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Lithuanian University of Agriculture

Subject: Recommendations on education

Latvian Agricultural Organization Cooperation Council (LAOCC) would like to inform you about recommendations on education, which were prepared by students of Lithuanian University of Agriculture and Latvian University of Agriculture in the project "New Business Ideas through Old Traditions - Future without Borders" of Latvia – Lithuania Cross Border Cooperation Programme.

Project main goal is to increase agricultural sector prestige among Latvian - Lithuanian youth, at the same time promote entrepreneurship development and national tradition maintenance.

In the Project two workshops on education were organised in the Lithuanian University of Agriculture and Latvian University of Agriculture, where the students offered suggestions for improving and developing of training programs and cooperation between the Universities.

Students who are participating at the Project analysing information availability about the Lithuanian University of Agriculture, as well as analysing SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) aspects about Lithuanian University of Agriculture - Faculty of Economics and Management. The goal of students' work were - through student point of view offer recommendations for the University to make Faculty of Economics and Management more effective and exciting for students in order to motivate students to return and to start entrepreneurship at rural area.

At this reference we offer students' recommendations and we very much hope that they will be valuable ideas that you might consider in planning of study programmes. Students' presentations have been sent to the Lithuanian University of Agriculture, Head of Department of Business Organization Audrius Gargasas e-mail: audrius.gargasas@lzuu.lt.

Annex – Recommendations on education – 3 pages

Yours sincerely,
Edgars Treibergs
Chairman of Board

Latvian Agricultural Organization Cooperation Council

Recommendations on education

Recommendations on education and study programmes

- Increasing research activities in faculties.
- Establish new and upgrade existing scientific laboratory equipment for priority study.
- Run and state entities on behalf of scientific research, popular science and activate the educational activity.
- Intensified participation in international research, exchange programs and networks.
- Invest money in technologies to make practical studies more interesting, and teach students to work with those new technologies.
- Need to buy more new literature library. (Books, manuals, etc.)
- Invite better known guest lecturers.
- Experience exchange trips to different enterprises and universities.
- More international conferences, exhibitions, projects.
- Prepare more seminars for students on business characteristics, in order to acquire more experience in solving problems of any kind and in any situation.
- Improve environment around university, for example, improve public urban transport.
- Workshops could be organized with well-known businessmen, because they could tell more from the practical side. These meetings would encourage students to start entrepreneurship because they would be informed about different practical details.
- Study program adaptation with needs of labour market and national requirement.
- For best students grant a scholarship.

Student proposals how to motivate youth to return to rural area:

- Create micro credit programs for graduates who start entrepreneurship at rural area.
- Invest finance in technologies, that studies would be practical argument.
- Land rent for lower rate.
- Study fee discount if youth return at rural area and work at acquire speciality.

Collaboration among Latvian/Lithuanian universities:

- More Erasmus (and others) programs for students and give a priority for Lithuanian – Latvian students.
- Organize more frequently common projects.

- Invite Lithuanian students to Latvia in “Vecauce” farm for practice and Latvian students to Lithuania.

Promotion of Agricultural science:

- The government should be interested in promoting these sciences.
- Provide more opportunities for graduating students.
- Show good examples of successful farmers in media.

SWOT analysis about programs of the Economic and Management Faculty (Lithuanian University of Agriculture):

Strength:

- Has a long tradition and strong positions in the regional development of rural social sciences.
- European study developed the system.
- International cooperation with other universities.
- Accounting and finance. This thing is taught only in this university.
- Upon the completion of studies leading to a double bachelor.
- A unique Faculty of Economics and Management programs of studies. (Accounting and finance / Economics /Administration and rural development /Business management)
- Increasing the competitiveness of scientific activity.
- Strong partnership with business and social partners.

Weakness:

- A small scientific-pedagogical staff of scientific productivity.
- Lack of modern science and the study material base.
- Underdevelopment of scientific study and quality assurance.
- The Faculty is unable to attract the brightest young people to study.
- Uncompetitive employee motivation system.
- Lack of rapid information equipment and facilities rates.
- Poor the quality of sequential study for foreign students.
- Total quality management system is not working.

Opportunities:

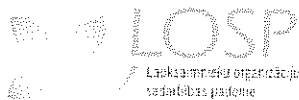
- Development of rural areas is a priority of EU policies.
- Openness creates new opportunities for recovery of cooperation.
- Emerging science and education, and the possibility of upgrading their infrastructure with new sources of support.
- Participation in integrated land, forest and food science, Studies and Business Centre (Valley) “Neman” promote the development of closer cooperation with academic institutions and businesses, allows for higher academic achievement and education quality.
- Scientific and educational reform.
- EU Structural Funds support for university education projects.
- Science and Technology Park.

- Agricultural infrastructure and the rapid pace of modernization.
- Bioenergy development.

Threats:

- Competition from other universities social science faculties.
- The deteriorating demographic situation in the country affects the quality of the accession.
- Higher education development trends and strategic decisions are detrimental to the universities.
- Too much political interference and educational reforms.
- Low intensity rural education and learning.
- The increasing competition between higher education institutions.
- Publicly funded positions decline.
- Teachers and researchers migration to other business structures.
- Demographic changes.

Project “New Business Ideas through Old Traditions - Future without Borders” is implemented through financing of Latvia – Lithuania Cross Border Cooperation Programme 2007 – 2013. In order to achieve the project objectives, the project has involved four project partners: Agricultural Joint Consultative Council, the Lithuanian University of Agriculture, Latvian Young Farmers Club and the Latvian University of Agriculture. The main objective of the Project is to increase the prestige of agriculture among youth in borderland areas of Latvia - Lithuania, while promoting business development and national traditions.



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