPARTMENT										
		2009- 2010	2010- 2011	2011- 2012	2012- 2013	2013- 2014	2014- 2015	2015- 2016	2016- 2017	2017- 2018
Bachelor	M	1	1	1	2	7	5	5	7	6
	F	3	7	4	5	10	20	14	24	23
	Total	4	8	5	7	17	25	19	31	29
Master	M	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	F	-	-	-	-	1	4	1	2	2
	Total	0	0	0	0	1	4	1	2	2
PhD	M	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	3
	F	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	3
	Total	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	-	6
TOTAL		4	8	5	9	19	29	20	33	37

3.2 Statistical Data of High School Average and University CGPA level for actual students

LEGEND	
Epoka GPA	High School GPA
3.5-4.00	9.5-10.00
3.0-3.49	8.5-9.49
2.5-2.99	7.5-8.49
2.0-2.49	7.0-7.49
0.0-1.99	5.0-6.99

Note: The red dark and light colors present the low and high GPA respectively

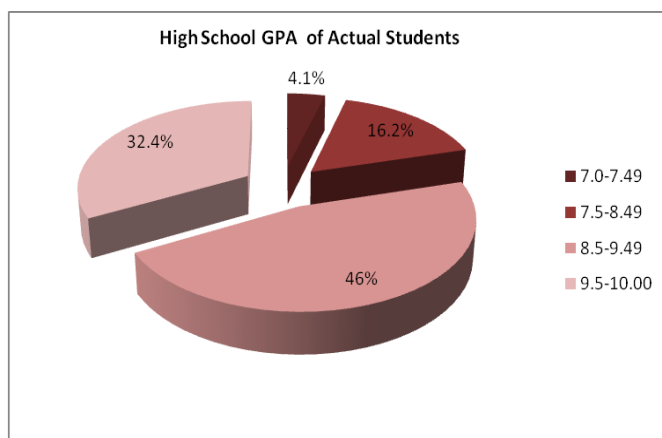


Figure 3.1: High School GPA for actual students

This figure presents an analysis for the statistical data of actual students in Department of Economics. Referring to the figure 3.1 it is clear that the highest percentage of students' enrollment is with high GPA (9.5-10.00). The high school GPA of actual students is over 8.5 for 79.3 percent of them.

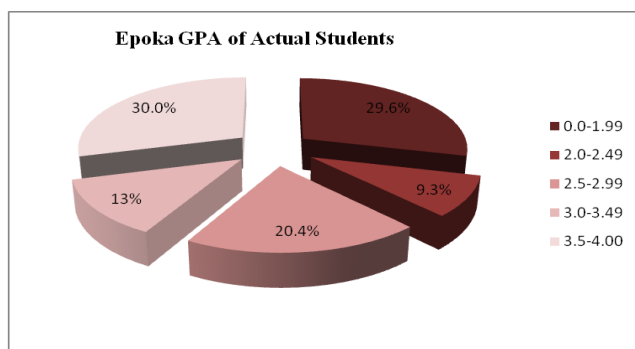


Figure 3.2: Epoka CGPA for actual students

Referring the figure 3.2 for the Epoka CGPA of actual students, it is clear that the high percentage of them have high GPA. As it is seen from this figure, 30 percent of actual students have their GPA over 3.0.

3.3 Statistical Data for relation of High School Average and University GPA level for graduated students

LEGEND	
Epoka GPA	High School GPA
3.5-4.00	9.5-10.00
3.0-3.49	8.5-9.49
2.5-2.99	7.5-8.49
2.0-2.49	7.0-7.49
0.0-1.99	5.0-6.99

Note: The red dark and light colors present the low and high GPA respectively

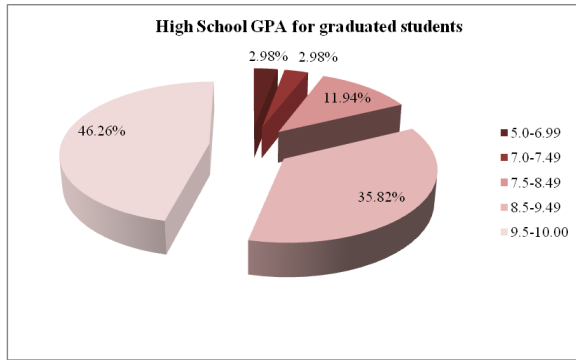


Figure 3.3: High School GPA for graduated students

Figure 3.3 presents the high school GPA for graduated students in Economics. As is it seen in the figure, 35.82 percent of graduated students have their high school GPA over 8.5 and 46.26 percent of them have their high school GPA over 9.5.

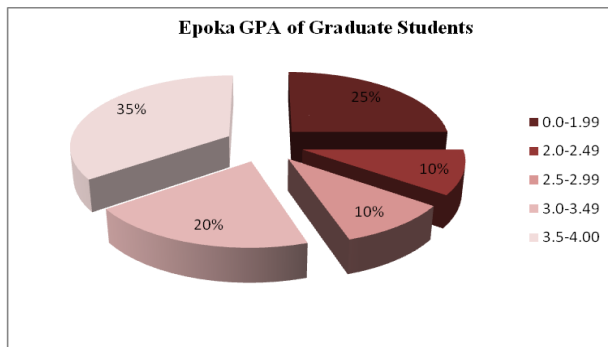


Figure 3.4: Epoka CGPA for graduated students

Figure 3.4 presents the Epoka CGPA for graduates students in Economics. As it is mentioned before that the high percentage of students come with high GPA from their high school, they go on with high GPA at Epoka University too.

3.4 Exchange Programs: Incoming and Outgoing Students

There are three students that were part of exchange program in different universities. A student exchange program is a program where students from a certain university study abroad at one of their institution's partner. Students can gain additional knowledge by being a participant in the student- exchange. By attending a different university they can experience life in another country, find out about potential graduate school opportunities, and overall, develop a sense of personal growth.

There are a total of three students of Economics Department taking the advantages of being part of Exchange programs. All of them are outgoing students for the academic year 2018-2019. Amela Dervishi, Melisa Pajo and Inesa Verlemi are the selected students for the exchange programme at University of Salerno.

3.5 Students' Leaving Reasons from Economics Department

For the academic year 2017-2018, no students left the Economics department.

IV. Academic Activities

4.1 Department Publications

Staff Publications:

Pub. Date	Title	Author	Publication
2017	“Empathic design for government services.”	Timothy Hagen	In I. Jusufi & J. V. Zeka (Eds.), <i>6th International Conference on European Studies (ICES'17): 5-6 November 2017, Tirana, Albania: Proceedings Book</i> (pp. 253-277). Tirana, Albania: Epoka University Press.
2017	“Discussing the Relevance of Problem and Problem-based Learning to Higher Education Challenges in Albania”	Mirela Alhasani	Jubilee Conference <i>Pedagogy of Providing Learning Opportunities for all</i> , 22 November 2017, St.Kliment Ohrid' University. Sofia University. Bulgaria
2017	“Creating Global Cities of Refuge: Moonshot Innovation for Refugee Well-Being.”	Timothy P. Hagen	<i>Journal of Social Research & Policy</i> , 8(1).
2018	“The contemporary politics of multilingualism and its role in democracy consolidation of an enlarged EU”	Mirela Alhasani	<i>Peace in the Balkans, Peace in Europe: Lessons Learned</i> , 10 May 2018, Centre for European Studies, Epoka University Albania
2018	“A Survey of Poverty in Albania: Comparison between Rural and Urban”	Edona Lacaj, Eglantina Hysa	<i>EuroEconomica</i> , 37(1).
2018	“The Long Run Relationship between Tourism and Economic Growth in Western Balkan Countries: A Panel Co-Integration Analysis”	Edit Gjergji, Eglantina Hysa	<i>Revista de turism-studii si cercetari in turism</i> , (25).
2018	“Political instability and economic growth”	Arjona Cela, Eglantina Hysa, Ugur Ergun	<i>International Conference on Economic and Social Studies (ICESoS'18): 10-12 May 2018, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina</i>

2018	“The impact of exchange rate volatility on economic growth”	Fatbardha Morina, Eglantina Hysa, Ugur Ergun	<i>International Conference on Economic and Social Studies (ICESoS’18): 10-12 May 2018, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina</i>
2018	“Religiosity reduces sexual aggression and coercion in a longitudinal cohort of college men: Mediating roles of peer norms, promiscuity, and pornography.”	Timothy Hagen, Martie P. Thompson, & Janelle Williams	<i>Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion</i> , 57(1), 95-108.
2018	“The role of higher education institutions in building a culture of peace: An Albanian case.”	Reina Z. Shehi, Salih Ozcan, & Timothy Hagen.	<i>Journal of Peacebuilding & Development</i> , 13(1), 46-61.
2018	“Do Formal and Informal Protection Methods Affect Firm Productivity and Financial Performance?”	Naqeeb Ur Rehman	<i>The Journal of World Intellectual Property</i> , 1-19
2018	How will investment professionals survive current	Erjon Gjoci	January 2018, ISSN-10: 1977008704
2018	Comparative analysis of the deep content-based ESP textbook to balanced ESP	Mirela Alhasani	In N. Stojkovic (Ed.1), <i>Positioning English for Specific Purposes in an English Language Teaching Context</i> (pp. 230-241). Vernon Press. USA Book link https://vernonpress.com/book/466
2018	Searching for the golden average between CLIL and ESP”	Mirela Alhasani	In N. Stojkovic and Nijole Burkšaitienė (Ed.1), <i>Establishing Predominance of English for Specific Purposes within Adult English Language Teaching</i> , (pp.47-59) Cambridge Scholars Publishing, UK
2018	“Security and Migration Management in Western Balkan”	Megi Hoxha	Student Conference SCE, June 25, Tirana, Albania

Students Publications:

2017	“The Financial Crises and the Monetary Policy Responses: A Comparison between Federal Reserve and European Central Bank Policies”	Suada Dajçi	1 st International Conference towards Sustainable Development (TSD’ 2017), Mother Tereza University in Skopje, 27-28 October 2017.
2018	“Banking concentration in Kosovo: Evidence from a country in transition”	Flamur R. Keqa	International Conference on Economic and Social Studies (ICESoS’18): 10-12 May 2018, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina
2018	“Political instability and economic growth”	Arjona Cela, Eglantina Hysa, Ugur Ergun	International Conference on Economic and Social Studies (ICESoS’18): 10-12 May 2018, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina
2018	“The impact of exchange rate volatility on economic growth”	Fatbardha Morina, Eglantina Hysa, Ugur Ergun	International Conference on Economic and Social Studies (ICESoS’18): 10-12 May 2018, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina
2018	“Urban- Rural Migration in Western Balkan”	Viola Alla	Student Conference SCE, June 25, Epoka University, Tirana, Albania
2018	“Population Growth, Demographic Structure and Aging in Western Balkan”	Esmeralada Jushi	Student Conference SCE, June 25, Epoka University, Tirana, Albania
2018	“Labor Market Dynamics and Unemployment in a Transition Economy: An Empirical Study of Albania”	Tea Rada	Student Conference SCE, June 25, Epoka University, Tirana, Albania
2018	“The Relationship among Human Capital, Education, Unemployment and Economic Growth in a small Transition Country: An Empirical Study of Albania”	Greis Rama	Student Conference SCE, June 25, Epoka University, Tirana, Albania
2018	“Foreign direct investment in Western Balkan countries”	Haidi Alla	Student Conference SCE, June 25, Epoka University, Tirana, Albania
2018	“Foreign Direct Investment and Economic Growth: Case of Western Balkan Countries”	Alba Zenunaj	Student Conference SCE, June 25, Epoka University, Tirana, Albania
2018	“Determinants of foreign direct investment FDI: Empirical study case of Albania”	Edrina Tusha	Student Conference SCE, June 25, Epoka University, Tirana, Albania

2018	“Free Trade and Gravity Model: Case of Albania as part of CEFTA”	Nerajda Feruni	Student Conference SCE, June 25, Epoka University, Tirana, Albania
2018	“Factors affecting economic growth: Case of Albania”	Xhoel Kushta	Student Conference SCE, June 25, Epoka University, Tirana, Albania
2018	“The Impact of Macroeconomic Indicators on Unemployment Rate: Case of Western Balkan Countries”	Eneda Vladi	Student Conference SCE, June 25, Epoka University, Tirana, Albania
2018	“An Empirical Study for a Small Transition Country of Albania”	Zenepe Murrizi	Student Conference SCE, June 25, Epoka University, Tirana, Albania
2018	“Exchange Rate pass through under the Inflation Targeting Regime: An Empirical Study for Albania”	Amela Dalipaj	Student Conference SCE, June 25, Epoka University, Tirana, Albania
2018	“Interest rate pass-through under inflation targeting regime: An empirical study for Albania”	Suada Dajçi	Student Conference SCE, June 25, Epoka University, Tirana, Albania
2018	“Determinants of the Albania tourism industry”	Doriana Mirashi	International Conference on Economic and Social Studies (ICESoS’18): 10-12 May 2018, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina
2018	“Analysis of balance of payments for Western Balkan countries”	Elda Cifliku, Megi Qoku & Suada Maloku	International Conference on Economic and Social Studies (ICESoS’18): 10-12 May 2018, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina
2018	“Durrës an Attractive Location for Foreign Investors”	Hatixhe Shtaro	Student economic conference, 31 May 2018, Aleksander Moisiu University, Albania

4.2 Projects in Departmental Base

1 - Fiscal Rule Policy and the Model Proposal for Implementation of Fiscal Rule Policy in Albania,

Project coordinator: Avenir Lleshanaku, PhD student; Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Gungor Turan; Project duration: 1 year

Project aim: The main aim of this research is to propose for Albania a model of rule based fiscal policy by examining the literature and selected countries experiences for fiscal rule policy. The arguments that support such a rule lead to a strengthening of fiscal discipline, will enhance the fiscal credibility and will serve as an anchor to fiscal sustainability in long run.

2 - The Entrepreneurship and Economic Growth in Albania

Project coordinator: Çeljeta Sherifi, PhD student; Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Gungor Turan; Project duration: 2 years

Project aim: The main purpose of this thesis is to study and empirically test the role of entrepreneurship in conjunction with innovation, on the economic growth of Albania for 1993 – 2013 time period. This will be realized based on time series econometric models, using vector auto regression analysis (VAR). This thesis is based on neoclassical growth theory, to study regional income disparities between western Balkan countries (using panel regression analysis).

4.3 Departmental Scientific Activities

1-The 1st Training on Research Methodologies was conducted on 26 January 2018 by the Economics Department of Epoka University. Participants from a wide variety of backgrounds took part in two training workshops. The first workshop focused on building effective research teams and



was taught by Dr. Timothy Hagen. In the workshop, participants developed simulation research teams and drafted policies to support effective team functioning. The second workshop provided an introduction to quantitative analysis using SPSS and was taught by Dr. Naqeeb Ur Rehman. In the workshop, participants had the opportunity to learn about econometric models, data, and analyses, and run and interpret example regression analyses. At the conclusion of this training, participants received certificates. Yet in addition to the technical training and certificates, the sessions and associated social interactions offered participants an opportunity to network with other researchers at various stages in their careers and explore opportunities for future collaborative work.

2- The Economics Department of Epoka University in partnership with the Economic Society of Albania (ESA) hosted the 2nd Symposium, Envisioning Albania 2030: Challenges to Employability on May 18, 2018, at Tirana International Hotel. Over 150 participants,

including professionals, academics, government representatives, and students participated in the Symposium. Special guests, Brunilda Paskali and Arber Bashkurti, both advisors to the President of Albania, joined the Symposium. A number of distinguished guests participated in the panel discussion in the Symposium: Dr. Diana Leka,



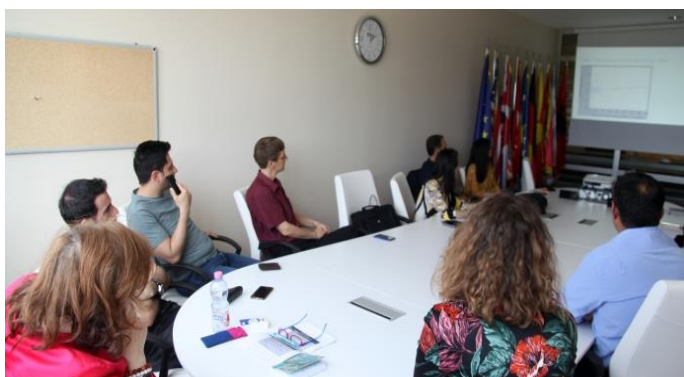
Director of the Investment Council Secretariat; Erjon Gjoci, Academician at Epoka University; Endri Ndoni, Consultant with AIMS International Albania; Agron Shehaj, Founder of Internet Data Service Group; Stephanie Sieg, General Manager of Tirana Business Park; Prof. Dr. Arben Malaj, Academician and Independent Economic Consultant.

3- On 25 June 2018, **Economics Department** in collaboration with **Economic Society of Albania (ESA)**, Albanian Association of Banks and Young Economist Network organized the **Student Conference on Economics, Finance, Business and Social Sciences, SCE-2018**. The



Faculty Dean, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Salih Ozcan addressed a welcoming note to all undergraduate and graduate students. Two keynote speakers, Dr. Spiro Brumbulli, General Secretary of Albanian Bank Association and Dr. Naqeeb Ur Rehman, lecturer of economics, added values to the conference by giving some hints and insights for the society challenges in Albania and beyond. They noted that such conferences could serve as good contributor to their career development. Four main topics was the key theme of the conference: Population, Migration and Security; International Trade; Economic Growth and Development; Exchange Rates and Inflation. Students had the opportunity to discuss the results and have some Important Insights from the professors. After the conference, Certificate of Participation were distributed to all the students.

4- **Economics Department** organized the second **Research Workshop for PhD students and young researchers**. This workshop aim was to encourage and help PhD students conduct quality research in different fields related to



economics and finance. Research topics were concentrated in two main fields: Development and Growth Economics and International Monetary Policy and Theory. During this event PhD students had the opportunity to present their research projects and receive feedback from academic staff of Departments of Economic and Banking and Finance. Participant had around 20 minutes to present they work for each project and after that questions and feedback session continued with discussion on how this researches works can further be improved in order to be ready also for publication. In order to help PhD students develop as scholars this workshops illustrate the process of research—brought into light problems that come up and how best to deal with them. These kinds of events are becoming a tradition to Epoka University in order to build an environment where knowledge can be shared.

5- Head of Economics

Department, Assoc. Prof. Dr.

Eglantina Hysa, participated as lecturer in the Master program “Economics, Management and Risk Management” and in the PhD program “Economics”, at the Department of Economics

and Statistics of the University of Salerno, with lectures on “Development and Growth” during 09-13 April. At the same time, she had the opportunity to discuss with the Director of Master’s Program and PhD Program, Prof. ssa Alessandra Amendola regarding future cooperation especially related to PhD program of both institutions.



4.4 Seminar / Invited Talks

1- On 18th of January 2018, YEN (Young Economists Network Club) organised the first event for the academic year, an Open Forum with the special guest, **Mr. Spiro Brumbulli**, where he discussed about the Albanian System of Banks. Mr. Brumbulli started the open forum talking about an overview on the banking sector followed by the economic growth in Albania. Moreover, he discussed about the contribution of the banking sector as well as banking developments in the region. Mr. Spiro concluded his open lecture while talking about the goals to be achieved in the future. After Mr. Brumbulli finished his speech, he was open to any question from the audience, students of Economics and Banking and Finance.



2- **Ms. Olta Manjani** is a **Senior Economist at Bank of Albania** with almost 10 years of experience in private and public sector. She was invited as guest speaker in the open lecture of “Monetary System and the role of Bank of Albania”. The purpose of the lecture was to enlighten students regarding the role of Bank of Albania to ensure economic and financial stability using monetary policy. This



event was organized within the framework of Global money week, an annual financial awareness campaign organized by Bank of Albania and many other institutions to inspire young people to learn about money matters. The lecture started with a brief description and an introduction of Bank of Albania. The presentation continued with the core functions of BoA, why its primary objective is maintaining price stability, types of monetary policy regime, and monetary transmission mechanism in the economy. She also explained the role of monetary policy in financial stability and development in Albania. Additionally, she gave results BoA has had implementing the monetary policy in the aftermath of financial crisis and concluded that monetary policy has been a key factor in responding to the financial crisis and contributing to positive financial and economic development in order to achieve Central Bank's objective, which is leading the monetary policy in the right direction to have a sustainable economic growth. In the second session Ms. Suela Totokoci, treasury manager at Intesa Sanpaolo Bank in Albania explained the role of commercial banks in transmitting the monetary policy to the market. Moreover, she described the ways commercial banks price the product they sell to their customers, speaking specifically about the deposits and loans.

3- **Prof. Dr. Hannes Rösler** spoke at **Epoka University** on the 27th of March 2018 in a lecture titled **Rule of Law and Economic Development**. Prof. Dr. Rösler made the argument that rule of law improves economic development. He argued that the rule of law is characterized by equality before the law, that the law is impartial,



and that citizens and businesses must have confidence in their ability to access and receive fair treatment in the justice system and by law enforcement. Prof. Dr. Rösler examined the legal system in Europe, providing an overview of the European Convention on Human Rights

(ECHR), the European Court of Human Rights, the European Court of Justice, and the growing rule of law in Europe, both within the EU and the wider area covered by the ECHR. He argued that the defining feature of the EU is that it is a community of nations ruled and joined by law, not by military or imperial force.

4- Representatives from the **Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)** and the **Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)** visited **Epoka University** on 14 February 2018 as part of



stakeholder mapping for an Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II) 2017 action in Albania, EU support to a tourism-led model for Local Economic Development. Specifically, the meeting explored Component 3 of the action, Improving the innovative eco-system and boosting start-ups creation, with a focus on the ecosystem or triple helix between government, academia, and business, the needs and options for start-up financing, and possible infrastructure, such as innovation hubs.

5- **InfoSoft Group in Albania** one the leading companies consisting of InfoSoft Systems and InfoSoft Business Solution held a meeting today with Epoka University. Eralda Lameborshi, Coordinator of Internal Projects at InfoSoft System and Donald Gjika Operations Manager at InfoSoft Business Solutions discussed the opportunities of **internship for Epoka University** students. The purpose of the internships is to provide a framework by which students can pursue a relevant education enhancing their educational experience through practical work assignments with employment opportunities. Additionally, one of the ideas discussed was offering students the chance to put their knowledge to practical use by writing diploma thesis in collaboration with InfoSoft.

6- On April, during a lecture of International Economics, we had the great pleasure of welcoming **Tomi Beruka, a representative of "AMITA"** company in Albania. Mr Tomi was so kind to explain the students of Economics and Banking & Finance departments the history of this company, also including the future challenges and the upcoming events



regarding this enterprise. On the framework of the scope of International Economics subject, he also explained the impact of International Trade, considering that AMITA also operates in

Kosovo and the effect of the exchange rates regarding this trade. At the end, Mr Tomi also distributed to the students some of the products of AMITA, including also some innovative ones this company is planning to distribute in the market in the near future. As a department, we would like to thank Mr Tomi very much for giving us the pleasure of getting to know more this company and we would like to welcome him again in the upcoming events of our department.

V. SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

5.1 Professors and Students Diversity Activities

1- Suada Dajçi, a 3rd year student of the Economics Department, participated on the 1st International Conference towards Sustainable Development (TSD' 2017) organized by Mother Tereza University in Skopje on the 27th and 28th of October. She presented her research paper, "The Financial



Crises and the Monetary Policy Responses: A Comparison between Federal Reserve and European Central Bank Policies," which consists of a detailed analysis of the most recent financial crises, the means used and measurements taken by the Federal Reserve and European Central Bank, and the policies aggressiveness measurement undertaken by each. Her presentation was in the Economic Development and Policy session.

2- In the context of many pressing and challenging economic questions, the Economics Department of Epoka University invited students from different high schools of Tirana and even from different departments of Epoka University to address various topics regarding these questions. The competition provided



opportunities for these students to give a presentation on an issue of economic importance in the manner of a **TED-talk** and in in six-to-ten minutes in length. Some of the topics that were shared with the audience were: "Unemployment in Albania" or "Minimum and maximum price". After the presentation, there was a Q&A session where the jury asked the participants various questions.

3- **Three Epoka students, Amela Dervishi, Inesa Vërteni, and Melisa Pajo, have been accepted to participate in an Erasmus+ exchange program at the University of Salerno in Italy.** This exchange program is part of an Inter-Institutional Agreement in the context of Erasmus+ signed with the University of Salerno, in Italy, Department of Statistics and Economics, and Epoka University, Department of Economics. The students expressed their excitement at this opportunity, and look forward to deepening their intercultural and international experience as they take courses in the Department of Statistics and Economics at the University of Salerno in the spring of 2018.

4- **LEAP Summit** was a 3-day conference, which gathered more than 10,000 change makers from more than 40 countries. The main focus of the conference was on themes connected to innovation, IT and modern technologies, entrepreneurship, career development and life-changing



stories. One of the main contributions of the conference was bringing people from all over the world at one place to learn together in order to solve most pressing challenges of our time. This year LEAP was held in Zagreb, Croatia. For three days Zagreb changed into a “small New York City”, the city that never sleeps, because there were about ten thousands of students from all over the world due to this large event. Xhoel Kushta, a third-year student of economic at Epoka University was part of this event. He describes it as a great experience which had an important influence on him. During these three days in Zagreb, he had the opportunity to learn from 60+ great CEO’s speakers, teachers, entrepreneurs etc that shared their personal experience.

5- On April 10, 2018, **third-year Economics students visited the Central Bank of Albania** to expand further knowledge on the history of the Central Bank and Monetary Policy. The students learned various aspects of the institution through a video presentation and a tour within the museum of the facility. The tour to the museum consisted of visiting the numismatics floor and the educational floor. The presentation was also accompanied by a question-answer session at the end of the visit.



6- During the International Monetary week, **AAB in cooperation with the Bank of Albania** and other financial institutions, organized a sequence of activities. The goal was to bring awareness of the younger generation to be responsible future citizens and capable of receiving well-informed financial decisions.



Epoka University participated in one of these events, the “Karl Popper” debate. The university was represented by three teams, in total 9 students: Elmedina Latifi, Xhoi Rapi, Egla Mansi, Adela Likaj, Greta Gusho, Sara Kokonozi, Jurgen Xhaho. This activity was supported by the Deposit Insurance Agency and the topic of debate was "Do deposit insurance schemes affect the stability of the banking and financial system of the country?". This debate taught students about teamwork, communication, organizing skills and most importantly finding logical reasoning and backing it up with evidence. All the participants were engaged, well prepared and showed All members were very committed, well prepared, and serious in their work, to prepare a more fruitful debate. Among other Universities, Epoka succeeded in going to the semi-finals with utter success. This helped all the participating students create a clear picture on how the banking system really works; beyond books and academic knowledges. The event took place on March 30, 2018, at 11:00 at Tirana International Hotel.

7- **Lecturer Mirela Dubali Alhasani** participated in the workshop “**Peace in the Balkans, Peace in Europe: Lessons Learned**” organized by **Center for European Studies at Epoka University** on May 10th, 2018. Her presentation entitled Contemporary Politics of Multilingualism and its Role in



Democracy Consolidation of an Enlarged EU provided insights into the inconsistency of language practices, as both official and working languages, among the supranational institutions of the European Union. By utilizing a cross-disciplinary qualitative literature from the domains of European Studies, International Relations, Applied linguistics and Language policy, lecturer Alhasani’s evaluative analysis casted doubts on the positive influence of multilingualism to functional flow of communication and political decision-making transparency at the supranational level. Her analysis of triple dimensions – political, economic, linguistic – paved the way to further debate and research on EU considering its constant enlargement and consolidation of a new identity of democratic, linguistic and economic cohesion where language

should be seen more as a common tool to democracy building rather than solely a marker of national identity.

8- On May 10 and 11, Economics Department students had the opportunity to participate in the International Conference on Economic and Social Studies held in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Students participated with various topics which were presented during the first and the second day of the conference including Hospitality and Tourism Management, Marketing, Information and Communication Technology and e-business, Economic and Finance, Innovation etc. This year conference main focus was one of the most important aspects of regional development

“Contemporary Trends in Tourism and Hospitality Industry in the Balkan Region” Representatives from different countries of Balkan and government of Bosnia and Herzegovina were part of the conference. All presentations showed high level of



commitment and a serious research work conducted by our students. After the conference students had also the chance to visit the city of Sarajevo and Mostar.

9- Student economic conference was held on 31 May 2018 at Aleksander Moisiu University.

This conference came as a collaboration between two universities, university of Durres and university of Tirana. There were 103 student that participated in conference and 46 research papers. Among those students was Hatixhe Shtaro. Her research paper was:” Durres an attractive location for foreign investors”. This research paper brought economic opportunities that foreign investors bring in economy of Durres and next to our country. There were a professional staff evaluating research papers. Research paper for foreign investors was among the bests research papers.

10-The Balkans Youth Council invited Dr. Timothy Hagen of the Economics Department of Epoka University

to share a guest lecture on economics on 19 May 2018 at a meeting of students and young professionals from across the Balkans. During the workshop, hosted at Luarasi University, Dr. Hagen focused on the definition of economics as the study of how we use our limited resources to



meet unlimited wants and needs. To better understand the complexities of this question, workshop participants took part in small group discussions in which they asked each other

questions such as “What do you want?” and “What will you give up to achieve this?” Participants then selected the most interesting answer to share with the larger group. Participant answers largely focused on the pursuit of academic and professional success, while some focused more on the passion and focus needed to achieve this success. One response in particular stood out in its focus on using one’s skills and accomplishments to serve the larger society. Dr. Hagen challenged the participants to use these answers: to continue in their search for individual academic and professional success through hard work and to do so for the benefit of the larger society. He then challenged the participants to keep thinking about these fundamental economic questions—what do we want, what is the cost of those wants, and which goals are ultimately most important and most worthwhile pursuing within the life spans and resources we have available?

11- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Eglantina Hysa, Head of Economics Department and Dr. Reina Shehi, Head of the Center for European Studies, participated in the Workshop: Exploring Data in Europe - with a Focus on European Attitudes and Values" funded by Cessda-Eric (*Consortium of European Social Science Data Archives- European Research Infrastructure Consortium*). The event, held in Prague on the 29th of May 2018, was organized by Czech Social Science Data and it explored the potential of research data available in Europe. In the morning, a practical session on **How to Find and Access data in Europe** introduced key data sources including CESSDA and European social science data archives and examined ways to identify and access good quality data for the research. The afternoon session hosted **expert talks** on research, data and methods. Experts on nationalism, political attitudes and migration provided researcher perspectives on important data in their areas of interest.

5.2 Young Economist' Network

The Young Economist Network (YEN) was created in 2014 from students of Economics Department in Epoka University. YEN provides young economists relation with professors of the field together in order to work toward organization of economic events in Albania and provide professional enhancement of students and strong network with professors and companies in Albania. Network seeks memberships from students interested in having professional network from all Departments of Epoka University and other Universities in Albania.

Mission

YEN is projected to be a think tank for promoting new and motivated economic youth that will work and compose strategies toward prosperity and development of economic environment in Albanian society.

Vision

Create a community of future leader devoted to bring a whole new concept in the way economists are interconnected; how they interact, exchange information and create contacts in order to gain employment after graduation.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

Economics Department of Epoka University is pleased to launch Annual Report 2017-2018. The report reviews the departmental activities and gives some crucial statistics on students' enrolments, students' performance within this department, scientific activities, publications, etc. This report draw out the departmental achievements over the past period and it is considered an useful tool in analyzing the department present status and exploring its future prospects.

In compliance with the departmental strategic plan, this year two new academic staff joined the department. There are around 35 staff and students' publication through the year, which are in line with the research areas of this department.

During this year the department has organized one Symposium on "Envisioning Albania 2030: Challenges to Employability", two workshops for PhD and young researchers, one Student Conference on "Economics, Finance, Business and Social Sciences, SCE-2018" and other related activities.

Lastly, we want to thank all academic and administrative staff of Economics Department, all the supportive units of Epoka University, and all the people contributing directly or indirectly to this department.



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