

**AGENCY FOR SCIENCE AND HIGHER EDUCATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA  
EXPERT COMMITTEE FOR THE EVALUATION OF QUALITY AND EFFICIENCY OF THE POLYTECHNIC OF  
RIJEKA**

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# **EVALUATION REPORT OF THE POLYTECHNIC OF RIJEKA**

**(REPORT)**

ZAGREB, June 2009.

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## FOREWORD

The evaluation of quality and efficiency of higher education institutions is a new and considerable challenge set upon the Croatian academic community, particularly young educational institutions as it is the Polytechnic of Rijeka (hereinafter: the Polytechnic).

The procedure will fulfil its purpose and justify sustained effort if it is accepted as “an inventory of pathway passed through” or a kind of examining the achievements, noticing weaknesses which are inevitable, hence expected follower of rapid development. We should accept cognition that the implementation of quality assurance on a regular basis is an inseparable part of “Bologna reform” of higher education.

We conducted the evaluation procedure of the Polytechnic adhering precise instructions from the memo of the director of the Agency for Science and Higher Education, Prof. Jasmina Havranek, Ph.D. - Class 602-04/09-08/002, File No 355-02-09-3, from 9 April, 2009 and the Ordinance on Measures and Criteria for the Evaluation of Quality and Efficiency of Higher Education Institutions and Study Programmes, issued by the Minister of MSES, announced on the web sites – [www.nvvo.hr](http://www.nvvo.hr) and [www.azvo.hr](http://www.azvo.hr).

The Polytechnic entirely fulfilled its part of obligations related to the preparation of documents which serve as the basis for the evaluation. Therefore, submitting this report, the Expert Committee expresses its gratitude to all participants in the evaluation procedure – leaders of the Polytechnic, students and teaching staff, with whom frank and sincere discussion was performed in an academic atmosphere as well as detailed analysis of the Self-Evaluation of the Polytechnic, which provided an insight into the status at this polytechnic institution.

In the first place we commit to the dean of the Polytechnic, Prof. Dušan Rudić, Ph.D. and vice-deans: for teaching – Prof. Nedjeljko Škifić, Ph.D., for business relations - Kuzman Vujević, M.Phil., for international cooperation – Prof. Damir Šekulja, Ph.D. We are indebted to Mario Staver, Ph.D. and associates of the Study of Mediterranean Agriculture and Winemaking in Poreč who provided an insight into teaching and practical training of the studies of Mediterranean Agriculture and Winemaking. Tasting “graduate thesis” – wine, whose preparation “from grape-vine to the market” was carried out by the students, is a convincing confirmation of their acquired knowledge and skills, and a memorable event as well. For the high level of professionalism, we express our appreciation to the organizer of the activities - Agency for Science and Higher Education, the director of the Agency, Prof. Jasmina Havranek, Ph.D. and associates; Vesna Dodiković-Jurković, Ph.D., Sandra Bezjak, M.Phil., who provided us with precise and clear instructions on the approach to the evaluation procedure, and to Ivana Borošić, M.A. – “the head of the protocol” who organized the work, watched closely over time limitations and guided the entire procedure, from the beginning to the creation of the report. And finally, work and valuable contribution of Professors Cadek and Billiet were enabled by the translator of the Agency for Science and Higher Education (ASHE) Gordana Cukar, M.A.

***According to our judgment, the Polytechnic is on the right path; it operates within the line of intended mission and it has a clear vision of tomorrow. Therefore, the Expert Committee is left with the impression of progress and achieved level of activity of the Polytechnic which exceeds our expectations. Likewise, we remain in belief that the alteration of noted shortcomings will be of use to the enhancement of quality of all activities of the Polytechnic.***

If on any matter related to this particular report, the need for special explanation or amendment is felt, the members of the Expert Committee (hereinafter: E.C.) are prepared for answers and explanations. Our work will achieve its goal if the findings, remarks and suggestions in this report contribute to the competent authorities of the Polytechnic in identifying weak points, their ranking and analysing, and thus being of use to further progress and development of young academic community.

In Zagreb, 7 July 2009

On behalf of the E.C., President:

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Prof. Ferdo Bašić, Ph.D.

## 1 MEMBERS OF THE EXPERT COMMITTEE

Pursuant to Article 7, paragraph 1 and 2, point 6 and Articles 16-18 of the Act on Scientific Activity and Higher Education (Official Gazette 123/03, 105/04 and 46/07) as well as the Ordinance on Measures and Criteria for the Evaluation of Quality and Efficiency of Higher Education Institutions (Official Gazette 39/05), at its 60<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 8 April 2009, the National Council for Higher Education of Croatia appointed an Expert Committee in charge of quality and efficiency evaluation of the Polytechnic in the composition as follows:

**Ferdo Bašić, Ph.D. – full professor in permanent grade – the president – an expert of external audit of the quality assurance systems at higher education institutions (a certificate submitted)**

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## 2 PROTOCOL OF THE EXPERT COMMITTEE'S WORK

Before the protocol was made, the documents which provide the basis for the evaluation procedure had been delivered to the members of the E. C., that is; Self-Evaluation containing the text and a special annex with data diagrams and tables as well as the Strategy of the Polytechnic for the period 2008 - 2013, both in English and Croatian. The Expert Committee and the leaders of the Polytechnic were acquainted with the protocol in advance and they accepted it as the content and time framework of their work.

### ***Monday, 1 June 2009 - Agency for Science and Higher Education, Donje Svetice 38/5, Zagreb***

10.00 – 12.30	Informing the members of the E. C. about the provisions of the Act on Higher Education and the system of higher education in the Republic of Croatia; Vesna Dodiković-Jurković, <b>Ph.D.</b> , Sandra Bezjak, <b>M.Phil.</b> ; Ivana Krznar, <b>M.Sc.</b> ; Irena Petrušić, <b>M.Phil.</b> , Ivan-Filip Jakopović, <b>M.A.</b> , Ivana Borošić, <b>M.A.</b> ,
12.30 – 13.30	Lunch in the premises of the Agency,
13.30 – 15.00	Meeting of the members of the E. C. and the employees of the Agency which is the coordinator in the evaluation procedure of the Polytechnic.
Departure and overnight stay in Rijeka.	

### ***Tuesday, 2 June 2009 - The Polytechnic of Rijeka***

TIME	AGENDA
09.00 – 10.00	Meeting with the dean, vice-deans and the members of the Expert Council of the Polytechnic.
10.00 – 11.30	Meeting with the working group in charge of the elaboration of Self-Evaluation and the committee for quality monitoring of the Polytechnic.
11.30 – 12.00	Break and a brief meeting of the E. C. – reflection.
12.00-12.45	Attendance to classes, visit to working premises of the Polytechnic – library, IT rooms and student's register office.
12.45-13.45	Meeting and discussion with students.
13.45-15.00	Break and lunch.
15.00-16.00	Meeting and discussion with the teaching staff of the Polytechnic.
16.00-17.00	Meeting with the heads of study programmes.
17.00-18.00	Break and meeting of the E. C. and the elaboration of the draft of the final report.
18.00- 18.45	Final meeting of the E. C. with the management of the Polytechnic and the working group in charge of the elaboration of Self-Evaluation.

Using the offered opportunity of modifying the protocol, Prof. W. Cadek and E. Billiet expressed a desire to visit the department of dislocated studies in Ogulin. However, as the classes at that department are held only on Friday afternoons and on Saturdays, on the proposal approved by all the members of the Expert Committee and leaders of the Polytechnic, the protocol was changed and thus a departure for the site visit to department of dislocated studies in Poreč was taken at 5 p.m. The meeting of the Expert Committee, scheduled at that time, was held in evening hours while the final meeting with the management of the Polytechnic was held the next day – on Wednesday, 3 June, at 8 a.m. Based on the implementation of described procedure, we submit the following

### 3 REPORT OF EVALUATION OF POLYTECHNIC RIJEKA

Adhering consistently to the Ordinance on Measures and Criteria for the Evaluation of Quality and Efficiency of Higher Education Institutions and Study Programmes as well as the instructions of the director of the Agency for Science and Higher Education from 9 April 2009, the Expert Committee studied the Self-Evaluation and the appertaining tables created by the Polytechnic, and, according to the abovementioned protocol, performed a site visit to the Polytechnic during which the Expert Committee held separate meetings with the leaders of the Polytechnic, Expert Council, heads of the councils of study departments, members of the committee in charge of the elaboration of Self-Evaluation, students and teaching staff, and thus gained a direct insight into the activities, conditions and quality of work. The procedure was carried out according to the protocol in time sequences as follows:

Tuesday, 2 June 2009

09.00-10.00

#### 3.1 MEETING WITH THE DEAN, VICE-DEANS AND EXPERT COUNCIL

Rijeka – Dean’s office of the Polytechnic – Trpimirova ulica 2

Present: the dean of the Polytechnic Prof. Dušan Rudić, Ph.D. and vice-deans: for teaching – Prof. Nedjeljko Škifić, Ph.D., for business relations - Kuzman Vujević, M.Phil., for international cooperation – Prof. Damir Šekulja, Ph.D..

Dean’s office is situated in the mere centre of the city of Rijeka, and all other premises – lecture-halls, practicum, laboratories, teachers’ offices and a conference hall are located at the address: Vukovarska ulica 58.

**Assessment of the E.C.:** *Dean’s office of the Polytechnic is representative, adequately situated in the mere centre of the city of Rijeka and it meets all the requirements of dean’s office and appertaining services for standard operation.*

10.00 – 11.30

#### 3.2 MEETING WITH THE WORKING GROUP IN CHARGE OF THE ELABORATION OF SELF-EVALUATION AND THE COMMITTEE FOR QUALITY MONITORING

**Central building of the Polytechnic – Vukovarska ulica 58**

The text of the Self-Evaluation submitted, in English and Croatian, to the members of the Expert Committee during the appointment serve as the basis for the work. The dean of the Polytechnic **Prof. Dušan Rudić, Ph.D.** opened a discussion and presented the participants;

**Prof. Juraj Ljubetić, Ph.D.**, – one of the founders of the Polytechnic, long-time vice-dean, formally in retirement, made a considerable contribution to the preparation of the Self-Evaluation,

**Prof. Nedjeljko Škifić, Ph.D.**, – vice-dean for teaching, an eminent experienced businessman,

**Kuzman Vujević, M.Phil., senior lecturer** – vice-dean for business relations and dean’s assistant for quality,

**Prof. Damir Šekulja, Ph.D.** – vice-dean for international cooperation,

**Saša Hirnig, M.Sc., senior lecturer** – head of the Department of Transport, quality, experience in education of secondary school students, an expert for railroad transport,

**Marko Balen, M.Phil., professor at a school of professional higher education** - head of the Department of Business, a leading department of the Polytechnic in number of teachers and students, a prominent

businessman, he was working within the large economic and monetary systems of Rijeka, he introduced a number of practical innovations at the Polytechnic– banking, finances etc.,

**Zdenko Novak, M.Phil., senior lecturer** – head of the Department of Occupational Safety, else a distinguished and experienced businessman: technology, technique and organisation of companies,

**Mario Staver, Ph.D., senior lecturer** –head of the Department of Agriculture,

**Velma Maleta, M.A.**, - member of the committee in charge of the elaboration of Self-Evaluation, a lawyer, engaged in personnel and general administration services, the issues of the appointment of professors into grades,

**Boris Sergović, M.A.**, - head assistant, he wrote first foundation legal acts for the purpose of the foundation of the Polytechnic 11 years ago, he has been a witness of its development from the beginning until the present time,

**Marica Lanča, M.A.**, - a head of the student's register office, involved in the working group due to her understanding of issues related to the enrolment of students, procedure of enrolment and studying,

**Marijana Jakopič, M.A.**, - involved in the preparation of Self-Evaluation as a participant and a witness of important administrative procedures, investments, public competitions, publications,

**Dijana Derđa, M.A.**, – competent for teaching and other student issues, she has been working here since the very first day, organisation, positioning of the Polytechnic along with the changes in cooperation with the MSES, time-table, defining the syllabus,

The student is not present as well as **Miljenko Bevančić** from Croatian Railroads– a member of the committee; he was promoted and transferred to Zagreb,

**Marina Rončević, M.A., lecturer**, - representative of teachers appointed into the teaching grades,

**Anita Stilin, M.A.**, - junior researcher - assistant - a representative of associates,

**Remark of the E. C.; Self-Evaluation of the Polytechnic represents an extensive paper containing a comprehensive and proper overview of mission, development of work and efficiency of the institution. There are 74 pages of text and 41 pages of tables and diagrams. We find this document having a permanent value, and on the occasion of the next evaluation it will serve for comparison. Therefore it should be completed with information on the composition of the committee – names of the members and text authors, body which appointed the committee and the date of the session at which this appointment was done.**

Activities are performed in accordance with the instruction from the Questionnaire for the evaluation of the institution which covers eight topic areas, of which each area is analysed separately, in a manner all members raise questions and all questions are answered by called participants. The discussion comprises following chapters;

- Mission, functionality and the vision of development of the Polytechnic,
- Organisation and implementation of study,
- Level of the teaching staff of the Polytechnic,
- Quality of premises of the Polytechnic,
- Quality of documents and information system,
- Internal system for quality assurance,
- Students,
- Comparisons of the institution and study programmes to the similar ones in the EU.

### 3.3 LEGAL ACTS OF THE POLYTECHNIC OF RIJEKA

In the conference hall of the Polytechnic, the members of the Expert Committee were presented with the legal acts which regulate all the activities of the Polytechnic;

#### 3.3.1 GENERAL LEGAL ACTS

- Statute of the Polytechnic—in force from October 2006,
- Rules of Procedure of the Management Council – in force from February 2007,
- Rules of Procedure of the Expert Council – November 2006,
- Ordinance on Protection of Archival Materials – March 1999,
- Ordinance on Salaries and Management of Market Income— July 2004,
- Student Council Statute – July 2008,
- Ordinance on the Election Procedures of Students' Representatives into the Student Council – November 2008,
- Ordinance on Disciplinary Responsibility of Students – June 2008,

#### 3.3.2 ORDINANCES ON EMPLOYMENT AND SAFETY AT WORK

- Ordinance on Labour – October 2007,
- Ordinance on Fire Protection – March 2006,
- Ordinance on Safety at Work – May 2005,
- Plan of the Evacuation and Rescuing of the Employees and Students – Decem. 2008,
- System, training programme for safety at work— December 2008,

#### 3.3.3 ORDINANCES ON TEACHING

##### **Ordinances on;**

- Studying – September 2008,
- Assessments of the students of professional undergraduate studies and specialist graduate professional studies – September 2008,
- Format of diplomas, content and format of certifications and attestations of the Polytechnic— February 2008,
- Issuing the attestation on a relevant professional title – October 2008,
- Quality system – February 2008,
- Activities of the library of the Polytechnic of Rijeka – February 2008,
- Organisation and implementation of differential programmes of professional studies and awarding professional titles – June 2008,
- Publishing activities – December 2008,

#### 3.3.4 AGREEMENTS ON BUSINESS COOPERATION

Copies of agreements were submitted;

- from 45 public educational, teaching and scientific institutions and economic stakeholders,
- agreement on lease and/or temporary use of facilities at 4 locations in Rijeka, one in Pula, Ogulin, Pazin and two locations in Poreč.
- Agreement on the reconstruction of barrack in Pazin.

3.3.5 THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE POLYTECHNIC OF RIJEKA 1998 – 2008 – a special publication issued in 104 pages which demonstrates development path and current status of the Polytechnic.

***Assessment of the E. C.: The Polytechnic possesses all proper fundamental legal acts necessary for standard operation – the Statute and ordinances necessary for performing its activity; and signed agreements portraying a good cooperation with the labour market.***



### 3.4 MISSION, FUNCTIONALITY AND THE VISION OF DEVELOPMENT

The Polytechnic is one of the first polytechnics in Croatia, established as a pilot – programme for the assessment of justification of binary system development at which professional study is being separated from the university study. On 21 May 1998, the Government of the Republic of Croatia adopted the Regulation on the Establishment of the Polytechnic of Rijeka and pursuant to the regulation, the Minister of Science and Technology passed the Decision on appointment of interim rector of the Polytechnic on 25 May 1998, and then on 26 June 1998, the Decision on appointment of the Management Council which adopted the Statute of the Polytechnic at its first session held on 15 July 1998.

The Polytechnic was entered into the register of the Commercial Court of Rijeka on 24 July and into the Register of Higher Education Institutions on 30 October 2001, by the decision of the Ministry of Science and Technology.

Primary mission of the Polytechnic is the education of experts in the field of technical, biotechnical and social sciences, focussing on the practice and professional knowledge as well as meeting the needs for experts in economy and other stakeholders, primarily at the territory of Primorje – Gorski Kotar County, Istra County and Lika – Senj County but at the other regions of Croatia and foreign countries as well.

Upon the consent of the Ministry of Science and Technology, following activities have been determined by the statute;

- organisation and implementation of professional undergraduate studies and postgraduate professional studies in the field of technical, biotechnical and social sciences,
- highly-professional and scientific – research work under the conditions in accordance with special regulations,
- organisation and implementation of programmes of constant training – lifelong learning,
- publishing, librarian and information activities related to basic activity.

After the establishment, the Polytechnic experienced hard times of losing particular studies and the implementation of another studies, in particular when several faculties of the University of Rijeka regained study programmes altogether with its students: tourism and hospitality management, entrepreneurial economics, commercial business, medical radiology, medical-laboratory study, study of medical nurses and medical technicians, study of physical therapy, civil engineering, mechanical engineering, electrical engineering and shipbuilding.

At the present time, professional studies<sup>1</sup> have been implemented pursuant to the accreditations issued in accordance with stipulated procedure on 2 June 2005;

#### 1 PROFESSIONAL UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES:

**Road Transport** (Class: 602-04/05-16/65, File No. : 533-07-05-2),

**Railroad Transport** (Class: 602-04/05-16/240, File No.: 533-07-05-2),

**Postal Services** (Class: 602-04/05-16/388 File No.:533-07-05-2),

**Road Transport in Gospić** (Class: 602-04/05-16/239, File No.:533-07-05-2),

**Entrepreneurship** (Class: 602-04/05-16/370 File No.: 533-07-05-2),

**Information Science in Rijeka and Pula** (Class: 602-04/05-16/179, File No.: 533-07-05-2),

**Occupational Safety** (Class: 602-04/05-16/470, File No.:533-07-05-2),

**Winemaking** (Class: 602-04/05-16/160, File No.:533-07-05-2),

**Mediterranean Agriculture** (Class: 602-04/05-16/161, File No.:533-07-05-2),

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<sup>1</sup> Names of study programmes in English are taken from the document *Self-Evaluation of the Polytechnic of Rijeka*

## 2 SPECIALIST GRADUATE PROFESSIONAL STUDIES:

**Transport – concentration: road transport, railroad transport, postal services** (Class: 602-04/05-16/114, File No.:533-07-05-2), from 2 June 2005,

**Information Science and Technology in Business Systems** (Class: 602-04/05-16/174, File No.:533-07-05-2), from 2 June 2005 and

**Winemaking** (Class: 602-04/05-16/101, File No.:533-07-05-2), from 21 June 2005.

Due to the establishment of the Polytechnic Nikola Tesla in Gospić, students' enrolment into the professional studies of Entrepreneurship and Road Transport in Gospić has been ceased since the academic year 2006/2007.

On 9 June 2006 the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports issued an accreditation for organising and setting up the professional undergraduate study of Entrepreneurship in Rijeka while on 20 June 2007 also issued an accreditation for introducing the professional undergraduate study of Entrepreneurship in Pazin, on 20 June 2007.

The accreditations for performing dislocated professional studies of Road Transport and Railroad Transport in Ogulin, were issued on 12 October 2006. The procedure for obtaining the accreditation for the organisation and implementation of a specialist graduate professional study of Occupational Safety has been underway. All study programmes which have been implemented since the academic year 2005/2006 are in line with "Bologna process of reform of higher education". Implementation of "bologna" study programmes resulted with the enhancement whereas curricula have been modernised and harmonised with the similar programmes within the European area of higher education.

Nowadays, the Polytechnic represents a significant factor in the development of the city of Rijeka and the county; and, its development path and achievements have been described in the monograph marking the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of operation (1998 – 2008).

Adoption and implementation of the mission is confirmed by the fact the Polytechnic has been linked with the academic community and economy, that is, labour market through a number of signed, to the Expert Committee presented, agreements on business cooperation with higher education institutions (University in Rijeka) and scientific institutions (Institute of Agriculture and Tourism – Poreč), city of Rijeka, counties (Primorje – Gorski Kotar County, Istra County) as well as business – economic stakeholders of broader area.

Having its own vision of tomorrow, an ambitious strategy of development for the period 2008 – 2013 was elaborated and presented to the Expert Committee.

***Remark of the E. C.; A publicly proclaimed, but rarely conducted in Croatia, "concept of flexibility" in discontinuation of studies for which the interest of attendants decreases and the implementation of studies for which the interest increases has been tested at the Polytechnic.***

***Strategy of development of the Polytechnic for the period 2008 - 2013 is a valuable document in 33 pages comprising the course of development with the precise flow-chart of carrying out of particular development stages. Such a valuable, and for the leaders of the Polytechnic binding document should include the names of the authors, reasons – motives as well as the date of the adoption of the decision on elaboration and the body which adopted it.***

Apart from other bodies, the Polytechnic established the Committee for quality monitoring, Committee for monitoring of Bologna process and Committee for international relations.

The Polytechnic has been indisputably supported by the city of Rijeka, Primorje – Gorski Kotar County as well as the mayors of the following towns: Otočac, Gospić, Pula, Pazin and Poreč.

***Assessment of the E.C.;*** *The E. C. established that the Polytechnic has been performing aforementioned activity and fulfilling its mission properly; it obtained all valid accreditations by the competent ministry (MSES) and adopted all proper and elaborated ordinances which determine the organisation and the activities of the Polytechnic as well as the Committee for quality monitoring and the Committee for monitoring of Bologna process.*

*The Polytechnic has been rationally and functionally organised; dean, vice deans and heads of particular studies have been implementing their mission and sustainable development strategy adopted within the process of establishment. According to our assessment the Polytechnic justified the integrity of the concept of polycentric development of Croatian higher education by its successful operation and results.*

The Polytechnic is a young higher education institution, so within the short period of its activity, it has not been attractive to international students yet, with the exception of the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, the Polytechnic is open for international students and thus the modules of courses, which may be instructed in a foreign language for the interested students, were listed. The objective was set out at least one educational programme to be performed in one of foreign languages. Considerable obstacle lies in the student standard which is below the standard at the foreign educational institutions. Namely, the capacity of adequate accommodation at student dormitories which would meet standard is too low so it is easier to send our students abroad rather than receive international students.

For the purpose of professional training, seven students of the Department of Agriculture spent several months at the facilities of distinguished winemakers in Germany, Spain and Italy, and each year the visits of students of the Department of Agriculture to international fairs and producers of grapes and wine in Italy and Slovenia are organised.

A longer stay of students abroad has not been achieved yet but the preparations for student exchange programme with the Technische Fachhochschule Wildau in Austria and Delgado Community College - New Orleans in USA have been underway.

***Recommendation of the E.C.;*** *In order to provide mobility and student exchange with other educational centres in Croatia or abroad, it is not necessary whole curriculum to be in a foreign language. A good solution is to give classes in a foreign language only one semester, since the experience in EU shows that the students do not come for one module - course, but for the aspiration of attending 1-2 semesters as a whole.*

### **3.5 ORGANISATION OF THE POLYTECHNIC**

By virtue of the Regulation on amendments to the regulation on the establishment of the Polytechnic of Rijeka, from 20 April 2005 (Official Gazette 51/05), the bodies of the Polytechnic are the Management Council, Expert Council and Dean.

**Management Council** is the highest body of the Polytechnic. The Management Council consists of five members, appointed for the term of office of four years, of which three members are appointed by the founder, one member by the Expert Council and one by the employees. The dean participates in the work of the Management Council but without decision-making rights.

The jurisdiction of the Management Council is determined by the Act, Decree and Statute, it adopts programme of work and development, monitors its implementation, takes care of the legality of work, rational use of material and personnel resources, implements Expert Council's decisions, adopts a yearly budget, submits to the founder proposals for changes or enlargement of activities, elimination or organisation of new departments or professional studies, and

following the proposal of the Expert Council, it adopts the Statute of the Polytechnic and its amendments. This body adopts the Ordinance on the organisation of work posts, and on the proposal of the dean, it determines development and business policy and adopts financial plan of the Polytechnic.

**Expert Council** is the key body of the Polytechnic for all issues related to teaching, professional and scientific activities. On the proposal of the Department Council, the Expert Council adopts all study programmes and performance plans, carries out the appointments into the grades in accordance with the Act and Statute and on the proposal of the dean, it adopts the budget of the Polytechnic and a yearly plan of publishing activities as well as examines the Self-Evaluation. The Expert Council is composed of the dean, vice deans, heads of departments, one representative of the teachers appointed into a scientific research-teaching grade, one representative of the teachers appointed into a teaching grade, one representative of the employees appointed into the associate grades and two representatives of students. Students make at least 15% of the overall number of members of the Expert Council. Dean, vice deans and heads of departments are members *ex officio* while other members are subject to elections.

**Dean** is the director and manager of the Polytechnic. The dean organises activity and operation of the Polytechnic, presents and represents the Polytechnic, submits proposal for work programme as well as development and financial plan, submits a report on his/her work and financial operations, implements decisions of the Management and Expert Council, recommends amendments to the Statute and other general legal acts, adopts general legal acts which are not set out within the competence of higher bodies, participates in the activities of the Council of the Polytechnics and Schools of Professional Higher Education, undertakes other tasks set out by the Act and legal acts of the Polytechnic. The dean is responsible for his/her work to the Management Council and Expert Council. The dean is elected by a public competition. To be appointed a dean a person must be a teacher appointed into a scientific research-teaching grade, a teaching grade of a professor at a school of professional higher education or a senior lecturer. A dean is elected by the Expert Council by a secret ballot and by a majority of votes of the overall number of all members of the Expert Council, and the election of a dean is confirmed by the Management Council.

**Vice deans** assist the dean in all fields of activity. The Polytechnic has three vice - deans; for teaching, for business relations and for international cooperation.

Vice deans are elected by the Expert Council, on the proposal of a dean, by a secret ballot and by a majority of votes of the overall number of all members of the Expert Council, and vice deans are appointed for the term of office of four years.

**Departments** have the head of department and the Department Council.

**Head of department** manages the activity of the department, organises, conducts the work and operation, grants the implementation of teaching process, submits proposals for enhancement and modernisation of teaching, chairs the Department Council, implements the decisions of the Management Council, dean, Expert Council and Department Council, takes care of a personnel policy at a department, development of a department and training of the employees, takes care of the organisation and quality of teaching, as well as premises, staff and personnel, equipment and financing of a department.

The head of department is elected, on a proposal of a dean, by the Department Council, by a secret ballot and by a majority of votes of the overall number of all members of the Department Council, and the election of a head of department is confirmed by the Management Council.

**Department Council** is composed of the head of department, all department teachers appointed into the scientific research-teaching grades or teaching grades, representatives of the employees appointed into the associate grades and representatives of students. Department Council discusses the issues of realisation of teaching process and professional activity of the department, it elects and dismisses a head of department, submits proposal to the Expert Council for study programmes and performance plans of professional studies and specialist graduate professional studies within the department, submits proposals for a yearly plan of publishing activities within the department, performs other tasks determined by the Statute and other legal acts of the Polytechnic.

At the present time, following departments operate at the Polytechnic:

**Department of Transport** performs its activities under the name *the Polytechnic of Rijeka, Department of Transport*; its component unit is dislocated study section in Gospić (in discontinuation) and Ogulin; it organises and carries out following studies:

- Professional Undergraduate Study of Road Transport
- Professional Undergraduate Study of Railroad Transport
- Professional Undergraduate Study of Postal Services
- Specialist Graduate Professional Study of Transport, concentration: Road Transport, Railroad Transport, Postal Services

It operates at the addresses: Rijeka - central building - Vukovarska ulica 58; Gospić – premises of old grammar school - Ante Starčevića 12 (exams and tutorials for the last generation of graduates of part-time professional study of Road Transport); Ogulin – Secondary Technical and Trade School - J.J. Strossmayera 2.

**Department of Business** performs its activities under the name *the Polytechnic of Rijeka, Department of Business*. Department of Business comprises a section in Gospić and a section in Pula as well; it organises and carries out following studies:

- Professional Undergraduate Study of Information Science
- Professional Undergraduate Study of Entrepreneurship
- Professional Undergraduate Study of Information Technology in Business Systems
- Specialist Graduate Professional Study of Entrepreneurship

It operates at the addresses: Rijeka – central building Vukovarska 58; Pula – Secondary School of Economics – Kovačićeva 3; Pazin – Secondary school – Šetalište Pazinske gimnazije 11.

**Department of Occupational Safety** performs its activities under the name *the Polytechnic of Rijeka, Department of Occupational Safety*; it organises and carries out following studies:

- Professional Undergraduate Study of Occupational Safety
- Specialist Graduate Professional Study of Occupational Safety (currently in the procedure of obtaining the accreditation, the accreditation is expected to be obtained shortly; it is planned to be carried out in the academic year 2009/2010).

Department of Occupational Safety operates in Rijeka, in central building - Vukovarska 58.

**Department of Agriculture** performs its activities under the name *the Polytechnic of Rijeka, Department of Agriculture*; and it organises and carries out following studies:

- Professional Undergraduate Study of Winemaking
- Professional Undergraduate Study of Mediterranean Agriculture

- Specialist Graduate Professional Study of Winemaking (it is planned to be carried out in 2009/2010). Department of Agriculture operates at the addresses: Poreč - Secondary School of Agriculture and Institute of Agriculture and Tourism - C. Huguesa 6;

#### **Joint services**

Joint services perform usual organisational, legal and administrative activities, student's register office activities, financial-accounting operations, information - librarian services, technical and other activities necessary for daily business of the Polytechnic. In addition, they provide administrative support both to teachers and students. Joint services office is situated within the premises of dean's office – Rijeka, Trpimirova 2/V.

The Ordinance on internal organisation provides the organisation of the institution, departments, laboratories and other internal units within the frame of the Polytechnic and its departments. However, neither the request has been submitted nor the need has been felt yet for the organisation of such units.

***Assessment of the E. C.: The Polytechnic has the organisation and mode of managing which are efficient and adequate to the requirements and all the activities of the Polytechnic, at the level corresponding the similar educational institutions and academic communities.***

### **3. 6 ORGANISATION OF STUDY**

Study is organised in accordance with “Bologna reform of higher education” which implies the curriculum to be module-structured and that the principle of European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) has been applied. Achievement of students in each subject is expressed in percentages (from 0 to 100%) of acquired knowledge within ECTS grading scale whereas a passing grade may not be less than 40%. Monitoring and assessment of students for each module is conducted during the teaching process and at the final exam in accordance with the following criteria: class attendance, midterm exams and other teaching activities determined by a study programme amount up to 70% of the grade, and student achievement at the final exam up to 30% of the grade.

For former generations who have studied according to the pre-bologna system of higher education, the mode of studying was determined by the provisions of the Ordinance on studying from October 2006.

In this academic year, 2526 students have been studying at the Polytechnic, 1155 of whom are full-time students and 1371 part-time students; and 720 of them are graduates.

Enrolment quota is 1182 student places. The right to enrolment into the first year of professional study have the applicants who completed a three-year or a four-year secondary education and fulfilled the enrolment requirements. All applicants are required to access admission procedure which consists of the evaluation of achievements from secondary education and achievements from secondary school final exam – matriculation, in a manner that the grade point average from all secondary school grades and from the matriculation are multiplied by ten in order to get the total for ranking of the students. This mode of admission procedure has shown that the applicants who completed a four-year secondary education have a certain advantage. Enrolments are performed according to the rank-lists made on the basis of aforementioned criteria.

**Part - time study** proved to be a very significant issue within the discussion and Self-Evaluation. Namely, students with full time jobs have been attending the Polytechnic as well. They are not

in a position to attend classes in the morning and early afternoon hours. If a great number of students are enrolled in the institution, 50% of the overall number of hours is held for employed part-time students. Arguments, defined by the mere mission of the Polytechnic, for providing enrolment and studying to all interested and qualified employed students, are strong and reasonable. Normally, "Bologna reform of higher education" recognizes the concept of *lifelong learning* (LLL). Classes for employed (part-time) students are organised in the afternoon hours. For modules attended by a fewer number of students classes are held after 4 p.m., for all students. At the Department of Business, classes for employed students are held on Fridays and Saturdays. Classes for the first year study are held in cycles. Exercises for the study programme of Information Science are the most demanding since they are held in IT rooms, in smaller groups of 20-25 students, whereas each student individually should have access to a computer. Seminars are attended by a greater number of students. Student class attendance at the Department of Business amounts up to 80%.

Passing rate of the exercises and seminars of "Bologna generation" exceeds 90%. The number of students who withdraw from a study is approximately 10%. Part-time study is not adequate for "Bologna process" because of the discontinuity in the performance of teaching. The solution should be found in e-learning system. However, each student must pass a number of procedures of the examination of knowledge: midterm exams, final exams.

***Assessment of the E. C.; Study is organised in accordance with time and space possibilities, that is, limitations. The organisation could be assessed as acceptable.***

### **3.7 LEVEL OF TEACHING STAFF OF THE POLYTECHNIC OF RIJEKA**

The Polytechnic has 89 employees; 61 with full-time or part-time employment in teaching and 28 non-teaching personnel. For the purpose of teaching the Polytechnic engages 87 external associates. Out of the overall number of 60 teachers and associates one employee is appointed into a scientific research-teaching grade of a full professor, 40 teachers into the teaching grades, 9 of whom are appointed into the grade of a professor at a school of professional higher education, 10 into the grade of a senior lecturer and 21 into the grade of a lecturer, and 20 associates into the grade of an assistant - 5 of whom are junior researchers.

The portion of teachers and associates in teaching who are employed at the Polytechnic exceeds the portion minimum stipulated by the Act. Namely, teachers employed at the Polytechnic perform 69% of teaching and external associates 31%. External associates mostly perform teaching of specific professional subjects. For the purpose of acquiring practical and specific knowledge in different fields of transport, occupational safety, entrepreneurship, or Mediterranean agriculture and winemaking, teaching, particularly exercises are conducted by the acknowledged experts in practice and partly by the faculty teachers. Engaging the experts in practice is regarded as desirable and useful since they present the students with the practice, which results in their better integration into the working processes upon the completion of study.

Teaching staff employed out of the Polytechnic contributes to the flexibility and adaptability of the Polytechnic, therefore it is easier to implement programme alterations and meet the requirements of the economic environment, that is, labour market.

### **Teaching workloads**

A yearly teaching workload of the employed teachers amounts approximately 519 standard-hours, that is, 17-18 hours per a week. Teaching workload of the external associates amounts approximately 168 standard-hours, that is, 5-6 hours per a week. The work of the teachers of the Polytechnic exceeds by 15% their yearly teaching workload and the work of the external associates considerably less.

### **A number of students in groups**

Depending on the particularities of study, teaching is limited by the premises limitations and by the number of students enrolled into the particular studies. Students groups consist of:

- 30-90 students - lectures;
- 30-50 students - seminars;
- 15-40 students - auditory exercises;
- 10-25 students - laboratory exercises.

Due to a great number of students in particular studies the lectures are held in two cycles for the first year students. The greatest is the load of the premises and equipment in Rijeka. Apart from using the premises in one part of the building at Vukovarska ulica 58, in the course of 2008, 3 lecture-halls and a chemical laboratory of Chemical-Technical Secondary School are being used.

### **Competence of teachers and associates**

The level of the competence of teachers and associates is examined within the procedure of appointment into the teaching grades or associate grades in accordance with the special procedure involving the opinion of expert committees and the competent Area Council of the Council of Polytechnics and Schools of Professional Higher Education of the Republic of Croatia. There are a great number of arguments that support the assessment on high competence of the teachers of the Polytechnic:

- 58 published textbooks, books and handbooks;
- 1037 professional and scientific papers in the scientific field of study programmes of the Polytechnic published within the last five years;
- 92 visiting lectures at national and international scientific and professional conferences;
- average grade (4.15) awarded to teachers by their students in student survey.

### **Exchange of teachers and associates with other institutions**

In the course of this year, the Polytechnic joined the Erasmus Programme and submitted a request for financial support of individual mobility to the Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes. Student exchange has been planned for the current year while the exchange of teaching and non-teaching staff is anticipated for the next academic year. On several occasions visiting professors held lectures on current topics in the field of information science and entrepreneurship and obtained positive assessments.

### **Scientific and professional activity of the teachers**

With the regard to dominant scope of activity and the fact that this is a young institution which was developing in the convulsion of unclear intentions, incomplete acts or inconsistency of legislator and academic community, the Polytechnic has an enviable scientific activity.

The Polytechnic supports a professional and scientific activity of its employees and associates as the essential unit of raising the quality of teaching and study. It is performed through various manners as it is covering, partly or fully, the costs of postgraduate and doctoral study, travelling



costs, costs of paper publications etc. The results of these endeavours are best portrayed by the data (table 4.2) that 787 papers were published in different publications within the last 5 years and all from the scientific field covered by the Polytechnic activity.

Agreement on working with assistants contains the provision on obligation of enrolment into the postgraduate study, therefore, 20 teachers and associates in teaching, nowadays, have been studying at some of postgraduate, that is, doctoral studies related to the interest of the Polytechnic. 46 teachers and associates have been entered into the Register of Scientists. The teachers of the Polytechnic participated in 29 scientific projects financed by the MSES, three of which were international (Self-Evaluation, tables p. 26) as well as in 21 professional projects with duration up to three years.

***Assessment of the E. C.; As the indicators of their activity the Polytechnic is in possession of showing a sufficient number of scientific research-teaching and highly professional employees. This even takes into account a relatively short period of operation and the conditions of operation as well as the structure and the workload of the employees and honorary engaged staff.***

### 3.8 QUALITY OF PREMISES OF THE POLYTECHNIC

Taking into account dislocated studies as well, the Polytechnic uses 33 lecture-halls of 2089m<sup>2</sup>, containing 1741 student seats, 15 laboratories/practicum of 1387m<sup>2</sup> containing 412 working seats for students.

The Department of Agriculture in Poreč uses, for the requirements of study, premises of the Secondary School of Agriculture at the address C. Huguesa 6, and the Institute of Agriculture and Tourism. Nine classrooms and one lecture-hall of 480m<sup>2</sup> containing 320 student seats have been used. One IT room of 35m<sup>2</sup> containing 15 student seats, two student wine cellars of 450m<sup>2</sup> containing 79 working seats as well as two laboratories of 170m<sup>2</sup> containing 20 student seats have been used.

The municipality of Poreč has been seeking a solution for providing a land for the experimental permanent plantations and economic facilities for the performance of practical training, but until that solution is found, plantations, equipment and economic facilities of Agrolaguna Poreč and prominent winemakers in Istra have been used pursuant to the agreement on cooperation. Last year, 3 lecture-halls in the central building of the Polytechnic were renovated, a library with the reading room, teachers' offices, halls, premises of students' records, facilities for practical training such as laboratories, wine cellars, IT rooms, etc., and at dislocated studies in Ogulin and Poreč, premises in lease have been used.

The project documentation has been prepared and the arrangement of premises given by the town of Pazin (old barrack) has been underway, and which are intended for study of Business and study of Apiculture for which this environment shows interest.

In the period from 1 April 2006 to 1 April 2009, 590 students graduated from the Polytechnic, while all together 70 persons are currently looking for a job in the same profession.

Among the studies carried out by the Polytechnic the number of unemployed varies, but the total is not disturbing, with the remark that no person, in some professions, such as Occupational Safety, Winemaking and Mediterranean Agriculture, is registered as unemployed at the Croatian Employment Service. It was noted that employers do not recognize holders of bachelor degrees as a new professional staff, but the data that a small number of graduates from the Polytechnic are registered at the Croatian Employment Service reflects a demand for

human resources from the Polytechnic. However, this analysis is not comprehensive since it is possible to follow students from our county, but they have been departing and getting employment in other counties as well which disables our monitoring of their employment. There is no systematic monitoring but it would be good to establish it.

The structure of incomes of the Polytechnic shows that a tuition fee makes 50% of the income. This provides a basis for quality assurance, certain autonomy, flexibility to change programmes and performance of programmes as well as commencing of dislocated studies. The management of the Polytechnic finds this manner to be positive since it reduces the pressure on the country - the state budget. The management of the Polytechnic believes that the Ordinance on tuition fees should be passed, but for now, ordinance on how to spend tuition fees has been applied. Solutions on the selection of modes of teaching are different and depend on the nature of the profession. For example, within the Department of Business, seminar papers on assigned topic are performed at the economic stakeholders, students may, in groups or individually, perform selected tasks supervised by an assistant, but the students themselves always prepare exposition-presentation. During the visits to the economic stakeholders, students are accompanied by an assistant. Students of Information Science attend seminars at more developed IT companies in Opatija. For example, the students of Entrepreneurship visited modernised factory *Gorenje* in Slovenia. Normally, the presentation provides the basis for the assessment of student, the topic of the presentation is very often taken as the final - graduate thesis. The best example is the study of Mediterranean Agriculture where students hold exercises in the production area - orchard, vineyard, garden, arable land or cellar. Each course of the study includes lectures, exercises and internship. Final year of study includes only internship. Practical training is held on technological sites throughout Istria. Students go to professional excursions, visit Istria, Goriška hills, international wine fair in Verona, every second year they go to Milano for the winemaking fair– it is all a part of the syllabus. The Polytechnic covers travel expenses but other expenses are covered by the students themselves. Students of the Department of Transport, visit large companies, within the field of their activity, participate in larger projects (roads, railroads), assist in regulation of the traffic, perform transport recording and visit transport companies.

### **3.9 INFORMATION SYSTEM QUALITY**

The E. C. is convinced that the Polytechnic recognizes the role of information technology, the latest equipment has been purchased; a manager, an expert in maintenance of the systems and a web- expert have been engaged with the web site.

Web pages of the Polytechnic are intended, in the first place, for the students (present and future), then the teaching staff and the public. They provide general information, such as overview and description of the activity of the Polytechnic, contacts, organization of dean's office, curricula vitae of the teaching staff and the official announcements of the Polytechnic.

The information providing a list of study programmes, description and content of study courses, an overview of the teaching contents for each course, information about learning outcomes for each course, auxiliary teaching materials, news from department, the schedule of classes and exams, a list of all the tutorials of all teachers and associates, the possibility for applying and withdrawing from exams, and monitoring the results of various knowledge examinations as well

as the possibility of their entering by the teachers, are of vital importance for everyday, academic life of student population.

Students possess the card *Carnetica*, which is fully adjusted to a student and it contains all relevant information significant to a student; information about the library, statistics; and, each enquiry is responded within 24 hours. Students have at their disposal 183 network computers with open access to Internet, e-mail, *StudisWeb* which provides the access to the database of student's register and on-line application for exams and withdrawal from exams.

95 of 183 computers are less than three years old.

This year, the supply of 30 new computers has been in progress, therefore about 60% of computers in use would be less than 3 years old; and renewal of computer equipment at the dislocated studies has been planned for the next year. Computers are placed in the classrooms and they have their function within the teaching practically all day.

**Assessment of the E. C.: *The Polytechnic has an adequate – quality organized and, according to our observation, an efficient, in every aspect, contemporary system of internal and external information.***

### 3.10 INTERNAL SYSTEM FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE

A key point for the assessment of the quality of teaching is a student survey, according to the experience in the world and in our country a survey shows the best, the most objective and realistic picture of the teacher's work. It monitors the assessment of each individual and defines when to react if the assessment of a teacher is insufficient. The implementation of surveys had begun even before the ordinance was adopted. The goal of the survey is rising up the quality of teaching performance. The first survey was conducted by the end of the winter semester in the academic year 2006/2007, and afterwards it has been conducted after each semester.

It is organised and conducted by the Committee for Quality Assurance. In order to achieve full transparency of the whole process, students are always engaged in carrying out the surveys and in processing of collected data. Apart from grading teachers, students also grade contents of courses, importance of a relevant courses and its correlation with other courses. Average grade of the teachers is 4.15 whereas the quality of teaching performance was graded with the average score 4.0, and the content of the course with 3.8. These grades show a high level of students' satisfaction. Indisputable fact is that the results have a stimulating effect on the work of teachers and students. According to the conducted student surveys average grade is 4.0.

The results of the survey are not public; they are submitted to the head of the study department and forwarded to the Expert Council and the Departments Councils for consideration and adoption of necessary conclusions. The dean, heads of departments and the President of the committee for quality gain collective and individual results of the survey.

A mechanism through which poor results would be reflected to the position of teachers and taken as a criterion into grades appointment and advancement, and/or income – salary of particular teachers has not been established yet.

### 3.11 STUDENTS

The Polytechnic is satisfied with the interest in all its studies. Most of the students come from vocational schools (about 85%), which is a favourable circumstance since they performed internship at secondary schools which is an important part of education of students of professional studies. Significantly greater number of students completed a four-year vocational

education, while a less number of students completed a three-year vocational education. There are no special entrance exams for the enrolment; enrolment and ranking are made on the basis of grades from secondary school. Grade point average from secondary school is usually *very good*, specifically grade point average of students who graduated from grammar school is slightly higher in relation to students from vocational schools. Analysis of the enrolment into the first year of study in the academic year of 2007/2008 shows that full-time and part-time studies were enrolled by 78% students who completed a four-year secondary education and 22% who completed a three-year secondary education, 50% of the total number of enrolled students have very good and excellent grade point average from secondary school.

Most students graduated from the secondary school in the field of electrical engineering, economics, transportation, mechanical engineering, while 12% graduated from grammar school. To the question on ration of full-time employed teachers and students, *Prof. dr. sc. J. Ljubetić* responded with the information of having 2526 enrolled students, and that there are 17 students per a teacher. However, the Department of Business has the largest number of teachers and students. There is a ratio of 20 students per a teacher.

Class attendance, in all modes of teaching is compulsory which is monitored by the records on the basis of solving tasks, seminars and exercises. This percentage is often much higher regarding the performance of teaching. Individual laboratory exercises require 100% of attendance and engagement.

Average grade of full-time students at the exams is approximately 3, but there is a tendency of continuous increase from generation to generation. Data for the first three "Bologna" generations show an increasing percentage in the number of students who earned more than two thirds of ECTS credits until 31 October, 2008. Within the first generation, this percentage amounted 26%, 38% within the second and 48% within the third, therefore, there is a tendency of a continuous increase.

### **3.12 COMPARISON OF STUDY PROGRAMMES WITH THE SIMILAR ONES IN THE EU**

Particular curricula of the Polytechnic are compatible with related studies at the foreign polytechnics, and the latest study programme *Telematics* (MSES accreditation is in the process of obtaining) was designed according to the practice in the EU, in cooperation with related German educational institutions. New programmes include both the mobility of teachers and students. One of the criteria of the evaluation review of study programmes in the procedure of obtaining institutional accreditation is the competence of experts who completed the study at the Polytechnic in comparison with study programmes of similar studies at the respective higher education institutions in Europe and the world.

The second criterion includes the conditions of implementation of studies with regard to the provided premises and equipment, the number and competence of teaching staff. According to all these bases, adequate conditions for the implementation of studies are provided, hence it could be stated that they have been close to those at the respective higher education institutions in Europe.

The next criterion; the system of examination of knowledge is comparable, practically the same as system at similar educational institutions; it is gradually upgraded and by applying a new Ordinance on studying and the Ordinance on assessment, it has been brought to the level of comparability with the systems applied at respective higher education institutions. Namely,

there is a continuous examination of knowledge during the teaching process through the courses, by solving specific tasks and writing seminar papers. Assessment is carried out through the implementation of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) and the numerical system. Employers have high opinions and assessments of the acquired competences and the rate of the students' integration into the working process for professionals.

12.00-12.45

#### **4 ATTENDANCE TO CLASSES, SITE VISIT TO THE WORKING PREMISES (library, IT rooms and student's register office)**

Usual liveliness was caught in the corridors and the working atmosphere in the classrooms; in all three well-equipped IT rooms and a spacious, considering the purpose, well-equipped chemical laboratory. Well organized and indisputably managed in an exemplary manner student's register office, where the central registry of students is kept, was perceived.

In student's register office, diplomas are printed and in accordance with the "Bologna reform", a diploma supplement as well, as an additional document about the study.

The library of the Polytechnic holds approximately 4000 titles, and when to this number is added the library fund at dislocated studies then this figure amounts 5000 titles. Working hours of the library respond to the students, at the time of the visit, classrooms were full.

***Assessment of the E. C.: The Polytechnic is in possession of a very substantial building with large parking area and it is situated within appropriate environment for this type of activity. Lecture-halls, within the building, have been arranged to a high level.***

***IT rooms are very well equipped. Classes are held in usual dynamics, a great number of students move throughout the building, therefore, it is the usual academic environment. The Library is equipped with a reasonable number of books and the classroom along with it contains a sufficient number of working seats. Working hours of the library meet the requirements of to the students and faculty. The Laboratory is well arranged and it contains a sufficient number of working seats for the students who use the laboratory for their exercises.***

12.45-13.45

#### **5 MEETING AND DISCUSSION WITH STUDENTS**

This meeting, in accordance with the adopted usual evaluation procedure, is held without the presence of teachers or employees of the Polytechnic, and it is conducted by the member of the Expert Committee, a student Ivan Bijelic.

First, the student recognizes that the meeting, notwithstanding in properly and timely manner announced, and undoubtedly a significant meeting, was attended by very few students, considering the number of students who attend the Polytechnic. Among the present students, there were only a few student representatives.

Students are not content with the surveys, especially with the survey questions. Namely, questions are general and formulated in a manner the teachers gain a positive assessment. Notwithstanding how questions are answered, in the end the results turn out to be more favourable for the teachers in comparison to the situation in reality. Students tend to change that. Students do not get feedback on the surveys and they have impression that nothing has ever been changed as the result of the survey. They seek a feedback for the results of the

survey. The information, a teacher should gain negative assessment four years consecutively in order to be something undertaken relating the improvement of his/her work, has been circulating among the students.

***Assessment of the E. C.; The situation is not satisfactory!***

***Experiences, in Croatia and abroad, about the efficiency of communication with students through student survey are very affirmative, and the approach of students is highly objective. The organization and conduction of the survey with students of the Polytechnic are not satisfactory.***

***Request of the E. C.; Polytechnic is obligated primarily to discuss and clarify all aspects of the survey with students, the reasons for conducting the survey as well as the significance of the survey. And certainly the students should be presented with the undertaken measures due to remarks on some teachers.***

According to the students' assessment some of the modules – courses are overburdened with contents which, according to their judgments, are not necessary for this level of education. They point out a few specific examples; the book they must study from consists of 400 pages but the title of the module – course is "fundamentals". According to the students' assessment, not only some of the teachers have not adapted to "Bologna reform of higher education system", but they did not change anything in their approach to teaching.

During the discussion, it was established that the students do not spend even at least two hours a day on learning, which the Expert Committee assessed as absolutely insufficient and pointed to the fact that so little work could not result in acceptable achievements.

The assessment was rendered and argued that an essential module – course at the study of Occupational Safety was reduced to a minimum while the course which according to the same assessment has no special significance for the internship is too extensive.

The opinion was rendered that the contents of studies took more into account available staff which should be assigned with the teaching commitments, rather than needs of study of a relevant profession.

To the question of how many students at the meeting knows what the term ECTS means and what ECTS represents, surprisingly a few number, only approximately one third of the present students raised hands signifying to know the answer to the question. This fact does not require a comment.

To the question whether there are modules extremely difficult to pass the students responded affirmatively. Students point out that this primarily refers to the modules – courses at the Department of Occupational Safety, that practically all modules of such nature are held by the same professor, in a manner whole teaching content is being read from the paper, all contents are the same as they were five years ago; the professor does not pursue contemporary trends in the profession, especially in teaching.

***Warning of the E. C.; The level of informing "ad hoc" group of students with whom the E.C. discussed essential and elementary questions related to the education system, which entered our higher education system through the front door, is unacceptably low.***

***Leaders, professional bodies, teachers individually and student choir all together in their own manner and within their own framework are obligated to work on information system issues.***

***How can a person study in the first place if both rights and obligations arising from the education system are unknown?***

***Each of these remarks should be dealt with and discussed by the competent bodies, as well as the objectivity of remarks should be assessed and the deficiencies corrected.***

***On each appropriate occasion, students should be faced with the fact that less than two hours of daily learning in the middle of a semester cannot result in good achievements, not even along with the best equipment of the Polytechnic and student talent.***

Prevalent opinion about teachers, among students, is positive; therefore, students emphasize examples of special care and effort of the professors of some modules. Some of the professors show great skills, expertise and selfless care for teaching, teaching aids and literature, and they provide the students with much more than a bare minimum.

To a question of how many of the present students regret for enrolling at the Polytechnic no student responded affirmatively but quite contrary; the students are content with the selection of study, prevailing atmosphere and relations at the institution, but they tend to point to the weaknesses, in a critical, clear, loud and quite open manner, as it is appropriate to the student population.

***Remark of the E. C.; Students accept the Polytechnic, identify with it and feel it as their own to the extent that in case of repeated enrolment they would select the same option of their education. This is an excellent and every attention worth achievement of all employees of the Polytechnic.***

***Yet, it obligates the competent bodies of the Polytechnic to eliminate the causes of students' dissatisfaction with the issues solvable without special efforts and means. Reading the teaching content to the students is not a lecture! This practice belongs to some other period and even within that period it was not highly valued.***

Students point out remarkable satisfaction due to the fact that the Polytechnic implemented a specialist professional graduate study, therefore, they can continue studying at "their" education institution. Discussing the amount of tuition fees students emphasize that the amount of 5500 HRK for one academic year for the study of information science or 7500 HRK for technical studies is too high, particularly if we take into account the fact that they pay the same tuition fee as their colleagues at some faculties of the University of Rijeka but their diploma, as they say, "is of less value".

***Remarks of the E. C.; Paying for the study and the tuition fee have become public issues with all the consequences that this brings. With a certain effort, it is possible to relate a tuition fee at the Polytechnic to the results of work of each student, that is, grade point average, and thus stimulate high-quality work and student learning by lowering the amount of tuition fee. Grade point average must stand as an identification of the student – an individual, in a manner directly affecting the status and the amount of tuition fee.***

***Students, with no exceptions, should be properly and thoroughly informed about the status of study which is their own and free choice. There should not be space for the statement of "less value" of diploma from the Polytechnic. Since "the value" of a diploma lies in, only and nothing else than, each individual's knowledge acquired during education; and a student by selecting the higher education institution selects the path towards acquiring knowledge.***

Furthermore, students express their concern and anxiety for the uncertainty which awaits them on the labour market upon the completion of studies. They have no knowledge on whether and how their diplomas will be accepted; hence, they express concern that as holders of those diplomas they would have difficulties in getting employment. This concern is, by all indicators, a consequence of a climate created under the influence of the current economic problems.

***Remarks of the E. C.; It is beyond doubt that the student population lives with the current social problems, feels them as its own, shares with the society the anxiety of uncertainty of economic crisis and the concern for the recovery of the economy.***

***It is essentially required to present the students with indisputable fact that the investment in knowledge in times of crisis is very rational, and for the long term profitable choice. We find every teacher "competent" for that, since this fact could be supported by the example from each profession.***

According to the students' assessment supported by the concrete figures, whose accuracy the Committee does not examine, the issue of student standard and particularly organized nutrition of students in Rijeka is not solved in an acceptable manner. It turns out that the student standard in Rijeka is less favourable for the students than it is in Zagreb. Greater number of student canteens and beds in the student dormitories are required. Most students have an accommodation in private engagements with high price, poor and unequal quality of accommodation. They are in difficult situation due to the expensive city transport as well, which is to be paid, as opposed to Zagreb where the city transport for students is free of charge by the mayor's decision.

***Proposal of the E. C.; Student standard is always actual and open issue, for which the Polytechnic is developing a solution; and it should work on these issues within the framework of its limited possibilities. However, we find the delegation of students, with prior preparation, notification and support of the leaders of the Polytechnic, to have arguments to ask the mayor of Rijeka, who proved to be attached to the mission of the Polytechnic, price-relief in the city transport or the transport free of charge following the example of Zagreb.***

Students are critical towards the issue of compulsory internship which, for example, within the study of Entrepreneurship amounts 350 hours. The Polytechnic established the obligation of internship, but it has not been engaged in providing the positions - companies in which the internship would be performed. In these circumstances, students are forced to seek a place to perform the internship. This is accompanied by the difficulties and objections of the companies on too many hours determined for internship. In these circumstances, employer, in more cases, does not know which assignments to give the student hence it is not uncommon the internship to be "only on paper".

Duration of internship should not be determined equal for all studies, since within some studies 250 hours are sufficient and within others even 350 hours are not sufficient. Assuredly, there are students who do not agree with a gained grade in internship. One student of information science points out a quite positive experience from the internship which was performed at the Polytechnic. The Expert Committee assess this case as neither desirable nor acceptable solution. Normally, the students of the Polytechnic are very active in sports competitions of Croatian universities, charity and other public activities. They participated in these competitions with outstanding success. The plan is to organise socializing of the students of all polytechnics in Croatia under the name *Velerijada*.

15.00-16.00

## **6 MEETING AND DISCUSSION WITH THE TEACHERS OF THE POLYTECHNIC**

In accordance with the prescribed procedure, this meeting is attended only by the teaching staff, without the members of management of the Polytechnic. Audience is acquainted with today's work and impressions from just finished, open and sincere conversation with students.



The Expert Committee requires, from the present teachers, a comment on the students' statement some modules to be considerably more difficult to pass and other to be passed successfully on the basis of the usual effort.

Participants in the discussion indicate the problem to be in insufficient partnership between students and professors. Six years ago, when the survey was conducted among students, on their own initiative, one of the questions was - how much time do they spend on learning? Responses were disastrous, and the later experience confirmed the students to be insufficiently engaged; they spend very little time on independent work. The problem lies exactly in the fact how much the student is engaged in independent work. If that is insufficient, and by all indicators it is, they hardly participate in the teaching process, during the lecture they do not understand the material, do not ask questions, thus a good intention of "active participation in teaching" already in the beginning encounters an insuperable obstacle.

The professors emphasize the importance of fieldwork which was accepted by the students in recent years quite well. The Department of Transport has designed a method by means of which students perform transport recording, logistic elements and compare the efficiency of transport measures on the field, and the results are presented in class. In that manner, it was managed to engage the students directly with the promising, exquisite results.

Participating in the discussion, a prominent employee of the Polytechnic, a university professor with a great experience acquired at the Faculty of Mechanical, Civil and Transport Engineering of the University of Rijeka, gives the highest assessments to the institution and working atmosphere within it. He points out that young people are employed at the Polytechnic and that it is governed by tolerant, fair, human, partnership relation between students and professors, practically "*the years are deleted*". He points out, as an example, the high level of students' graduate thesis, whose preparation takes 3-6 months. The library of the Polytechnic has been filled by these valuable theses. He is proud of the designing carried out by the students of Road Transport. This opinion is supported and the assessment confirmed by the professor with long working experience at the Polytechnic.

***Opinion of the E. C.; It is with content we hear the affirmative and high opinions on the academic environment, particularly since these opinions are expressed in the tone and manner leaving no room for doubt sincerity and accuracy of the statements. This atmosphere should be kept.***

During the discussion, it was established that all teachers gladly and regularly participate in the work of the Expert Council, including the elections and re-elections of the teachers. Within this body, assistants have only their representative. Professional study is subject to constant change due to labour market requirements which are in constant change as well. Favourable circumstance is the possibility of changing the programme of the Polytechnic to 20% without requesting a new accreditation; only in the case of exceeding the "quota of changes" a special process for obtaining a new accreditation is initiated. As an objective, the largest obstacle and a problem in change and enhancement of the programme, that is, appropriate performance of quality of teaching the difference in the level of education of enrolled students, can be perceived. Previous knowledge of the student population is quite heterogeneous, since the studies are enrolled by the attendants from a three-year and a four-year secondary school who at this level of education do not acquire the same previous knowledge. Due to the aforementioned fact, the Polytechnic is, in a certain manner, "forced" to adapt to the "average" knowledge and thus some study programmes of the Polytechnic simply cannot keep track with

all contemporary trends. For all studies, with no exceptions, but particularly for some as for example Information Science, continuous monitoring of the trends in the world is the condition for survival. Obviously, the Polytechnic has not considered the option of selection of students of homogenous knowledge who are ready for studying, to be performed through the admission procedure.

***Recommendation of the E. C.; It is advisable the issue of insufficient and heterogeneous previous knowledge of the students who enrol into the studies at the Polytechnic, to be solved by the introduction of entrance exam which would result in a certain guarantee of the minimum knowledge the student begins higher education with. Admission procedure would result in the selection of students prepared for studying and with the minimum or completely avoided student objections related to low passing rate of the courses fundamental disciplines (mathematics, chemistry and physics).***

The question put by the Expert Committee, on the reasons why students do not receive a feedback on the results of the surveys and measures which might be initiated by the survey results, has left unanswered. We are left with the impression that nobody of the present felt competent to respond to this question.

Furthermore, ensuring the renewal of the teaching staff by young scientists – junior researchers, is made difficult by the fact that without a clear perspective, the requirements for obtaining a doctoral degree and advancement, it is not easy to ensure capable and ambitious young people since such personnel look for work posts providing a certain promotion in a career.

From the discussions on advancement and appointments into higher grades we point out opinion on the illogicality of criteria, according to which the requirements for appointment into the grade of a senior lecturer at polytechnics, are far more rigid than the requirements for the same grade at the university studies. However, the analysis of this issue would show this comparison cannot withstand critical analysis. Within the system of professional education, a senior lecturer is a very highly rated position, practically at the mere “top of the scale” of the grade, therefore, “a pillar” of professional education. Within the university study this grade is not a scientific research – teaching grade on which university study is based but a teaching grade into which teachers of the modules not essential to the profession (foreign languages, physical education) are appointed, therefore, requirements for the appointment into grades are not so demanding, quite milder requirements are sufficient.

17.00-21.00

### **7 SITE VISIT TO DISLOCATED STUDIES IN PAZIN AND POREČ**

The E. C. visited one of dislocated studies in Pazin where the study of Entrepreneurship is carried out and the third year of the professional study of Mediterranean Agriculture, concentration: Apiculture, for which there is a strong need and interest of potential attendants from the society of agriculturists and entrepreneurs.

For the time being, teaching has been performed in the secondary school, but the preparations for the reconstruction of the former barrack, which E. C. visited, have been underway. It is situated in an excellent location, in a surrounding convenient for studying.

The Expert Committee visited the building of Secondary School of Agriculture and the Institute of Agriculture and Tourism, in Poreč, where professional study of Winemaking and professional study of Mediterranean Agriculture have been carried out, and where the implementation of specialist graduate professional study of Winemaking is planned for the academic year

2009/2010. This study is very well positioned; actually, it represents standard and logical continuation of education of graduates from outstanding and prominent Secondary School of Agriculture - Poreč, with a very long tradition. According to the E. C.'s observations, all whole process of teaching within this study is organized in an exemplary way; it applies to theory and particularly to the practical training and exercises in contemporary, well-equipped laboratory which performs services of wine analyzing, on a commercial basis, for the needs of numerous winemakers of Istria. Each student of the study of winemaking prepares graduate thesis by wine fermentation carried out under the conditions supervised and determined by a student himself/herself in his/her own barrel. The Expert Committee was assured in the quality of graduate thesis by tasting wines containing the label "student wine".

**Wednesday, 3 June 2009**

07.30-08.00

### **8 MEETING OF THE E. C. - ELABORATION OF THE DRAFT OF THE FINAL REPORT**

The members of the E. C. share the same view that the Polytechnic fulfils its mission properly, the final report should be affirmative for the Polytechnic, but perceived problems should not be left out from the report.

8.00 – 08.45

### **9 FINAL MEETING WITH THE MANAGEMENT OF THE POLYTECHNIC AND WORKING GROUP IN CHARGE OF THE ELABORATION OF SELF-EVALUATION**

Expert Committee expresses appreciation to all participants for creative and in an academic manner balanced, friendly atmosphere which has accompanied the work of the E. C., and particularly to the authors of documents which provided the basis for work; Self-Evaluation of the Polytechnic 2009 and the Strategy 2008-2013.

Starting with the assessment based on the statements from Self-Evaluation of the Polytechnic and insight into the situation on site, the Polytechnic obviously fulfils its clearly defined mission successfully (p.13); it has appropriate and efficient internal organizational structure and management system (p.14-22), contemporary study programmes for professional undergraduate studies and specialist professional graduate studies having proper accreditations (p. 24-38), clearly defined conditions of studying and obligations of students (p. 39-43), a reasonable number and structure of competent teaching staff and associates, appropriate teacher workload and size of student groups for different modes of teaching, a relatively satisfactory publishing activity, an efficient information system within the Polytechnic and out of it, a high level scientific and professional activity of engaged staff (p. 50-58), adequate premises and equipment which has been continually renewed, upgraded and modernized (p. 63-68), and finally, it has a system for monitoring the quality of teaching (p. 68-74); the consent, that the report for the Polytechnic should be affirmative, was reached. However, the issues to which the E. C. desires to draw attention to, primarily part-time study were perceived.

***Opinion of the E. C.; Indisputable fact is that the part-time study is not aligned with the principles of "Bologna Process". The Expert Committee does not question part-time study. On the contrary, it finds this study to have a future as a part of the system of lifelong learning. Improvement of this system of***

***education and adjustment to the requirements of “Bologna reform of higher education” is a permanent task of the Polytechnic. Well-planned solutions should be sought at the level of the Councils of Polytechnics and Schools of Professional Higher Education in Croatia, since this issue is not a particularity of the Polytechnic alone. We should look for a solution in more contemporary approach to teaching (such as e-learning), which is on the one hand acceptable to the student population, and the requirements of the “Bologna” on the other hand.***

***Expectations of the E. C.:*** We expect additional efforts and a step forward of the Polytechnic for the work of higher quality with part-time students;

- ***increasing the performance of teaching to 70-80% of the overall number of hours,***
- ***separate the monitoring of full-time study and part-time study,***
- ***examine the practice of teaching full-time study and part-time study only in the afternoons, since in this manner full-time students are deprived.***

***Recommendation of the E. C.:*** The issue of part-time study and the conditions under which the study is carried out deserves mindful analysis at the national level taking into account the particularities of individual professions, the needs of the economy and intentions of lifelong learning.

The attention was drawn to the issue of personnel which is a central question of survival and advancement of the Polytechnic, as well as the issue of permanent high importance. However, it is stated in the Strategy of the Polytechnic 2008-2013 (p.13 task 3.6.) that “the expanding of teaching basis” will be carried out by “further inclusion of recognized experts from the economy and public sector”. We point to the need the term “a prominent expert” to be precisely, unambiguously and clearly defined.

***Opinion of the E. C.:*** Representation of the active scientific workers in the teaching staff is below the level which could be considered as optimal. Notwithstanding the manner of dealing with personnel issues so far proved to be efficient, which is confirmed by the information that the status of the Polytechnic today meets the requirements, since it exceeds the minimum coverage of teaching by its own teaching staff; we believe that within the renewal of the personnel more attention should be brought to the opportunity of recruiting junior researchers. Talented, skilled and ambitious junior researcher guided and developed within his/her own institutional environment, according to the experience in other academic environments in our country as well as in the world, is a reliable way towards forming its own highly professional and scientific research-teaching personnel. The teaching staff should be given the possibility to exchange their knowledge and experience to other teachers in the same scientific field, having the same problems, to improve their knowledge and exchange successful experience. Since this is dependent on financial possibilities, support from national government and international institutions should be investigated.

Strategy of the Polytechnic, 2008-2013, demonstrates that the Polytechnic has a clear vision of tomorrow. This extensive document comprises all the key issues of development in the upcoming period and flowchart of activities in the implementation of the Strategy. It covers all aspects of development with a special emphasis on the issues of changes due to rapid accession the European Union and inclusion into the European research and higher education area. The obligation of the implementation of “Bologna process” is highly ranked and important issues are the development of lifelong learning as well as the establishment of an integrated quality assurance system. Bearing in mind a path passed through, we find the strategy ambitious but realistic and feasible.

***Opinion of the E. C.; It is the opinion that the Strategy of the Polytechnic 2008-2013, in a rare manner, for this type of documents, defines quite precisely a development path of all activities, and significantly, management and professional bodies and persons responsible for implementation, as well as the time framework of the carrying out planned activity. The Strategy 2008-2013 should be finalised, supplemented and possibly corrected with respect to newly risen economic and other circumstances, then print it as a document of permanent value, affirmative in the eyes of the public - taxpayers and the competent state bodies, and binding for all the selected persons and bodies of the Polytechnic.***

The issue of correctness of a professional title the graduates of the Polytechnic are awarded was noticed and discussed. Namely, upon the completion of Professional Undergraduate Study of Winemaking, student is awarded a professional title - *Professional Bachelor-Engineer of Winemaking*, upon the completion of Professional Undergraduate Study of Mediterranean Agriculture - *Professional Bachelor- Engineer of Mediterranean Agriculture*, and upon the completion of Specialist Graduate Professional Study of Winemaking (Self-Evaluation p. 32 and 33) - *Professional Specialist Engineer of Winemaking*.

***Warning of the E. C.; A professional title “Professional Bachelor-Engineer of Winemaking” then “Professional Bachelor- Engineer of Mediterranean Agriculture” and “Professional Specialist Engineer of Winemaking” are in contradiction with the provisions of the Act on Academic and Professional Titles and Academic Degrees (Official Gazette 107/2007, Article 9), currently in force, which stipulates the awarding of the title engineer, by ways of an exception, upon the completion of a professional study exclusively in the scientific field of technical sciences. The Department of Agriculture of the Polytechnic belongs to the scientific field of agronomy, but not the scientific field of biotechnical sciences. To avoid misunderstandings legislators should re-examine their own provisions.***

The discussion with the students raised a quite delicate issue on reasons of too low level of passing rate of some modules, without referring to “the usually” difficult modules (mathematics, physics or chemistry).

***Remark of the E. C.; Reasons for inconsistency in students’ passing rate of some modules can be two-fold; either the material of the module is disproportionately extensive, or the work with students (teaching, tests, textbook) is insufficient! Solving this problem should be considered in a manner of organising additional instructions, as some of our universities do, for students who could not adopt the material.***

Professor Billiet introduced an interesting and noteworthy experience of the polytechnic in Belgium. Firstly; perceiving that students are reluctant to fulfil extensive questionnaires in the survey, (and in case of fulfilling, they seek a feedback on the results of their comments), it was decided to interview only one third of the study each year which means that the survey is carried out once in three years within the entire institution. If some problems, at some of the studies, are perceived, the survey is carried out more often. A dialogue with students, on the topic of the survey results, is organised once a year. This meeting is attended by the students from all three years of undergraduate study. It is conducted by a completely independent chairperson familiar with the results of the survey, but with the obligation of confidentiality of all information and results of the whole dialogue as well. The task of the chairperson is to establish what the students really meant under the statements in the survey about teaching and teachers. It appears the students of lower years hear answers to some questions from their older colleagues who know how and why the problems occurred within a specific module, rather than from their teachers.

At the end of the dialogue, the chairperson, or even better still the head of the study introduces the audience with general remarks and objections from the survey and the measures undertaken by the management and relevant competent bodies of the educational institution in order to eliminate the objections.

This is so-called "Feedback". However, it is important to say that all "personal" remarks related to a teacher - an individual, according to the Act are confidential and must not be subject to public disclosure except with the consent of the teacher. However, his/her superior sees the remarks, discusses them with the teacher, and in consultations with him/her, search for the problem solution. Results from the survey, in any case, are not taken as evaluation criterion for the appointment and advancement of teachers.

## **10 FINAL ASSESSMENT WITH RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE NATIONAL COUNCIL**

Based on the Self-Evaluation, data from the tables and Strategy of the Polytechnic, as well as discussions with all participants of the education process and the insight into the situation on site during the site visit, the Expert Committee for the evaluation of quality and efficiency of the Polytechnic established that the Polytechnic has been performing successfully its clearly defined mission, fulfils the expectations of the public in all fields of its activities. There is no doubt that the Polytechnic has;

- appropriate and effective internal organizational structure, and in the same way, effective management system acceptable to academic community as well as recognized and respected by the students and teachers of the Polytechnic,
- study programmes for professional undergraduate study and specialist professional graduate study, with accreditations for study,
- clearly defined conditions and rules of studying as well as the obligations of students,
- acceptable number and structure of competent teaching staff and associates,
- appropriate teaching workloads and sizes of student groups for the different modes of teaching,
- satisfactory publishing activity,
- very efficient, actually in an exemplary manner information system within and out of Polytechnic,
- a high level scientific and professional activity of teaching and scientific staff,
- adequate premises and contemporary equipment which has been renewed and modernised,
- system of monitoring the quality of education and finished students - experts.

The Report contains the description of the course of work of the Expert Committee and elaborated suggestions with regard to changes the Polytechnic is obliged to undertake with the aim of enhancement of the quality of work. Based on the assessment of the overall status and the state in particular areas of activity of the Polytechnic of Rijeka;

### **The Expert Committee recommends the National Council for Higher Education to issue the accreditation for performing the activity to the Polytechnic of Rijeka,**

at the same, to oblige the Polytechnic to harmonisation and solving the issues, specially highlighted in the report and assessed as deserving careful consideration, analysis and changes.

Finalised in Zagreb, 7 July 2009

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