

TRAINING ON ECONOMIC POLICY IN GEORGIA¹

The undersigned was on an assignment in Georgia from 2 March to 5 April 2014², organised within a Marie Curie action of the EU 7th Framework Programme³. According to the contract, the undersigned prepared an advanced training programme on the complex subject Bases of Economic Policy,⁴ which was reviewed and approved first by the Georgian Technical University. The instruction was conducted in Russian.

The main activities of the assignment were carried out at the Faculty of Business Engineering where the lectures within the above-mentioned programme were delivered from *5 to 10 March*.⁵ The participants were students (a group of 22 students had been invited for this programme) and members of the academic staff and doctoral students, researchers and specialists of the faculty, interested in these lectures (59 people), in total 81 people.⁶ For an introduction, the undersigned gave an overview of the whole programme of studies planned, requirements for reviews that the students were required to submit for workshops, and the recommended subjects for the reviews, also conditions for issuing certificates upon passing the programme. In addition to the treatment of issues of economic policy, the lectures included an overview of the development and current situation of the Estonian economy.

A trip from Tbilisi to the Kutaisi State University in Western Georgia had been planned for *14 March*. The Rector of the University Professor George Gatvadze and other representatives participated at the meeting. The undersigned delivered two lectures (Overview of the Estonian Economy and General Bases of Economic Policy) to the students and the academic staff of the university in addition to the formal programme. Besides, several local members of the Georgian Parliament participated in the lectures (35 participants according to the records). Numerous questions were asked.

¹ The undersigned hopes to publish an article on the developments and problems of the Georgian society and economy in one of the next issues of this journal.

² The name Georgia of the state is generally and widely used everywhere, including on their national currency notes (GEL). The name Grusia is mainly used in Russian. The official name of the state in the Georgian language is Sakharthvelo.

³ Seventh Framework Programme: Marie Curie Actions: People, International Research Staff Exchange Scheme.

⁴ It was planned to include 12 hours of lectures, 12 hours of workshops and 54 hours of independent work, in total 78 hours for which the participants would get 3 credits.

⁵ Only the dates of formal meetings have been mentioned in this article but many more meetings and discussions were held with the academic staff and students of the university on other days. Also several outings and trips out of the city were organised during weekends, including visits to historical sites and architectural monuments and visits to the homes of the academic staff and meeting their family.

⁶ Participation was recorded daily according to the conditions of the contract.

Consultations (approximately 6 hours) were provided from 17 to 21 March to students who had decided to write a review.

A meeting with the Rector of the Georgian Technical University (Professor Archil Prangishvili) had been planned for the afternoon of 18 March to discuss the stay of the undersigned in Georgia and the possible areas of further cooperation (also Professor Alexander Sichinava, member of the Academic Council of the Georgian Technical University and head of department of the Faculty of Business Engineering participated at the meeting).

Meeting of the Estonian Ambassador Priit Turk with the students and staff of the Faculty of Business Engineering of the Georgian Technical University was held on 21 March. Also the undersigned participated in this meeting with the Ambassador and provided additional insight in the issues related to Estonian economy.

Workshops were held from 26 to 28 March (for in total 12 hours) with presentations of the reviews of economic policy by students and interesting and thorough discussion conducted on the basis of these reviews (10 reviews and 10 presentations). Also a few members of the academic staff of the faculty participated in the workshops as supervisors of the reviews, including the head of the department A. Sichinava. Students acquired valuable experience in the workshops and were able to participate/present these subjects/reviews at the student conference of the Georgian Technical University in spring.

A trip to Zugdidi in Western Georgia was organised on 29 March to meet the Rector of the Zugdidi State University Professor Teona Khupenia and other members of the administration of the university after which the undersigned delivered two lectures (Overview of the Estonian Economy and General Bases of Economic Policy) again to the audience which included 53 students and members of the academic staff in addition to the formal programme. Numerous questions were asked. A tour of the university and a visit to the very interesting Zugdidi Museum with a rich exposition followed.

On 3 April the non-formal certificates⁷ were issued in the assembly hall of the Academic Council of the University at the Rector's Office building of the Georgian Technical University to all students, members of the academic staff, doctoral students, researchers and specialists who had participated in the lectures within the programme of Bases of Economic Policy. Also the Ambassador Priit Turk participated at the event and greeted and congratulated all participants.

After the end of the lectures at the Georgian Technical University (on 10 March 2014), more than ten persons (representatives of both students and the academic

⁷ Formal certificates will be prepared by the University of Tartu on the basis of the participation records approved in Tbilisi and delivered in Tartu, for the students who passed the programme Bases of Economic Policy. It was planned to forward the certificates to the persons concerned at the Georgian Technical University in May-June 2014.

staff) took the floor to express their thanks for the interesting lectures and comprehensive and in-depth information characterising the situation and developments of the Estonian economy, in addition to personal expressions of thanks. They emphasised that this meeting should not remain the last and that it is absolutely important to continue the contacts of both the undersigned and Estonia with both Georgia and the Georgian Technical University. The same ideas were expressed also by the rectors of both the Kutaisi State University and the Zugdid State University. There was always great interest in Estonia everywhere. The undersigned received also a certificate from the Georgian Technical University for appreciation of the work done and as a token of friendship.

The hosts had organised also a number of different interesting meetings, trips to the beautiful Georgian countryside and historical sites and many sites related to cultural history and history of architecture for the undersigned. All receptions and meetings were very warm and heartfelt. It was an opportunity to get acquainted with the daily life of the Georgian society and participate in several of the rich Georgian traditions.

In Tbilisi, in Tallinn, at Pirita-Kose and in Pärnu
Georgia-Estonia
March-May 2014

Matti Raudjärvi (Professor-trainer at Georgian universities in March-April 2014)