

80 YEARS OF THE FACULTY OF ECONOMICS AT TALLINN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

The 80-year history of Tallinn University of Technology School of Business and Governance is complex, with its ups and downs, and inevitably, for almost half a century, under Soviet rule. The establishment of Soviet power in Estonia in 1940 led to reorganizing the university-level training of economists. It was considered reasonable to develop higher economic education in the capital, and on 28 September 1940, the Presidium of the Provisional Supreme Soviet of the Estonian SSR issued a decree establishing the Faculty of Economics at Tallinn University of Technology (TUT). To rationalize higher economic education, the Faculty of Economics at the University of Tartu (UT), established on 1 January 1938, was liquidated and incorporated into TUT. The war interrupted teaching and learning activities. In the autumn of 1941, the Faculty of Economics was returned to the University of Tartu and in the autumn of 1944, it was moved back to Tallinn, into the composition of TUT (TPI – Tallinn Polytechnic Institute at that time).

During the Soviet period, economists were trained in nearly 20 different fields, including mechanical engineering economics and organization, accounting and economic analysis, construction economics and organization, industrial planning, economic information processing, service economics and organization. Several specialities had parallel student groups according to the language of instruction (Estonian or Russian).

Economic education was delivered in three forms of study (full-time, evening, distance), and the study period was 4-6 years. Graduates, depending on the specialty, obtained the qualification of an engineer-economist or an economist. Economics courses were also taught to students of the faculties of technology.

In the 1970s and 1980s, there were 900-1,000 students studying at different faculties at the same time, and the average number of graduates was 300-400 per year. Economics students accounted for almost 30% of the entire TPI student body. In the period of 1945–90, almost 60% of the Estonian economic specialists with a university degree were trained at TPI.

During the Soviet period, the Faculty of Economics was comprised of 29 departments, including the ones that operated for a longer period: statistics and accounting, production economics and organization, construction economics and organization, industrial management and planning, service economics, occupational safety, mathematical economics, information processing, statistics, accounting, industrial economics, and 3 research laboratories: work organization, economics of higher school, social and economic analysis.

In 1992, the academic structure of the Faculty of Economics was reorganised, and 5 departments with 17 chairs were established.

In 2005 the Faculty of Economics was renamed in English as Tallinn School of Economics and Business Administration (TSEBA), the predecessor of today's School of Business and Governance.

In 2008/2009 International University Audentes was merged with Tallinn University of Technology and some of their teaching staff members transferred to TSEBA. In 2017, due to the structural reform of TUT, the School of Social Sciences and TUT Tallinn College were merged with TSEBA. All chairs were liquidated and research groups were formed instead. Currently, in 2021, there are four departments at the School of Business and Governance: The Department of Business Administration; the Department of Economics and Finance; Ragnar Nurkse Department of Innovation and Governance; the Department of Law. The School also comprises the Centre for Language and Communication and a Laboratory of Ergonomics. In 2020, the first service design laboratory in Estonia - *dLab* - was initiated. As of 1 September 2021, the School of Business and Governance employs 217 full-time staff, of whom 169 are the teaching staff and researchers (including 29 professors and 21 associate professors), 30% are international staff members (26% at TUT) from almost 30 countries. 57% of teaching staff and researchers hold a doctorate and 37% a master's degree.

TUT School of Business and Governance is the largest “school of economics” in Estonia, with an average of 2,550 students and depending on the academic year, an average annual admission of 630 students. The specialties of the School of Business and Governance have been very popular with students from Estonia and also abroad. During the annual admission of students, the programmes taught at the School are the most competitive. The specialties of the School mostly fall into the curriculum group of *Business and Administration*, which in Estonia has been the responsibility of Tallinn University of Technology. The School is primarily responsible for the level of the quality of economics and entrepreneurship education.

Bachelor's studies were started in 1995, and in 2002 the so-called 3+2 integrated bachelor's and master's study programmes were launched. All bachelor's, master's and doctoral programmes are nationally accredited and internationally recognized.

The School of Business Governance has almost 2,300 students, 49% of them in bachelor's, 47% in master's, and 4% in doctoral studies. The share of international students - about 550 from more than 65 countries - is 23%, which makes it the most international school at TUT, where 16% are international students, and probably also in Estonia. The student body of the School makes up 27% of the total number of TUT students, the share of international students is 5.6%. More than 20,000 people have graduated from the Faculty of Economics/Tallinn School of Economics and Business Administration/School of Business Governance (including evening, distance, master's, and doctoral studies).

Research is carried out in research groups according to the profile of the departments. The research groups cover a wide variety of topics, including economic performance and financial behaviour; investments, markets and competitiveness; economic and fiscal policy; sustainable business development; digital enterprises and business model innovation; entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial university; law and technology; public sector innovation and digital transformation; innovation policies and technological development; smart cities.

More than 130 doctoral theses have been defended in the doctoral programme of the School.

In 1996, the collection of research papers of the Faculty of Economics, *Working Papers in Economics* was published, which has been the international scientific journal *Research in Economics and Business: Central and Eastern Europe* since 2009. The School has organised several international and local conferences and seminars, about 8-10 conferences a year. Research has been evaluated internationally.

In 2008, the School joined the international network of European universities. As an institution, the School of Business and Governance is a full member of five international organizations.

In 2019, TUT School of Business and Governance reached the sectoral ranking of the prestigious *QS World University Rankings by Subjects* with its three main areas (public administration, economics and econometrics, and business and management). It means being one among the top 2% of the universities in the ranking of the world's 500 universities for 48 different subjects.

The study programme *International Business Administration* received international accreditation in 2021, becoming one of the world's 170 top business and management programmes.

The School's public administration ranks as 101-150 position in the Shanghai ranking of prestigious universities and research fields, and is on a par with Cambridge University, leaving behind all Finnish and Central and Eastern European universities. In order to analyse its effectiveness in the region, the School has passed the international BSIS (Business School Impact System) evaluation being the first in Estonia to receive the corresponding label.

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The School of Business and Governance
Tallinn University of Technology