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European academic mobility for students of economic specialization at KNUTE: achievements and prospects

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Abstract. It is becoming increasingly difficult to ignore the growing expansion of outbound academic mobility in Ukraine. However, very little empirical research has been carried out to outline the way mobility programs are organized in particular educational institutions. The aim of this study was therefore to investigate the achievements and prospects of European academic mobility for students of economic specialization at Kiev National University of Trade and Economics. The changes and current trends in mobility at KNUTE were analyzed basing on statistical information, KNUTE website and printed materials. Results of the assessment showed significant interest of students in European mobility programs which is proved by the increasing number of mobile students, partner universities and joint degree programs. This suggests that further development of academic mobility at KNUTE is required.

Keywords: *European academic mobility, French-Ukrainian Institute of Management, types of academic mobility, joint-degree program, language proficiency, Kiev National University of Trade and Economics*

In recent years, there has been an increasing interest in developing and promoting student academic mobility in Ukraine. Progress in this sphere has been made to the point that a variety of international exchange programs, joint-degree and double-diploma programs, bilateral treaties on diploma recognition was created. Many students have already taken part in mobility programs at KNUTE and this stimulates university to expand the number of mobility programs. Most data seem to prove that joint degree Bachelor and Master programs with obtaining Ukrainian and foreign diploma are of the highest demand. For example, more the 350 French state diplomas were received by students of French-Ukrainian Institute of Management during almost a decade of its operation. Several studies investigating academic mobility have been carried out and they view academic mobility in different aspects: academic mobility as a way of integration in Bologna process, challenges of academic mobility in Ukraine, language proficiency as an integral part of mobility [1], [2]. Formation of favourable conditions for academic mobility and a view on modern mobile students are described by A.I. Mokij and I.A. Lapshina; O.M. Kyslova and L.H. Sokurjanska analyse academic mobility of modern Ukrainian students, study the determinants of academic immigration [3], [5]. Recent developments in this field have heightened the need for more in-depth analysis of European academic mobility for students of economic specialization.

However, even though many studies have reported an increased popularity of academic mobility in Ukraine, there has been very little research reported on the development of mobility in particular universities. The purpose of the present study is to assess the current stage of the development of European academic mobility at Kiev National University of Trade and Economics, challenges it faces and future prospects.

Kyiv National University of trade and economics takes a leading position among Ukrainian universities training specialists in the area of economics, which is proved by ratings. Thus, in 2013 this educational institution was ranked 1st according to programs allowing students to study abroad; 2nd according to training specialists in economics, finance, enterprise management and 6th in training top-managers [4]. The university pays great attention to encouraging its students to participate in European academic mobility programs. Academic mobility is regarded

as an opportunity to study during one or more semesters within the general training period at another higher education institution, which trains specialists in the same specialty with recognition of courses (credits) and periods of study abroad; with the aim of effectively developing the intellectual potential allowing the student to choose institutions, courses, subjects independently [6]. This gives the university, students and staff a number of benefits:

- The university can promote itself on the international level via participation in conferences and signing two- and three-party agreements;
- The university can enhance its educational programs and curriculum by adopting positive experience and innovations from foreign universities;
- Establishing new mobility programs can be the source of additional income and will help to attract new students;
- Students become more motivated to study well because only people with high academic achievements can apply for mobility programs;
- Students get better opportunities for further employment due to having international experience, develop their life skills and have more active life position and improve language skills

There exist the various types of academic mobility according to:

- period: full or partial;
- educational level: horizontal or vertical;
- direction: outbound or inbound;
- method of organization: organized or individual;
- location: foreign, domestic or intrainstitutional;
- choice: voluntary or involuntary.

Speaking about full and partial mobility we mean either studying at foreign educational institution during the whole period before obtaining a diploma (full academic mobility) or temporary studying during 1-2 semesters, deployment periods, apprenticeship (partial mobility).

Classification of mobility according to students' choice means that student change the institution of country where they study willingly, while some of them are forced to do that due to moving to another country, economic or social reasons.

Classifying mobility according to the way of organisation we mean participating in "programme mobility" where place, terms and conditions of studying are predetermined. Individual mobility is a situation when students contact the institution independently and agree upon conditions of staying there.

Regarding educational level we can speak of horizontal and vertical mobility which is connected with the stage of

education the student is currently at. For instance, if an undergraduate student from Ukraine continues his education in Europe also as an undergraduate student we can speak of horizontal mobility; if as a graduate student – we speak of vertical mobility. Finally, we can differentiate between outbound mobility (when Ukrainian students temporarily move to other countries to study) and inbound mobility (when foreigners come to study in Ukraine).

Students of KNUTE have opportunities to participate in various mobility types due to extensive connections of the university with partners from Europe and other continents. The changes and current trends in mobility at KNUTE were analyzed basing on statistical information, KNUTE website and printed materials. Table 1 presents information on academic mobility programs available for students.

Table 1. Academic mobility programs available for students

University, Country	Specialfield	Education level	Period of education
<i>Université d'Auvergne, France</i>	Management, Enterprise management	Undergraduate, Graduate	1-2 years
<i>ESCP Europe, France, the UK, Spain</i>	Management	Graduate	2 years
<i>Université Paris-Est Creteil, France</i>	Economics, Finance, Management	Undergraduate, Graduate	1-2 years
«Audencia Nantes», France	Management	Graduate	2 years
<i>Université Pierre Mendès, France</i>	Regional economics and development, Economics, Energy and sustainable development	Graduate	2 years
<i>University of Central Lancashire, UK</i>	Economics, Marketing, Management, Finance	Undergraduate, Graduate	1-2 years
Participation in Erasmus Mundus programs			
<i>Johannes Kepler University of Linz, Austria</i>	Management, Business, Economics, Sociology, Law	Undergraduate,	0,5-1 years
<i>University of Salento, Italy</i>		Graduate,	
<i>University of Alicante, Spain</i>		Postgraduate	

Besides, KNUTE established joint programs (including spending one or more semesters at partner universities), namely with: Cracow University Economics, Poland; Poznan University Economics, Poland; Budapest Economic Institute, Hungary; Mykolas Romeris University, Lithuania; University of Pecs, Hungary; School of Business Administration Turiba, Latvia; Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia; Technological Educational Institute, Greece [8].

Some of the most highly-valued and popular directions with students are France and Poland. Let us analyse each direction.

French-Ukrainian Institute of Management was created in 2000 on the basis of agreements with a number of educational institutions in France – the University of Auvergne (Clermont-Ferrand), the Paris Graduate school of Commerce (ESCP Europe), which refers to the so-called "Grandes Ecoles" and is recognized as the first in Europe (by the assessment of employers) according to the classification of Financial Times as well as with other universities of France. It trains specialists in the areas of:

- quality management;
- management in trade industry;
- management of commercial activity;
- general enterprise management;
- HR management;
- purchasing management and logistics;
- management and information systems;
- management of internal and external communications.

Such focus on France as an educational partner was based on several reasons. Firstly, historically French universities were perhaps the first to enter the educational space of independent Ukraine in the 90s due to the rise in the world popularity of French language. Secondly, French universities, unlike in many other EU countries, almost do not charge fees for tuition which allows greater amount of students choose studying in France. Of course,

foreigners bear accommodation and food costs, but taking into account ability to take part-time jobs or obtain grants students do not suffer from great financial pressure.

It is important to highlight the structure of educational process at FUIM which lasts 5 years and gives students a unique opportunity to combine obtaining Ukrainian and French diplomas. The first two years are dedicated to acquiring level B2 in French by taking in-depth course of this language. After that 2 modules are taught by French lecturers in Kiev and one – in France. Upon this students may have deployment period in Ukrainian or French enterprises.

The results prove the effectiveness of FUIM: graduates received 250 Bachelor and 98 Master diplomas, more than ten students obtained Master diplomas at Paris and London branches of ESCP and three – the most prestigious MBA diplomas at Berlin branch [7].

One major current trend in higher education is spreading English-medium instruction by introducing greater amounts of Bachelor and Master programs. There are several reasons for this: establishing English as a common language of science, competition among European universities, enhancing academic mobility, creation of single educational space. This encouraged KNUTE to shift its focus in European mobility to English-medium programs and recently the university presented a new joint French-Ukrainian program. The aim of the program is to provide students with state Bachelor diplomas of Ukraine and France. The requirements for enrolment are: specialisation in economics after a minimum of three-year study at KNUTE and language proficiency in English or French at at least B1 level. During a year of this program students cover 6 subjects of fundamental economics and a mandatory course of French language (for those who selected English-medium instruction). Moreover, students can have educational trips to France at their own expense. On

condition of getting an average grade point in all 6 subjects and passing a test in French students get French diploma which allows to continue their education at graduate level in Europe [10].

As it was mentioned before, the second most popular destination for European mobility is Poland. Students exchange programs now operate between KNUTE and the Poznan and Cracow economic universities. Students demonstrating high level of proficiency in English and Polish, high academic results and active participation in educational process can spend a semester studying in Poland, while the same quantity of Polish students come to study in Ukraine.

The evidence proves that Poland is becoming one of the major destinations for Ukrainian students, often successfully competing with Ukrainian educational institutions. Ukrainian students comprise the biggest group of foreign students in Poland, accounting almost 20% of all students studying in Poland. Poland as an educational destination attracts Ukrainian students for several reasons: reasonable tuition fee and living costs, European educational standards, favourable attitude towards Ukrainian students, territorial closeness to Ukraine [9].

The results of the study indicate the following trends in European academic mobility for students of economic specialization at KNUTE:

- the demand for academic exchange programs is steadily increasing from year to year;
- students have become more active in exploring opportunities of European academic mobility in comparison to previous years, when it was a concern of dean's offices;
- students are ready to make a considerable effort to study abroad, e.g. learn a foreign language from a scratch;
- joint-degree programs enjoy the highest popularity among students;
- students tend to choose programs with low and reasonable tuition fee or grant programs.

To sum up, we can observe that significant progress has been made in promoting European academic mobility at KNUTE. There can be several prospects of developing it in the future, including raising student awareness and motivation levels through establishing new channels of spreading information about academic mobility (interactive screens, meetings, presentations, discussions). Taking into account the necessity of language proficiency it may be concluded that learning foreign languages for academic purposes should be deeper incorporated in educational process. Finally, we may say that establishing more partner relations with European universities would be a great tool for promoting academic mobility at KNUTE.

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Лысак О.Б. Европейская академическая мобильность студентов экономической специализации в КНТЭУ: достижения и перспективы

Аннотация. Становится все труднее игнорировать распространение исходящей академической мобильности в Украине. Тем не менее, очень мало эмпирических исследований было проведено для обозрения организации программ мобильности в конкретных учебных заведениях. Целью данного исследования было рассмотреть достижения и перспективы европейской академической мобильности студентов экономической специализации в Киевском национальном торгово-экономическом университете. Были проанализированы изменения и текущие тенденции мобильности в КНТЭУ на основе статистической информации, веб-сайта КНТЭУ и печатных материалов. Результаты оценки показали значительную заинтересованность студентов в европейских программах мобильности, что подтверждается увеличением числа мобильных студентов, университетов-партнеров и совместных программ. Это говорит о том, что требуется дальнейшее развитие академической мобильности в КНТЭУ.

Ключевые слова: европейская академическая мобильность, Французско-украинский институт менеджмента, виды академической мобильности, программы двойных дипломов, владение языком, Киевского национального торгово-экономический университет