



Department of Business Administration

Annual Report

2017-2018 Academic Year

June, 2018

## Welcome Speech of Department's Chair



EPOKA University is a young energized and leader university in Albania and a highly competitive one throughout Western Balkans. The Department of Business Administration (BUS Department) is one of the strongest pillars of the university and actually the biggest one by number of programs and students. As the responsible person of BUS Department, I would like to emphasize that we as a team strongly believe that organizational performance depends closely on leadership behaviors, commitment, and inclusiveness. These all require understanding deeply the nature of humans by nurturing a constructivist and systems perspective, and by developing day by day good skills of emotional intelligence.

At BUS Department, people come first. We do not differentiate if they are academicians, supporting administrative staff or students. For us diversity matters.

Our global perspective for Bachelor, Master, and PhD programs at BUS has been attracting the attention of international academicians and candidates from several countries. We focus on global quality standards implemented in an extremely dynamic environment. Based on this perspective, we inspire our students how to “manage” effectively and efficiently with universal principles and ethical mindset.

In conclusion to this first salutation I would like to summarize the spirit of BUS Department with the words of Henry Ford:

*“Coming together is a beginning;*

*Keeping together is progress;*

*Working together is success.”*

I invite you to experience this exciting atmosphere at BUS Department of EPOKA.

**Dr. Xhimi Hysa**

Head of Business Administration Department

Epoka University

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## 1. Introduction

The Department of Business Administration (BUS Department) aims the development of business knowledge to be applied in the management of business and non-business organizations, big and small, domestic and international (e.g. small family businesses, corporations, cultural associations, nonprofit organizations, social businesses, healthcare organizations, financial institutions, public administration, and others). The students will be able to acquire the necessary skills to operate in Albania and globally due to the systemic and integrated knowledge about organizations. The department's objective is to qualify new future employees and managers with a strong background on business administration by underlying a systems and constructivist perspective.

In the BUS Department, students can choose to study business administration, business informatics, and international marketing and logistics management. These programs offer a high rate of employment opportunities. By studying in BUS, students can work in different departments as easily configured in an organizational chart. For example, taking into account their specialization, they might work in the departments of accounting, marketing, sales, human resources, information systems, operations, R&D, etc.

Detailed information on the courses offered in the semester schedules is included in the academic plan. The list of departmental compulsory and elective courses is provided in details in the academic programs. In addition, for each course the students can check the content from the information system in order to be aware about the subjects, teaching methods, requisites, ECTS credit system, and workload. Furthermore, students will be supported all the time by the academic advisors, which are professors of the BUS Department. The list of courses offered each semester by our department and academic catalogue correlate together. The objective of this department is to fulfill the need for qualified members in this field, and to prepare skilled people to work in different sectors of the global economy.

### 1.1 Structure of the Department

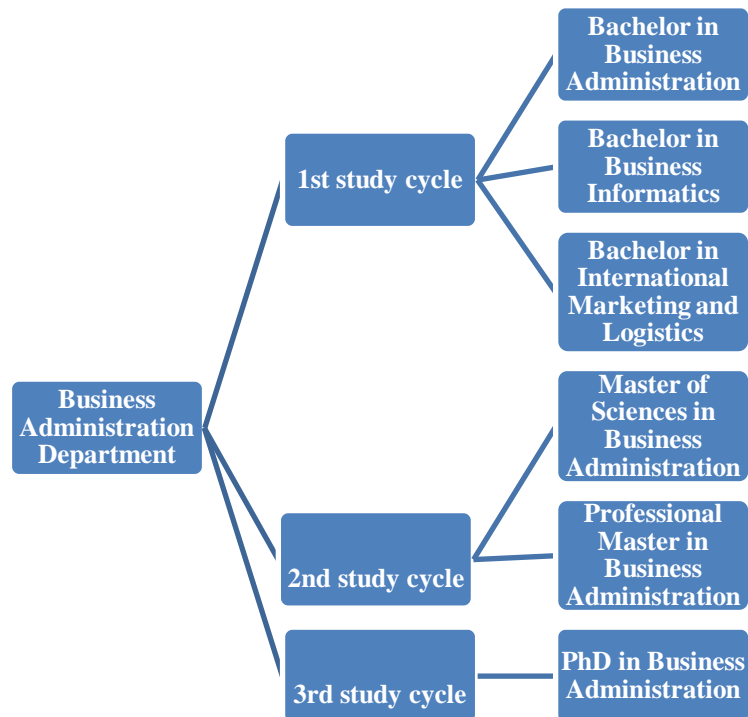


Figure 1- Department's Structure

### 1.2 Academic and Administrative Staff

Full-Time Academic Staff Members			
No.	Title	Name/Surname	Position
1	Assist. Prof. Dr.	Xhimi Hysa	Head of Department
2	Prof. Dr.	Teoman Duman	Lecturer
3	Assoc. Prof. Dr.	Mustafa Üç	Lecturer
4	Dr.	Vusal Gambarov	Lecturer
5	Dr.	Alba Kruja	Lecturer

6	PhD (c)	Besjon Zenelaj	Assistant Lecturer
7	PhD (c)	Esmir Demaj	Assistant Lecturer
8	M.Sc	Sonila Cela	Research Assistant
<b>Part Time Academic Staff Members</b>			
1	Prof. Dr.	Francesco Polese	PhD Supervisor
2	Dr.	Erjon Hitaj	Lecturer
3	M.Sc	Florian Tahiri	Lecturer
4	M.Sc	Gelanda Shkurtaj	Lecturer
5	M.Sc	Erion Nako	Lecturer
6	M.Sc	Sajmir Lacej	Lecturer
<b>Administrative Staff</b>			
1	MA	Anida Lazeri	Department Coordinator
2	M.Sc	Tekim Peza	Faculty Administrator

### 1.3 Strategic Plan

#### Strategic Plan 2017-2022 of Business Administration Department

##### I. Introduction

##### *1. Mission*

The mission of the Department of Business Administration (BUS Department) is developing business capabilities through holistic teaching methods by cultivating a sense of intellectualism, togetherness, and inclusive leadership.

The final output is educating early professionals for co-creating value among market actors, in terms of employability, continuous improvement, and business system sustainability.

##### *2. Vision*

The Albanian Business Ecosystem is moving toward a new era, which will be accompanied by best business practices and success stories. The vision of BUS Department is to be the most valuable partner for transforming Albanian business cases into best business practices. Our ambition is to have behind all business case histories, our early professionals.

### **3. *Motto***

Today knowledge students, tomorrow knowledge workers.

### **4. Challenges**

Due to rapid changes in technology and considering the economic environment nowadays it is clear that BUS Department faces several challenges for the upcoming years. Main challenges include offering an environment in which students can use efficiently their analytic skills and take advantage of the technology development. For this purpose, qualified staff, a central library, student co-working areas, and smart classrooms are provided to achieve the challenging academic and professional objectives. Moreover, the BUS Department must ensure strong relationships and furthermore enhance its network with business professionals, academic institutions, research centers, and other stakeholders. Another challenge that the department will be facing is the diversification of research areas and the establishment of research units/clusters, by being able to ensure agreements and memorandum of cooperation with other institutions in order to carry out research according to business necessities. Finally, considering the growing trend of students in the department, especially the business informatics branch, the department should design the suitable scenarios for recruiting ulterior qualified academicians and providing the necessary learning infrastructure. Since businesses and markets are very dynamic, it is the responsibility of BUS Department to be a vigilant observer of complex dynamic business systems in order to fit the curricula with the upcoming market changes.

### **5. Sources**

There is a rising market demand for programs such as Business Informatics and International Marketing and Logistics Management. Since the first year these programs opened, respectively 2011 and 2012, the students were very promising, and their employability rate has been high after graduating from BUS Department. Currently, the number of Students in BUS Department is 357 students. Considering the enrollment number of students in BUS Department, given also the trending rise, it is estimated that the number of students will increase furthermore. The number of students that will be studying in Business Administration by 2022 is estimated to be 600. Given these sources, the department must be prepared, as stated also in the “Challenges” paragraph, to afford the new wave.

### **6. Achievements**



Since the opening of BUS Department, the network logic was established. Company visits, open forums, Dream Business Competition (this competition aims to select students with excellent results and talented, mainly in the field of business and entrepreneurship) and Brain Ring Competition (this competition aims to select students from high schools with excellent results and talented, mainly in the field of marketing and information technology) were among the milestones of BUS Department. In accordance with the principles of mobility of Bologna Process and Erasmus Program, the BUS Department has established several agreements to offer to the students and the academic and administrative staff the opportunity to learn in a multicultural perspective. Actually, the department has Erasmus Agreements with the University of Applied Sciences Mainz and the Middle East Technical University. Other agreements are also with top universities such as Sapienza University of Rome (Department of Management), University of Salerno, California University of Pennsylvania and others. For the executive education, the department offers a unique joint MBA with EADA Business School (top 24 European business schools and top 31 worldwide according to FT ranking). In terms of research, the BUS Department is the unique in the whole Western Balkans to have established a Research Unit/Cluster for Social Business research in collaboration with the Yunus Social Business Balkans. It is also among the first in the region to have found a master course dedicated to Social Business and Sustainability.

## II. PRIORITY AREAS

Theme 1: Provide a high-quality environment for teaching and learning.

In order to succeed in terms of teaching and learning the department must have highly qualified and experienced academic staffs that are looking forward to constantly develop their skills and stayed updated to the last social and technological developments. Furthermore, there should be a systematic collection of graduation theses done at the department in order to create a collection of academic and practical materials that are case-based referring to the Albanian and the regional market (i.e. Western Balkans). Also, students and academic staff should have the possibility to access online data sources of the university from outside the campus. The number of prestigious online sources should be enhanced furthermore to make the department competitive also in the international market, and to provide possibilities for students to access the most updated sources during their study period. In addition, the BUS department must have annual subscriptions with newspapers and business journals, to give the possibility to faculty and students having access in cases, videos and other materials. Finally, the department must focus to provide short online courses on behalf of already established platforms (e.g. edX, Coursera, etc.), or create its own digital platform.

Specific goals for theme 1:

Goal 1.1: Increase the efficiency of academic staff and the quality of their publications.

Goal 1.2: To have a better relationship among the triangle: academic staff-students-industry.

Goal 1.3: To build a “thesis directory data”.

Goal 1.4: To build a good infrastructure to make easier the access to sources for both students and lecturers.

Measures in order to reach mentions goals under Theme 1:

Measure 1.1: Arranging flexible working hours for the academic staff and defining goals to be achieved. Design “bonus” payment systems according to the quality of publications and teaching.

Measure 1.2: To create an “industry network directory” (IND) of the department and managed only by the department in full compliance with the regulations of Epoka University.

Measure 1.3: To provide a good thesis guideline, to design a new thesis evaluation system that would be more specific, to take advantage of technology and build an online “Thesis Source Directory” in order to create a handbook of Albanian business cases.

Measure 1.4: Technology infrastructure so that students can study at their places as they were at the university. Recording courses in order to overcome absences (should be done in a controlled manner).

Theme 2: Recruit, educate and graduate a high-quality and diverse undergraduate student body

To recruit good student from high schools there should be cooperation with high schools’ representatives, creating competitions, workshops, and other meetings, especially for last year high school students. Moreover, the Department must ensure that the quality of the students will be high during the studies and afterward, by respecting the conditions stated in the previous paragraphs.

Specific goals for the Theme 2:

Goal 2.1: Involving students clubs to arrange different competitions in order to get the best high school students.

Measures in order to reach mentions goals under Theme 2:

Measure 2.1: “Brain Ring” Competition powered by the student club Marketing Zone should continue. Further competitions should be arranged, like it was the “Dream Business” in the past years.

Theme 3: Recruit, educate and graduate a high-quality and diverse master student body

The BUS Department is committed to propose and open a Master of Science program in Business Innovation and Informatics in collaboration with the University of Salerno for a double degree diploma. Based on questionnaires distributed by an ad hoc team created within the

department for this purpose, the demand to open a master in this field was high. Registered students in the bachelor program in of Business Informatics almost doubled the A.Y. 2016-2017, and the number is expected to grow in the near future. Consequently, more and more they will ask for a master to be represented and proud. In addition, given the market conditions, the BUS Department is planning to design also a master in Service Marketing, Advertising, and Branding to be proposed in the near future.

Specific goals for the Theme 3:

Goal 3.1: Opening Master Programs on Business Informatics and Marketing

Goal 3.2: Cooperation with other universities especially to get to know last year students

Measures in order to reach mentions goals under Theme 3:

Measure 3.1: There should be a systematic plan on opening these programs

Measure 3.2: Signing agreements to provide the possibility to enter to the courses for guest students as if they were normal students.

Theme 4: Recruit, educate and graduate a high-quality and diverse PhD student body

PhD studies should be designed according to the need of the market and according to this, registrations must occur. Enrollment procedures for PhD students should be redesigned and the interview of the Scientific Committee must be added as one of the core evaluation criteria. On the other side, because the number of PhD applicants is low the BUS Department should collaborate with other departments to create one or more hybrid interdepartmental doctoral schools or try to change the advertisement techniques and budget for the PhD program promotion.

Specific Goals for Theme 4:

Goal 4.1: Redesigning PhD enrollment procedures

Goal 4.2: Raising the number of well qualified thesis supervisors.

Goal 4.3: Improving budget and advertising.

Goal 4.4: Proposing new PhD routes.

Measures in order to reach mentions goals under Theme 4:

Measure 4.1: Collaboration with other departments.

Measure 4.2: Collaboration with university decision making bodies such as the Faculty Board and the Academic Senate.

Measure 4.3: Negotiations with Secretary General Office for dedicating more funds to PhD advertising.

Measure 4.4: Recruiting more Associate Professors as PhD supervisors, according to the law.

Theme 5: Provide a high-quality environment for research

Good teaching is strongly related with research and consultancy. One of the classical teaching methods business schools are adopting is the case study method and David Kolb's experiential learning. In order to deliver high teaching quality to the students, the academic staff must be committed with research and organizational consulting experience. As mentioned also in previous paragraphs, the research environment (newspapers and journal access: e.g. Harvard Business Review materials, like cases, videos and articles) should be inspirational for scholars. Furthermore, a better balance between teaching load, research and service must be aimed.

Specific goals for Theme 5:

Goal 5.1: To encourage academic staff to participate in trainings and conferences.

Goal 5.2: To negotiate with business journals, organizations, and research centers by having access for data gathering and elaboration.

Measures in order to reach mentions goals under Theme 5:

Measure 5.1: Making the flextime part of department's culture, by asking at the end of any research process the aimed outcomes.

Measure 5.2: Dedicating a higher budget at departmental level for journal subscriptions.

Measure 5.3: Increasing the number of internal full-time faculty for a better teaching load distribution, by dedicating more time to research and consulting.

Measure 5.4: Making more case study research which will be beneficial also for teaching.

### 1.4 Academic Advisers

#### **Duties and Responsibilities**

1. To help the students to register the courses during pre-registration, registration and add and drop weeks and approve them at the beginning of each semester.

2. To inform and provide new students with the documents containing information about passing the courses of the undergraduate and graduate level, rules and regulations about examinations and also about other rules and regulations concerning students.
3. To be aware of the changes made in the regulations and inform students about these changes.
4. To be aware of the changes in the program curriculum, inform students about these changes and help students selecting their courses based on the curriculum changes.
5. To make possible that the students read the content of the Elective Courses or Non-Technical elective courses and to help students in selecting their courses by ensuring that they do not surpass the maximum 45 ECTS credits limit per semester.
6. To provide students with information regarding Student Exchange programs, Study Abroad Opportunities and European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), consulting with the International Relations Office of Epoka University.
7. After the advisor has approved the course registration in compliance with points 4 and 5 of the list, s/he prints out the course registration form in three copies, one for the student, one for the advisor her/himself and one for the Registrar's Office. The advisor gives one signed copy of the course registration form to the student whereas s/he keeps the copy for the Registrar's Office. The advisor submits all these forms to the Registrar's Office at the end of the Add and Drop Week. One copy of the course registration form of each student is always stored by the respective advisor.
8. To provide students with information regarding Minor and Double Major Programs and also give information about the conditions students must fulfill in order to be part of these programs.
9. To provide students with information regarding the conditions to be graduated by the Epoka University (a GPA of at least 2.00 with no failed courses).
10. To provide students with information about prerequisite courses as determined by the respective departments.
11. To prepare the list of candidates who fulfill all the requirements of graduation at the University and submit the list to the respective Head of Department.
12. To inform last-year students who have no more than two failed courses to use their right to take additional exam (Referring to the Article 27 of the Undergraduate Studies Regulation).
13. To provide orientation to students regarding their post-graduation career.
14. To provide information and to orient students to the respective units of the University about issues related to accommodation, scholarships, health issues and extra-curricular activities.

PROGRAM	YEAR	ADVISORS
BA BUS	2nd Year	Assist.Prof.Dr Xhimi HYSA
BA BINF	1st Year, 2nd Year, 3rd Year	Dr. Alba KRUJA
BA IML	1st Year	PhD (c) Besjon ZENELAJ
BA IML	2nd Year	Dr. Vusal GAMBAROV
BA IML	3rd Year	PhD (c) Besjon ZENELAJ
PM BUS	All Students	Assoc.Prof.Dr. Mustafa ÜÇ
M.Sc BUS	All students	Assoc.Prof.Dr. Mustafa ÜÇ
PhD BUS	All Students	Assoc.Prof.Dr. Mustafa ÜÇ

Table 1- Academic Advisers during 2017-2018 academic year

## 1.5 UN PRME

The Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) is a United Nations-supported initiative, founded in 2007, as a platform to raise the profile of sustainability in schools around the world, and to equip today's business students with the understanding and ability to deliver change tomorrow.

As a voluntary initiative with over 650 signatories worldwide, PRME has become the largest organized relationship between the United Nations and management-related higher education institutions. Working through Six Principles, PRME engages business and management schools to ensure they provide future leaders with the skills needed to balance economic and sustainability goals, while drawing attention to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and aligning academic institutions with the work of the UN Global Compact.

*As a signatory of PRME, Epoka University, under the initiative of Business Administration Department, expressed the conviction that higher education institutions*

*integrating universal values into curriculum and research, can contribute to a more sustainable and inclusive global economy, and help build more prosperous societies.*



*Epoka University and in particular the Business Administration Department (BUS) are highly focused on integrating the triple bottom line approach in curriculum design and courses in order to have a social, economic, and environmental impact. For*

*instance, the BUS Department is a pioneer in the whole region for designing a course dedicated to Yunus Social Business and Business Sustainability, a unique course in the Western Balkans and Eastern Europe.*

Following the signing of the MoU with Yunus Center Dhaka, the two institutions will collaborate for promoting Social Business. This will be achieved through, but not limited to, social business action programs, courses, research, publications, conducting social business design labs, conferences, exchange programs, academic workshops, exposure visits, internships and scholarship programs. Already, Epoka University has founded a students' club called Sensitive Society Club dealing specifically with social sustainability issues.

The most important achievements in the area of Research and Development in the Field of Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability are summarized as follows:



The Department of Business Administration of Epoka University has pioneered in Western Balkans and Eastern Europe the first research cluster on Social Business and Sustainable Systems.

Under the initiative of Business Administration Department, Epoka University has established Yunus Centre in collaboration with the Nobel Peace Laureate Prof. Muhammad Yunus.

### PRME Six Principles

Principle 1 | Purpose: As an institution of higher education we will develop the capabilities of students to be future generators of sustainable value for business and society at large and to work for an inclusive and sustainable global economy.

Principle 2 | Values: As an institution of higher education we will incorporate into our academic activities, curricula, and organizational practices the values of global social responsibility as portrayed in international initiatives such as the United Nations Global Compact.

Principle 3 | Method: As an institution of higher education we will create educational frameworks, materials, processes and environments that enable effective learning experiences for responsible leadership.

Principle 4 | Research: As an institution of higher education we will engage in conceptual and empirical research that advances our understanding about the role, dynamics, and impact of corporations in the creation of sustainable social, environmental and economic value.

Principle 5 | Partnership: As an institution of higher education we will interact with managers of business corporations to extend our knowledge of their challenges in meeting social and environmental responsibilities and to explore jointly effective approaches to meeting these challenges.

Principle 6 | Dialogue: As an institution of higher education we will facilitate and support dialog and debate among educators, students, business, government, consumers, media, civil society organizations and other interested groups and stakeholders on critical issues related to global social responsibility and sustainability.

### 1.6 Eduniversal

Under the initiative of Business Administration Department, the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences of Epoka University, has been selected by Eduniversal–Business Schools Ranking as a promising business school, close to the 1000 best business schools worldwide and nearing to claiming a spot. “Branded” as an Eduniversal Selected School, the



Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences of Epoka University cannot currently obtain a “Palme of Excellence”, but is following a positive course in getting there. Together with other business schools in the Eduniversal Selected list, the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences of Epoka University has been recognized by Eduniversal for bringing new and disruptive energy, innovative projects and growing potential.

Headquartered in Paris, Eduniversal is a global ranking and rating agency specializing in higher education, ranking and rating 1000 Best Business Schools in 154 countries in 9 geographical zones: Africa, Central Asia, Eastern Europe, Eurasia & the Middle East, Far East Asia, Latin America, North America, Oceania, Western Europe.



## **2. Study Programs and Curricula**

### **2.1 Bachelor in Business Administration**

Bachelor Program in Business Administration consists in 180 ECTS including the diploma thesis. The students that have successfully completed a total of 180 ECTS shall be entitled to graduate from the program and shall be conferred the diploma of Bachelor in Business Administration.

A student who has been successful in all courses, summer practices, seminary course and diploma thesis and, through pursuing the academic program, his/her cumulative grade point average is to at least (2.00), without having a FD or FF grade shall be deemed to have met the requirements of graduation by the relevant board decision and be awarded Bachelor Diploma in Business Administration.

The Bachelor in Business Administration provides students with knowledge in management and in business administration, as well as with organizational skills to serve in the public and in private sector. The business administration program is structured around a group of technical courses, which exposes students to the basic tools of quantitative methods, accounting, and economic theory, and a core of management and leadership courses that integrate culture, language, and ethics, to enable future business leaders to meet the challenges of today's global

environment. The table below shows the curricula of the Business Administration program throughout three years of bachelor studies.

<b>FIRST YEAR</b>	
Introduction to Economics I	Introduction To Economics II
Introduction to Business	Management and Organization
Introduction to Law	Communication Skills
Essentials of Organizational Behavior	Introduction To Accounting
Math. for Economics and Business I	Math. for Economics and Business II
Core English	Business English
Developing Reading and Writing Skills	Developing Reading and Writing Skills
Introduction to Economics I	Introduction To Economics II
Introduction to Business	Management and Organization
<b>SECOND YEAR</b>	
Microeconomics	Marketing II
Marketing I	Macroeconomics
Business Law	Management Information Systems
Statistics I	Statistics II
Financial Accounting I	Financial Accounting II
Elective I	Elective I
<b>SECOND YEAR ELECTIVE COURSES</b>	
Government, Politics and Public Policy in Albania	Public Finance
Research Methods in Social Sciences	Money and Banking
Turkish I	Introduction to Public Administration
German I	Introduction to Political Sociology
Italian I	Turkish II
French I	German II
	Italian II
	French II
	Sales Techniques and Management
<b>THIRD YEAR</b>	
Operations Management	Managerial Accounting
Cost Accounting	Financial Management
Human Resource Management	Operations Research
Fundamentals of Corporate Finance	Graduation Project
	Final Comprehensive Exam
Elective I	Elective I
Elective II	
<b>THIRD YEAR ELECTIVE COURSES</b>	

E-Marketing	Capital Markets and Law
Consumer Behavior	International Economics II
Total Quality Management	Monetary Theory and Policy II
International Economics I	Customer Relationship Management
Monetary Theory and Policy I	Strategic Logistic Management
Banking Operations and Service	International Marketing and Management of Multinational Enterprises
Financial Institutions and Markets	Knowledge Management
Innovation and Human Consciousness	Branding and Brand Management
Social Media Marketing	
Marketing Research	
Supply Chain Management	

Table 2- BA BUS Curricula

## 2.2 Bachelor in Business Informatics

Bachelor in Business Informatics program is comprised of a three year curriculum at EPOKA University. The educational workload for these three years is 180 ECTS. Each semester, students are expected to cover at least 30 ECTS credits.

Bachelor Program in Business Informatics aims at the qualification of new staff with general knowledge, alert to the challenges in finance, and able to work in the banking sector as well as in the administration of local and foreign private companies.

Bachelor Program in Business Informatics consists in 180 ECTS including the diploma thesis. The students that have successfully completed a total of 180 ECTS shall be entitled to graduate from the program and shall be conferred the diploma of Bachelor in Business Informatics. The table below shows the curricula of the Business Informatics program throughout three years of bachelor studies.

FIRST YEAR	
Introduction To Economics I	Introduction To Economics II
Introduction To Business	Math. For Economics and Business II
Introduction to Algorithms and Programming	Introduction To Accounting
Introduction to computer Engineering	C and C ++ Programming
Math. For Economics And Business I	Management and Organization
Core English	Business English
Developing Reading and Writing Skills	Developing Reading and Writing Skills
SECOND YEAR	
Statistics I	Statistics II
Business Law	Management Information Systems
Computer Organization	Database Management Systems

Object Oriented Programming	Web Technologies
Principles of Marketing	Data Structures
Elective BUS	Elective BUS
<b>SECOND YEAR ELECTIVE COURSES</b>	
Financial Accounting I	Financial Accounting II
Essentials of Organizational Behavior	Knowledge Management
Total Quality Management	Communication Skills
Supply Chain Management	Macroeconomics
Microeconomics	Turkish II
Turkish I	German II
German I	Italian II
Italian I	French II
French I	Sales Techniques and Management
<b>THIRD YEAR</b>	
Web Programming	Econometrics II
Computer Networks	Operations Research
Fundamentals of Corporate Finance	Operating Systems
Operations Management	Software Engineering
Econometrics I	Graduation Project
Elective BUS	Final Comprehensive Exam
<b>THIRD YEAR ELECTIVE COURSES</b>	
Cost Accounting	
Human Resources Management	
Innovation and Human Consciousness	
Social Media Marketing	
Consumer Behavior	

Table 3- BA BINF Curricula

## 2.3 Bachelor in International Marketing and Logistics Management

Globalization is the keyword in today's marketplace which is highly competitive. A switch of powers took place in the last decades from businesses towards customers. Marketing is one of the most important business` functions that played a crucial role in this. Marketing is responsible of satisfying unlimited customer needs and wants through many important processes. These processes include: production, pricing, promotion and distribution of goods and services that have high quality and affordable prices. Customer retention and attraction of new customers is possible by building strong brands.

International Marketing & Logistics program aims to provide knowledge in the field of marketing and logistics to our students, so they can be well-trained individuals, ready for today`s

high competitive labor market. Through this program; our students are able to analyze how critical issues such as customer relationship management, international marketing, consumer behavior, and logistics are applied in the market place by the companies. In total accordance with the mission and the vision of Epoka University, International Marketing and Logistics Program also aims to provide well-educated individuals to satisfy the companies' needs in marketing and logistic departments. The table below shows the curricula of International Marketing and Logistics Management program throughout three years of bachelor studies.

<b>FIRST YEAR</b>	
Introduction to Economics I	Introduction To Economics II
Introduction to Business	Communication Skills
Introduction to Law	Introduction To Accounting
Essentials of Organizational Behavior	Management and Organization
Math. for Economics and Business I	Math. For Economics and Business II
Core English Developing Reading and Writing Skills	Business English Developing Reading and Writing Skills
<b>SECOND YEAR</b>	
Microeconomics	Marketing II
Marketing I	Macroeconomics
Business Law	Sales Techniques and Management
Statistics I	Statistics II
Financial Accounting I	Financial Accounting II
Elective I	Elective I
<b>SECOND YEAR ELECTIVE COURSES</b>	
Government, Politics and Public Policy in Albania	Public Finance
Management Information Systems	Introduction to Public Administration
Government, Politics and Public Policy in Albania	Introduction to Political Sociology
Research Methods in Social Sciences	Turkish II
Turkish I	German II
German I	Italian II
Italian I	French II
French I	Money and Banking
<b>THIRD YEAR</b>	
Operations Management	Operations Research
Fundamentals of Corporate Finance	Strategic Logistic Management
Marketing Research	International Marketing and Management of

	Multinational Enterprises
Supply Chain Management	Graduation Project Final Comprehensive Exam
Elective I	Elective I
Elective II	
<b>THIRD YEAR ELECTIVE COURSES</b>	
Human Resource Management	Branding and Brand Management
Innovation and Human Consciousness	Capital Markets and Law
Consumer Behavior	International Economics II
Social Media Marketing	Managerial Accounting
Cost Accounting	Monetary Theory and Policy II
Total Quality Management	Customer Relationship Management
International Economics I	
Monetary Theory and Policy I	
Banking Operations and Service	
Financial Institutions and Markets	

Table 4- BA IML Curricula

## 2.4 Professional Master in Business Administration

Professional Master in Business Administration consists in 48 ECTS of taken courses and a 12 ECTS Term Project (micro-thesis). The students that have successfully completed a total of 60 ECTS shall be entitled to graduate from the program and shall be conferred the diploma of Master Professional in Business Administration.

A student at the graduation stage who has been successful in all courses, seminary courses and thesis of the study program, and his/her cumulative grade point average is to at least (2.00), without having a FD or FF grade shall be deemed to have met the requirements of graduation by the relevant board decision and be awarded Master Professional in Business Administration Diploma.

Professional Master in Business Administration provides students with knowledge in management and business administration, as well as with organizational skills to serve in the public and in private sector. The program harmonizes contemporary business theory with business practice and problems. The program gains mastery to graduates in the business management field. In the table below is shown the curricula for one year of studies in Professional Master Program.

<b>FIRST YEAR</b>	
Research Methods in Business	Micro Thesis
Seminar on Business Administration	Elective I

Elective I	Elective II
Elective II	Elective III
Research Methods in Business	
<b>FIRST YEAR ELECTIVE COURSES</b>	
International Accounting and IFRS	Strategy and Management
Advanced Managerial Accounting	Advanced Management Information System
Advanced Organizational Behavior	Financial Statements Analysis for Managerial Staff
New Concepts and Trends in Business Management	Brand Management
Leadership	Social Business And Sustainability
Strategic Marketing	
Advanced Operations Management	

Table 5- PM BUS Curricula

## 2.5 Master of Science in Business Administration

Master of Science in Business Administration consists in 90 ECTS of taken courses and a 30 ECTS Master Thesis. The students that have successfully completed a total of 120 ECTS shall be entitled to graduate from the program and shall be conferred the diploma of Master of Science in Business Administration.

The mission of the Master of Science in Business Administration program is to prepare and graduate students for careers in academia, business, government and non-profit organizations by providing a broad professional education.

The Business Administration program is structured around a group of technical courses, which exposes students to the basic tools of quantitative methods, accounting, and economic theory, and a core of management and leadership courses that integrate culture, language, and ethics, to enable future business leaders to meet the challenges of today's global environment.

Opportunities:

- Appropriate and comfortable spaces for students and academicians.
- Recent catalogues and educational programs based on the global trade demand of work  
Diversified staff (foreign and Albanian) with long educational experience.
- Possibilities for internships during the studies in local and foreign companies. The spaces are supplied with wireless and cabled internet 24 hours a day so that students can use to develop their research.

- The possibility of employment for the graduated students is tightly connected with their academic advances, courage, and conditions that will be provided by the university.
- The graduated students will have consolidated knowledge on management, economics and human resources
- Students will be able to situate organizational work in the company and to find relevant solutions to the continuously appearing challenges.
- Through the gained experience, the graduated managers will be among the most preferred staff in the specific disciplines due to their profession ethics, acquired theoretical framework, and applied methodology when employed. The department aims at encouraging and motivating the graduated students to organize and manage their private activities.

Table below shows the curricula of Master of Science program throughout two years of studies.

<b>FIRST YEAR</b>	
Academic Reading and Writing	Strategic Management
Small Business Management and Entrepreneurship	Auditing
Elective I	Elective I
Elective II	Elective II
Elective III	Elective III
<b>FIRST YEAR ELECTIVE COURSES</b>	
Business Ethics	Strategic Analyses on Business
Comparative Business Law	Advertisement Management and Creativity
International Business	Development and Growth II
Development and Growth I	Albanian Tax Law
Portofolio Management and Investment Analysis	Bank Management
Financial Analysis	Risk Management and Insurance
World Politics	
Nationalism and Ethnic Studies	
Human Rights and Humanitarian Interventions	
Conflict Resolution & Diplomatic Language	
<b>SECOND YEAR</b>	
Research Methods in Business	Thesis
Seminar on Business Administration	
Elective I	
Elective II	
<b>SECOND YEAR ELECTIVE COURSES</b>	
International Accounting and IFRS	



Advanced Managerial Accounting	
Advanced Organizational Behavior	
New Concepts and Trends in Business Management	
Managerial Economics	
Leadership	
Strategic Marketing	
Advanced Operations Management	

Table 6- MSc BUS Curricula

## 2.6 Joint MBA with EADA Business School

Professional Master in Business Administration (**EPOKA University**)

Executive Master in Management (**EADA Business School**)

Epoka University and EADA Business School offer in Tirana and Barcelona an **Executive Education** for the Albania, based on the tradition and the internationally certified quality of EADA Business School, accredited by the best international institutions (EQUIS, AMBA, CFA) and recognized and ranked by prestigious international surveys and reports (Financial Times, The Economist).

The program covers the needs of current executives working in various areas, leading their teams to identify and face the challenges to be encountered, as well as take advantage of the national, regional and global opportunities.

Curriculum			
Fall Semester			
Code	Course	Lecturer	ECTS
<b>BUS501</b>	RESEARCH METHODS	Dr. TeomanDuman	6
<b>BUS505</b>	SEMINAR ON BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION	Supervisors	8
<b>BUS513</b>	STRATEGIC MARKETING	By EADA`s Staff / held in Tirana	8
<b>XXX xxx</b>	ELECTIVE		8
			30
Electives			
<b>BUS503</b>	ADVANCED ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR	Dr. Xhimi Hysa	8
<b>BUS515</b>	OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT	Dr. Alba Kruja	8

Spring Semester			
Code	Course	Lecturer	ECTS
<b>BUS518</b>	MICRO THESIS	Supervisors	9
<b>BUS509</b>	LEADERSHIP	By EADA`s Staff / held in Barcelona	7
<b>XXXxxx</b>	ELECTIVE		7
<b>XXXxxx</b>	ELECTIVE		7
			30
Electives			
<b>BUS502</b>	STRATEGY AND MANAGEMENT	Dr. Xhimi Hysa	7
<b>BUS508</b>	FINANCIAL STATEMENTS ANALYSIS FOR MANAGERIAL STAFF	Dr. Mustafa Üç	7
<b>BUS526</b>	BRANDING AND BRAND MANAGEMENT	Dr. VusalGambarov	7
<b>Total Credits Required in Degree Program is 60 ECTS Credits</b>			

Table 7- Curricula Epoka/Eada

Founded in 1957, EADA was one of the first Spanish institutions to provide training programmes that specifically targeted the business world. For over 50 years EADA has been in the frontline of manager training and in-company training programs for the business community. Over 120,000 participants from over 40 countries have entrusted their training to EADA, which in itself goes to show that EADA is one of Europe's most innovative and prestigious business schools (<http://www.eada.edu/en>).

Figure 2- EADA Business School



**eada**®  
business school  
barcelona

## 2.6 Double Degree with Hochschule Mainz – School of Business



Figure 3- University of Applied Sciences Mainz, Germany

Based on the cooperation agreement between Epoka University and Hochschule Mainz, Business Administration students will be able to spend one year at HMBS with the goal of completing both the Master degree of Master of Science and the degree of a Master of Arts in International Business (MA.IB) at HMBS.

The second year of studies in Germany for the selected students will be financed by the Erasmus+ Program. Upon successful completion of the Program in Germany the student will be awarded the diploma “MA in International Business” from the University of Applied Sciences in Mainz, Germany.

## 2.7 PhD in Business Administration

Doctorate (PhD) in Business Administration consists in 60 ECTS of taken courses and 120 ECTS dissertation. The students that have successfully completed a total of 180 ECTS shall be entitled to graduate from the program and shall be conferred the diploma of Doctorate (PhD) in Business Administration.

The persons who are eligible for admission to the PhD program should:

- have obtained a Master of Science/Master of Arts, integrated second cycle studies or any other equivalent diploma in the field of the Doctorate (PhD) program or in a close field previously defined in the requirements established by the respective of the Scientific Committee
- have a CGPA of at least 2.70 out of 4.00 or 8 out of 10 from the Master of Science/Master of Arts, integrated second cycle studies or any other equivalent diploma in the field of the Doctorate (PhD) program or in a close field previously defined in the requirements established by the respective Scientific Committee or an equivalent CGPA
- applicants must demonstrate that they have reached the minimum acceptable level of proficiency in use of the English language:

- having studied undergraduate degree in English
- a TOEFL IBT score of at least 70 or
- the equivalent score for the internationally recognized English Language Exams as stipulated in the Directive of the Minister of Education and Science No. 14, dated 28.03.2011 "On the recognition of English language exams for the second and third cycle study programs"

Table below provides the curricula of Doctorate (PhD) in Business Administration studies.

<b>FIRST YEAR</b>	
Research Techniques in Business Administration	Advanced Quantitative Methods For Management Science Research
Elective I	Elective I
Elective II	Elective II
<b>FIRST YEAR ELECTIVE COURSES</b>	
Accounting Theory	Advanced Human Resources Management
Strategic Management	Knowledge Management
Operations Management	Strategic Management Accounting
Entrepreneurship Perspectives	Strategic Brand Management
Game Theory	Systemic Management and Complexity
Finance Theory and Management	Strategic Marketing
<b>WRITING OF DISSERTATION STAGE</b>	
Thesis	

Table 8- PhD BUS Curricula

### 3. Mobility

#### 3.1 Students Mobility

<b>Incoming Exchange Students</b>				
No	Name	Surname	Home University	Program
4	Shakhlo	Shermukhamedova	The International University of Logistics and Transport, Poland	IML
5	Askarjon	Khidirov	The International University of Logistics and Transport, Poland	IML

Table 9- Incoming Exchange Students

Outgoing Exchange Students						
No.	Name	Surname	Study Program	Out- Going University	Country	Method
1	Emanuela	Buci	MSc BUS	University of Applied Sciences, Mainz	Germany	Erasmus+
2	Kira	Cami	IML	California University of Pennsylvania	USA	Bilateral Agreement
3	Alkeo	Taga	IML	International University of Logistics and Transport	Poland	Erasmus+
4	Denis	Mehillaj	BUS	University of Applied Sciences, Mainz	Germany	Bilateral Agreement
5	Joana	Doko	IML	International University of Logistics and Transport	Poland	Erasmus+

Table 10- Outgoing Exchange Students

### 3.2 Staff Mobility

Outgoing Exchange Staff				
Name Surname	Title	Sending University	Host University	Cycle
Xhimi Hysa	Dr.	Epoka	University of Applied Sciences Mainz, Germany	Erasmus
Alba Kruja	Dr.	Epoka	University of Applied Sciences Mainz, Germany	Erasmus

Vusal Gambarov	Dr.	Epoka	International University of Logistics and Transport, Poland	Erasmus
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Table 11- Outgoing Exchange Staff

**Incoming Exchange Academic Staff**

Incoming Exchange Staff					
No	Name Surname	Title	Sending University	Host Department at Epoka University	Cycle
1	Maria Fedele	Dr.	University of Cassino and Southern Lazio	BUS	BA
2	Alessia Scibetta	PhD	University of Cassino and Southern Lazio	BUS	BA
3	Volrad Wollny		University of Applied Sciences, Mainz	BUS	Erasmus
4	Karsten Lorenz		University of Applied Sciences, Mainz	BUS	Erasmus

Table 12- Incoming Exchange Staff



## 5. Activities

### Study visit to Sheraton Tirana Hotel by Epoka University master students

On November 22, 2017, 14 students from International Business master class of Epoka University, Business Administration Program paid a visit to Sheraton Tirana Hotel as part of their course curriculum. On behalf the hotel, Human Resources Director Alma Sulaj hosted the group and presented Sheraton operation philosophy. Course instructor Prof. Dr. TeomanDuman



Figure 4 - Hotel Sheraton, Tirana

and the group asked a number of questions regarding Sheraton brand name, history of operations, human resources policies, and challenges of running a well-known brand in international business environments. Sheraton set a good example of learning for students as they are expected to prepare franchising business plans as their semester projects. Madam Alma Sulaj presented a number of interesting facts about Sheraton operation philosophy including the service culture towards upscale hotel customers and importance

of keeping international standards at the hotel. She also mentioned about the work culture and team spirit at the hotel giving examples from international standards Sheraton uses in its human resource applications. Following the discussions, Madam Sulaj lead a facility tour in the hotel and showed students all service culture and quality standard applications in the hotel with visible signs of procedures, colors and employee motivation techniques. At the end of the visit, Prof. Dr. TeomanDuman presented an appreciation certificate to hotel management as a gratitude sign from the Rector of Epoka University. As a coincidence of the visit, Dinamo Kiev football team was checking in the hotel at the end of visit where the students had a chance to observe part of a service process to a vip visitor group to the hotel.

### The Executive Director of IDRA Research & Consulting shares his experience with Business Administration Students

Auron Pasha, cofounder and Executive Director of Idra Research & Consulting, was invited as a guest speaker in the open lecture "Marketing Research in Albania". The purpose of the lecture was to provide the students with practical dimension of the field of market research so that they could match their theoretical knowledge with the practices pursued by professionals in this field.

The session started with a brief description on IDRA Company, the activity profile and the projects it has realized in the field of market research. Mr. Pasha first pointed at the importance



Figure 5- Marketing Research in Albania-open lecture

of market research and professional standards applied by IDRA in this field. He then presented some of the successful projects that Idra has realized in time, focusing on details regarding the applied methodology and the way of data processing. In the second part of the lecture, the Research Expert answered different questions addressed by the students, who seemed very interested in the practical cases of

market research. At the end, Mr. Pasha mentioned about employment opportunities and showed the students the way they may follow for being hired by IDRA. Idra Research & Consulting has a long experience in the field of market research. It was established in 2001 and alongside Albania, it is active in several different countries of the region and beyond.

### **E-soft CRM simulation project launch Epoka University and Softmogul Inc. launched E-soft hotel business simulation as part of BUS 348 CRM course at the university**

It was piloted for the first time at Epoka University a new way of delivering the CRM course.

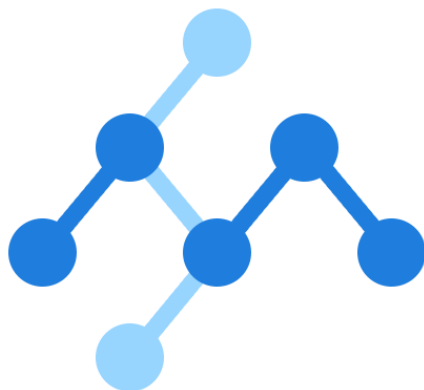


Figure 6- Softmogul

Softmogul's software was installed in our department's computer lab to explain students in practical terms how it functions in tourism industry (because the marketing professor that teaches this course is specialized in destination marketing and consumer behavior). At the end of the course students will prepare projects with innovative ideas on how to improve the features of Softmogul. Headquartered in Sunnyvale, California in the Silicon Valley, this start-up business offers CRM services for hotels. The CTO, Mr.

Arnold Drita, is an alumnus of Epoka University.



**Prof. Dr. Teoman Duman, invited as keynote speaker in the research training organized by Epoka University**

Prof. Duman talked about “The Business of Academic Publishing: Tips to Publish in Qualitative Journals”. Rationale of the Session: More and more journals are emerging, but with increasing competition to be able to publish in journals with impact factor indexed in Thomson Reuters or Scopus. Nevertheless, it is still possible to publish. What strategies are journals adopting to meet their article needs? How to approach Journals?



Figure 7- Training details

**Dr. Xhimi Hysa, Head of Business Administration Department was part of the Staff Mobility at Hochschule Mainz – University of Applied Sciences**

Dr. Xhimi Hysa, Head of Business Administration Department at Epoka University, was part of the Staff Mobility for Teaching at Hochschule Mainz – University of Applied Sciences (School of Business) during 16-20 October, 2017. He taught there about the emergent topics of Social Business & Sustainability, to both undergraduate and master student.

Epoka University shares an academic collaboration with the University of Applied Sciences Mainz within the framework of Erasmus+, based on a double degree diploma. Dr. Hysa is also the academic contact for Epoka University.

### **Business & Service Ecosystem – New Consulting Frontiers**

On January 26, 2018, it was opened the first co-morning coffee for 2018 at Tirana Business Park by Dr. Xhimi Hysa and Dr. Vusal Gambarov, professors of Business Administration Department at Epoka University. The topic was: Business & Service Ecosystem – New Consulting Frontiers. Dr. Hysa introduced the ecosystem design thinking as a new mindset in the era of servitization and industry 4.0. Thus, shifting the focus from a strict profit maximization view to the value co-creation between service systems. Furthermore, Dr. Hysa showed how the organizational design is not just about engineering design but the emotional design as well. Then, Dr. Gambarov completed the scenario by emphasizing the soul of value propositions, i.e. branding. He stimulated some reflections and answers through fundamental questions such as: “What builds a brand?” “How you benefit from branding?” “What brings profitability in branding?”



Dr. Gambarov concluded the session by emphasizing the role of brand equity and brand identity in service ecosystems. The event enjoyed a vivid interaction between the keynote speakers, students and professors from Epoka University, DIHA's members and other organizations who participated in the co-morning coffee.

## 2nd Symposium Envisioning Albania 2030: Challenges to Employability

Business Administration academic staff attended the 2nd Symposium, Envisioning Albania 2030: Challenges to Employability on May 18, 2018, held at Tirana International Hotel. The event was organized by Economics Department of Epoka University in partnership with the Economic Society of Albania (ESA). Over 150 participants, including professionals, academics, government representatives, and students participated in the Symposium.



Figure 8- Symposium

**The BUS Department initiated the foundation of Yunus Center for Social Business and Sustainability at Epoka University, an affiliation of the official Yunus Center (agreement signed by the Nobel Peace Prize, Prof. Muhammad Yunus). A center of this kind is the first in Eastern Europe, and Dr. Hysa is the first Executive Director.**

On January 10, 2018, Epoka University signed the Memorandum of Understanding with Yunus Center, a social business hub for issues related to social business, working in the field of poverty alleviation and sustainability. The Center is aimed primarily at promoting and disseminating Professor Yunus's philosophy, with a special focus on social business and is currently chaired by Nobel Laureate Professor Muhammad Yunus. Based on the MoU, Yunus Centre, in Dhaka and Epoka University will collaborate for promoting Social Business. This will be achieved through, but not limited to, social business action programmes, courses, research, publications, conducting social business design labs, conferences, exchange programmes, academic workshops, exposure



visits, internships and scholarship programs. The Yunus Social Business Center at Epoka University will organize student exchange and learning visits, so students can learn first-hand techniques and programs which have been set up to assist the economic development of the poor in developing countries.



### **The Head of HR at AGNA Group delivered a lecture to the students of HRM course**



On January 26, 2018, Mr. Artan Kocuku, the Head of HR at AGNA Group, joined our lecturer of HRM, Mr. Florian Tahiri, to add value of HRM course by explaining what Mr. Kocuku calls the “AGNA’s way”. Besides the general description of the company, he

explained in detail the recruitment process, the compensation system, trainings, etc. He put the accent also in the unique AGNA Leadership Academy.

**Dr. Hysa, the acting Executive Director of Yunus Center on Social Business and Sustainability, attended the 8th Global Social Business Summit 2017, held in Paris November 4th – 9th.**

Dr. Hysa, presented a case-based paper related with the foundation of social businesses within the university campuses. Concretely, he shared social business plan canvas for founding an organic shop within Epoka University in order to impact employment in the surrounding area, and to increase health awareness. The 8th Global Social Business Summit 2017 took place in Paris from November 4th – 9th. This edition represented an important step for the social business community fostered over the past years, as there were welcoming new participants with different backgrounds to increase the impact and expand the social business movement. In this spirit, inclusiveness, impact measurement and sustainability were three commitments placed at the center of the organization of the event as well as the dedication to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) of the United Nations (UN).



### **Visiting scholars from University of Cassino and Southern Lazio**

Prof. Maria Fedele, researcher at University of Cassino and Southern Lazio, and Ms. Alessia Scibetta, a PhD student near the Department of Business Economics and Law at the same university, visited Business Administration Department of Epoka University during December 11 and 12 for sharing best practices on social business, micro-credit, and the Italian model of cooperative banks. Seminars were concluded with the presentation of a case study, that is Banca

Popolare del Cassinate and its initiative of “Prima Idea” project, which aims to support innovative start-ups initiated by youth. The BUS Department, as an advocate of Social Business, is thankful to the visit of the Italian colleagues to share at Epoka best practices in this emerging field of business.



### **Tirana Business Park & BUS Department together in practicing emotional intelligence**

Tirana Business Park & BUS Department (Epoka University) together in practicing emotional intelligence. @ TiranaHall it was a great synergy created through the EQ Cafe-POP-UP Festival organized by Mr. Abdullah Veliu, Certified EQAC & EQPC Consultant on Supporting Change at Six Seconds. Marketing and business students of Epoka University followed by their professor Dr. Xhimi Hysa participated in this event where they had the possibility to discover their emotions and learn how to grow and drive themselves into a successful actor.

There aren't wrong and right, there is only different. Empowering Diversity.





### **Dr. Vusal Gambarov was part of the Staff Mobility at University of Logistics and Transport in Wroclaw**

Lecturer of Business Administration department and coordinator of International Marketing and Logistics Management program Dr. Vusal Gambarov paid visit to International University of Logistics and Transport in Wroclaw (MWSLIT). His visit occurred within Erasmus+ Exchange program. This relationship was initiated by our partner last year, and representatives of MWSLIT have been to our university in 2017. Dr. Gambarov lectured to the group of students in



Wroclaw. Students from Poland, Ukraine, Belarus, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan enjoyed the discussion on Brand Management. Dr. Gambarov also had productive meetings with the decision-makers of the university, where further collaboration between universities was discussed.

*Dziękujębardzo, MWSLIT!*

**Dr. Alba Kruja was part of the Staff Mobility for Teaching at University of Applied Sciences Mainz, Germany**

In the framework of the Erasmus+ Programme, Dr. Alba Kruja, lecturer at the department of Business Administration, was part of the Staff Mobility for Teaching at the University of Applied Sciences Mainz, in Germany, for a period of one week.

During her visit, Dr. Kruja lectured to bachelor and master students. The lectures she delivered to the students focused on current issues on Entrepreneurship and the contribution of Tourism sector in the development of the Albanian economy. During one of her teaching sessions were present the Epoka University students who are continuing their second year of Master studies at the International Business Programme of the University of Applied Sciences Mainz, with a scholarship from Erasmus+ Student Exchange Programme.

Dr. Kruja participated also at the International Fair, organized by the University of Applied Sciences Mainz in the framework of the International Week, where the interested students were informed about studying opportunities at Epoka University.





**Business Informatics students attend LEAP Summit 2018**

LEAP is a global movement firstly created in Zagreb Croatia, which influences more than 100.000 people world-wide. This year LEAP Summit lasted from March 15 th to 17 th , a three day conference that hosted many famous speakers from all around the world.



The speeches were related to many different fields like entrepreneurship, leadership, technology and innovation, creativity, and inspiring personal stories. There were in total more than 3000 participant from more than 40 countries. BINF III students: Kei Hysi, Lumturi Kalluci, Abdyl Sadaj, Ferit Tarushi, Suag Selimi, Artjola Ganellari, Herda Akshija, Altea Gjini, Geneld Rroji, Ena Ujkashej, Ester Bardhi, Migen Sala, Nensi Dosari, Mario Arizaj, Anxhela Uka and Eriola Ndoj became part of this wonderful experience. The speeches from CEOs and other important speakers had really impressed them and had triggered a new way of thinking. But beside the conference, the networking zone was something that made this experience even more memorable. The students had the opportunity to meet international people, network and make new friendships. They also had the chance to try Virtual Reality games while in conference. Kei Hysi, the representative of BINF III, was selected to give a speech during the Open Mic session with some other internationals. Each of them had the opportunity to talk about a topic that has had an impact on their life and that could inspire others. She chose to talk about volunteering and specifically about an initiative “Tungjatjeta” that students of Epoka University had done two years ago. This trip will be a wonderful memory for each of these students, not only because they learnt new things, got to meet some foreigners, but they also had the opportunity to travel and enjoy Zagreb together, exploring something new each day.

## Epoka Talks

On May 24th, 'Epoka Talks' was organized for the first time at Epoka University by 5 students of Innovators Club. They wanted to bring the motivational spirit of these kind of events at Epoka, since they strongly believe that connecting, listening and sharing with other peers directly affects everybody's personal development. There were ten



speakers participating, which were divided into two sessions. The list of speakers and the respective topics were as above: 1. Kei Hysi- 'Love yourself first' 2. Kelvin Cobanaj- 'Keep Going' 3. Klajdi Ballanca- 'Bit by bit the greatest work is done' 4. Teadora Suku- 'My Story' 5. Shejda Domnori- 'My willpower formula' 6. Ditjona Lila- 'Cheers to Failure' 7. Tuqa Rahman- 'Identity Struggle' 8. Bleona Duka- 'This can't be done, can be done' 9. Franceska Picari- 'How to succeed in public speaking?' 10. Gestjan Mekshi- 'If you like your job, you like your life' Through 'Epoka Talks' students got to know more about each other's success, difficulties, efforts and personal experiences. The organizer staff: Kei Hysi, Panajota Baka, Judoris Merkaj, Fiorela Marra and Debora Abduramanaj, encourages everybody to be part of organizations like this, since it will give you a lesson that university will not. We appreciate so much the work that our students did and we wish them luck in every achievement they will have in the future.

## The Key to Success 5.0

On November 8th, the Innovators student club had their first guest for the "The Key to Success" Seminars, Mr. Ervin Kalemi, CEO, Founder and Developer of Publer. Mr. Kalemi talked about his application Publer, the virtual superhero that manages social media, how he got



the idea and what it took to develop it. He also shared some stories about his life, challenges he has faced and how he managed to overcome them. Even though he was working as a programmer in USA in one of the best startups nowadays, Mr. Kalemi decided to go after his dream, that of creating his own innovative business.

Even though many people did not believe in his vision, this did not stop him from working day and night to create Publer. He then answered many questions the students had and advised them

about the “after university” life. Mr. Kalemi was delighted and even nostalgic to be back to university, since according to him, this is one of the best periods in one's life and he advised us to make the best out of it.

**Dr. Kruja, lecturer in BUS Department, was part of Epoka’s collaborating team with Investment Council**

On March 31, 2017, Epoka University signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Investment Council (IC). IC is a platform set up by the Albanian authorities with support from the EBRD to intensify the dialogue between the government and the private sector, improve the business climate and promote good governance. Based on the MoU, a team of five members from Epoka University collaborated with IC on the conduction and analysis of the Survey “On some Aspects of Investment Climate”. The team consisted of two academic staff: Dr. Alba Kruja and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ugur Ergun, and three students: Dajana Hoxhaj, Kei Hysi and Gerta Shllaku. The Survey results were presented and discussed on December 6th during the eleventh Meeting of the IC chaired by the Minister of Finance and Economy, Mr. Arben Ahmetaj.





**BUS Department's students visit Coca Cola Company**

In framework of Introduction to Business subject, Career Planning and Alumni Office in collaboration with Business Administration Department organized a visit with students to one of the largest companies operating in our country, Coca-Cola. During this study visits students were able to understand how the company works and to be able to obtain more information on labor market. After a short company presentation on the coca cola history, students visited the coca cola production process starting from bottling, packing and storing them.

**Dr. Demaj, appointed as a team member of PROMIS Project which has been successfully submitted under Erasmus+KA2**

After three months of continuous work and strong efforts of our team members, Epoka University has successfully submitted to the participant's portal of the European Commission the project application titled "Project Management

Integrating Sustainability'(PROMIS), in the framework of the Erasmus+ Call under the

component of Capacity Building in Higher Education (CBHE). The wider aim of this project is to seek qualified professionals with sustainable project management skills to match the labor market and society needs, foster region-wide sustainable project management awareness and culture and enhance regional cooperation for sustainable development of the Western Balkan Countries in line with relevant national strategies for development and EU integration. Dr. Esmir Demaj, assistant lecturer in the Department of Business Administration was one of the members of the working group.

### **Public Speaking Techniques - 10 reasons why you should learn to speak in public**

The Department of Business Administration organized an Open Lecture on Public Speaking Techniques in the framework of Communication Skills class with Mrs. Arjeta Dhima, who shared with us her experience as a professional actress in various plays and dramas, her experience as a public speaking mentor of various public figures in Albania. And most excitedly she demonstrated her skills on ventriloquism and shared with us the challenges she faced on developing her ventriloquism skills, which made her the first ventriloquist in Albania. While talking about public speaking, Mrs. Arjeta talked about the reasons why public speaking skills need to be developed for everyone and most importantly she demonstrated some techniques upon how to get rid of scene phobia and how to conduct successful speeches in front of large audiences. Students found this lecture very helpful given that in many courses they need to present various projects in front of the class. A questions session was allocated at the end where students had the chance to ask Mrs. Arjeta upon public speaking and her experience in mentoring public figures on public speaking.



**Brain Ring Competition from the students of International Marketing and Logistics Management**

Business Administration Department in collaboration with the student club Marketing Zone organized the 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition of Brain Ring Competition. This competition was organized by the students of International Marketing and Logistics Management students under the supervision of Mr. Besjon Zenelaj the club advisor, and the member of our department.

In the framework of this interesting competition format, 110 high school students from 12 different high schools in Tirana visited Epoka University premises during April, 16-20. The final phase was organized at the Library of Epoka University among 30 students and 6 different teams. At the end of 13 questions, the winner of Brain Ring 3 was `Turgut Ozal College`. `Besnik Sykja` high school team came second with only 1 point of difference. For the winners, EMR stationery provided coupon gift in the amount of 7.000 ALL for each team member. Furthermore, the winning team members will be awarded 20% scholarship for the programs Business Informatics, International Marketing and Logistics Management, and Business Administration in case they decide to pursue their studies at Epoka University.

In the final that lasted 70 minutes students were asked to give answers that incorporated their Business, and Marketing related topics knowledge with the critical thinking.





### Epoka student's winners of "Power Up Community" project

In the framework of the youth week, the social start-up "Power Up Community" was organized successfully by the Center ACT for SOCIETY with the support of Raiffeisen Bank Albania.



The participants of this start-up project came from different areas of Albania. They were divided into 7 groups and worked on 7 different project ideas, with the assistance of their respective mentors. On the second day, the groups presented their projects to the commission comprised by

specialists of certain fields and three best ideas were selected, which will have financial and professional support throughout the implementation of the projects. Judoris Merkaj, Mirian Mertiri, Artjola Boja and Arjola Xhelili were part of the winning group, which consisted in the implementation of a youth center for the pupils of high-school "Dhosi Lipera" left in oblivion in the area of Sukth, the village near Durrës. We wish our students good luck in the implementation of the said project. We thank them for the active participation and contribution to society, as well as for being an inspiring example for the other students.

### Student Council President and First Vice-President elected from Business Administration Department



The Business Administration Department wishes good luck to its students Kei Hysi, from Business Informatics program, elected as Student Council President, and Mirian Mertiri, First Vice-President, coming from Business Administration program. The Department is proud of their students' achievements and representations. Both students will be members of Academic Senate of Epoka University.



**TET @ BUS**

The Business Administration Department welcomed Tomorrow's Entrepreneurs Tirana (TET) students on January 24. They are 15 high school students attending TET, a 23-week program to acclimate high school students in a hands-on entrepreneurial environment. This program is organized by Albania's Business Generation, an organization started as an initiative by four high school students on March 2016 to empower entrepreneurship within Albanian youth.

During the visit it was shown to these aspiring entrepreneurs how Epoka University started and the way it works as an organization. The Head of Department, Dr. Xhimi Hysa, engaged in discussion with these high schoolers too, answering their questions about Epoka University and its know-how. The Business Administration department supports the entrepreneurial spirit of youth by emphasizing socially responsible business practices.

**International Marketing & Logistics Management students visit Marketing & Distribution Company**

International Marketing & Logistics Management 3rd year students visited Marketing & Distribution Company during June, 2018. During the visit, the students were introduced to the practical procedures for importing and distributing products to the retail trade network. Furthermore, Warehouse Management's computerized system, forecasting practices, inventory management and key performance indicators were introduced in detail to the students.





### Our master students attended conference in Spain



Anisa Berisha and Keda Koldashi, Master of Science students in Business Administration, attended the 7th ICHSS-International Conference on Human and Social Sciences, organized by Sapienza University of Rome and Mediterranean Center of Social and Educational Research. The successfully presented the paper “structural and Cultural Barriers for Woman to Leadership in Albania”.

**Invitation to the Strategy Consultation of World Vision Albania & Kosovo\_14 June 2018**

The consultation workshop for the 2019-2023 Strategy of World Vision Albania & Kosovo took place in three parallel group discussions, in three different venues. Dr. Hysa was invited at PROTIK center to discuss about the economic empowerment of youth, especially the marginalized categories.



**Our alumnus becomes an “ambassador” of BUS Department at California State University, Fullerton**

Xhoni Nezha started his undergraduate studies at BUS Department, Epoka University in the branch of International Marketing and Logistics Management. During his studies, he benefited of our partner, California University of Pennsylvania as exchange student. Then, he decided to continue his studies in the “real” California. Besides university, Xhoni is very passionate about music and currently he is managing also a radio show: The Johnny Chandlers Show.

**Block Chain Western Balkans workshop**

On Wednesday, March 21, Innovators Club in collaboration with Blockchain Western Balkans community brought Blockchain Western Balkans workshop. Mr. Klajdi Turlla was the representative of community and talked about Bitcoin and Blockchain. His presentation consisted of three main parts:

- 1- Introduction to Bitcoin
- 2- From Bitcoin toward Blockchain
- 3- Application in actuality



Ms. Morena Sheta from ReMAX Real Estate visited BUS Department as a guest lecturer for Sales Techniques and Sales Management course. Topic: Steps of Sales and Real Estate Market in Albania. Date: 10th April.



Ms. Joy Banushi from AGNA Group visited BUS Department as a guest lecturer for Brand Management course. Topic: Brand Management Applications in Albania. Date: 16th May.



Ms. Denisa Dervishi from ALEAT Group visited BUS Department as a guest lecturer for Brand Management course. Topic: Brand Identity. Date: 23rd May.



Mr. Elias Mazloun (Entrepreneur and Founder of NGO in Albania) visited BUS Department as a guest lecturer for Sales and Project management exercise at University. Exercise made with 22 students. Date: 22nd May.

Dr. Vusal Gambarov attended an event organized by GIZ and German Embassy in Tirana regarding 30 years of collaboration between Germany and Albania with the group of students. Date: 25th May.



Mr. Eron Piperku from New Moment Advertising Agency visited BUS Department as a guest lecturer for Marketing course. Topic: 360 degree Marketing Services and Trends in Albania. Date: 28th May.



Mr. Florian Tahiri, the Vice Mayor of Durres Municipality, joined BUS Department as a part-time lecturer for the AY 2017-2018.

Dr. Erjon Hitaj, Head of Law Department at University Ismail Qemali Vlore, joined BUS Department as a part-time lecturer for the AY 2017-2018.

Invited speaker – Ndrith Braho – Former CRM Manager of Albtelecom, MsBraho gave a one-hour lecture to BUS 348 CRM students explaining the customer relationship management use in telecommunication sector in Albania.



The BUS Department incentivized project applications with the support of IRO to start Erasmus+ staff and students' mobility with the University of Salerno and the University of Cassino and Southern Lazio.



Dr. Hysa consulted United Nations Development Program (ESERE Project) with regards of measuring the impact of a pilot Behavioral Change Model, implemented to public officials for changing behaviors and attitudes for a better social inclusion of Roma and Egyptian communities in public service access.



Professors from BUS Department were assigned as team members for the project application "Science Communication" in the framework of Erasmus+KA2 Program. The coordinating institution is the University of Novi Sad.



## 4. Publications

### Journal publications

Barile, S., Riolli, L., & Hysa, X. (2018). Modelling and Measuring Group Cohesiveness with Consonance: Intertwining the Sociometric Test with the Picture Apperception Value Test. *Systems Research and Behavioral Science*, 35(1)1-21. <https://doi.org/10.1002/sres.2418>

Hysa, X., Zerba, E., Calabrese, M., & Bassano, C. (2018). Social business as a sustainable business model: Making capitalism antifragile. *Sustainability Science*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11625-018-0566-1>

Gambarov, V., Sarno, D., Hysa, X., Calabrese, M., & Bilotta, A. (2017). The role of loyalty programs in Healthcare Service Ecosystems. *The TQM Journal*, 29(6), 899-919. <http://www.emeraldinsight.com/doi/full/10.1108/TQM-02-2017-0019>

Duman, T., Ozbal, O. and Duerod, M. (2017). The Role of Affective Factors on Brand Resonance: Measuring Customer-based Brand Equity for Sarajevo Brand. *Journal of Destination Marketing and Management*. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2017.08.001>. (Research Article) [https://www.journals.elsevier.com/journal-of-destination-marketing-and-management-http://mjl.clarivate.com/publist\\_ssci.pdf](https://www.journals.elsevier.com/journal-of-destination-marketing-and-management-http://mjl.clarivate.com/publist_ssci.pdf)

Üç, M. and Shehu, D., “The Attitudes of Internal Auditors to Internal Audit Practice in Post-communist Countries - Case of Albania”, *Accounting and Finance Research*, Vol.6 No.3, 2017, p. 88-93 <http://www.sciedu.ca/journal/index.php/afr/article/view/11995>

Gambarov, V., Sarno, D., Hysa, X., Calabrese, M., & Bilotta, A. (2017). The role of loyalty programs in Healthcare Service Ecosystems. *The TQM Journal*, 29(6), 899-919. <http://www.emeraldinsight.com/doi/full/10.1108/TQM-02-2017-0019>

### Books

Hysa, X. (2018). Managing group dynamics with the Viable Systems Approach: A study on consonance, group cohesiveness, and positive conformity. Beau Bassin, Mauritius: Scholars' Press. <https://www.scholars-press.com/catalog/details/store/gb/book/978-620-2-31175-5/managing-group-dynamics-with-the-viable-systems-approach>

Gambarov, V., & Emiri, E. (2017). The Halo Effect as A Factor Influencing Membership Logics. Saarbrücken, Germany: Lap Lambert Academic Publishing. <https://www.amazon.com/Effect-Factor-Influencing-Membership-Logics/dp/3330055006>

Demaj, E. (2017). Impact of Nepotism Practices on Organizational Trust and Commitment: A Country Case. Saarbrücken, Germany: Lap Lambert Academic Publishing. <https://www.amazon.com/Impact-Nepotism-Practices-Organizational-Commitment/dp/6202073659>

## Book chapters

Perano, M., Hysa, X., & Calabrese, M. (2018). Strategic Planning, Cultural Context, and Business Continuity Management: Business Cases in the City of Shkoder. In A. Presenza & L. Sheehan (Eds.), *Geopolitics and Strategic Management in the Global Economy* (pp. 57–77). Hershey, USA: IGI Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-5225-2673-5.ch004>

Fotino, F., Hysa, X., Calabrese, M. (2018). Il controllo strategico nella Pubblica Amministrazione: verso nuove forme di modellizzazione e organizzazione. In C. Simone (Ed.), *Il controllo manageriale e gli indicatori di performance dentro e fuori le organizzazioni: alcuni contributi di studio* (pp. 153-182). Roma: Edizioni Nuova Cultura. <https://doi.org/10.4458/9903>

Kruja, A. (2018). “Synergic individual entrepreneurial orientation of university students: A new measurement model”. In S.R. Nair & J.M.S. Alvarez (Eds.), *Handbook of Research on Ethics, Entrepreneurship, and Governance in Higher Education*. Hershey, PA: IGI Global.

Ferizi, V., Kruja, A. (2018). “Coastline hospitality industry performance, challenges and opportunities: Evidence from Durres coastline”. In D. Batabyal (Ed.), *Managing Sustainable Tourism Resources* (pp. 14-38). Hershey, PA: IGI Global. doi:10.4018/978-1-5225-5772-2.ch002

## Technical reports

Hysa, X., & Titka, M. (2017). *Behavioral change training curriculum and manual for public servants*. Tirana / Albania. <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.35117.59366>

Hysa, X., & Titka, M. (2017). *ESERE Behavioral Change Model Changing Attitudes and Behaviors of Public Servants with Regards to Roma and Egyptians' Access to Public Services*. Tirana / Albania. <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.21695.82085>

## Conference papers

Hysa, X., Zenelaj, B., & Gambarov, V. (2017). Social Business Canvas Model: White & Blue Case, Meeting Blue and White Collar Workers. In *Social Business Academia Conference*. Paris: HEC Paris. Retrieved from <http://socialbusinesspedia.com/sbac/2017>

Duman, T. (2018). Contemporary Trends in Tourism and Hospitality Industry in the Balkan Region: Outlook for the Western Balkans. *International Conference on Economic and Social Studies*. 10-12 May, 2018. International Burch University. Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Üç, M. and Latifi, E. “The Determinants of Accounting Information of SMEs in Albania” Atlantic Schools of Business Conference 2017, September 29-October 1 2017, F.C. Manning School of Business Administration, Acadia University, Wolfville, NS/Canada.

Kruja, A. (2018), "Entrepreneurship among graduates: Assessing self-employment opportunities and advancements in Albania", 8th Lument International Scientific Conference: Rethinking Social Action. Core Values in Practice. April 27-28 2018, Suceava, Romania

Kruja, A. (2017), "Measuring Individual Entrepreneurial Orientation and Intention of University Students: A Comparative Study of FEAS Students", International Academic Conference on Business, August 1-3 2017, New York, USA

Tafaj, A., Kruja, A., (2017), "Implementing HOS, Challenges and Opportunities: Evidence from Tirana", The 1st International Conference towards Sustainable Development (TSD`2017), Skopje

Zenelaj, Besjon&; VusalGambarov, (2017), How Does the Relationship Among Corporate Ownership Corporate Governance, and Cultural Background Effect Albanian Businesses?, 6th International Conference on European Studies (ICES`17) 5-6 November 2017, Tirana, Albania

Zenelaj, B., and Kruja, A. (2017). Entrepreneurship Intention of Albanian Students: an Evidence From Computer Engineering And Business Informatics Programs. AC-EITAI 2017, 297.<https://books.google.al/books?isbn=8088085152>

Çela, S. (2018), "Effects of Customer Orientation, Entrepreneurial Orientation, Innovation and Collaboration in the Development of Tourism Sector: Case of Berat City", 8th Lumen International Scientific Conference: Rethinking Social Action. Core Values in Practice. April 27-28 2018, Suceava, Romania

Çela, S. (2018). Tourism Slogans and Tourism Strategies: Albania and its Regional Competitors. Contemporary Trends in Tourism and Hospitality Industry in the Balkan Region: *International Conference on Economic and Social Studies*. 10-12 May, 2018. International Burch University. Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

### **Popular Magazine Articles**

VusalGambarov (2018). Please understand me, Follow Business Albania, December 2017, PP. 58-59. [https://issuu.com/followbusinessalbania/docs/follow\\_business\\_-\\_dec2017\\_-\\_digital](https://issuu.com/followbusinessalbania/docs/follow_business_-_dec2017_-_digital)

VusalGambarov (2018). Whose responsibility is this?, Follow Business Albania, May 2018, PP. 84-85. [https://issuu.com/followbusinessalbania/docs/follow\\_business\\_albania\\_-\\_6\\_-\\_may\\_2](https://issuu.com/followbusinessalbania/docs/follow_business_albania_-_6_-_may_2)