

INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD INFORMATION
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INFORMATION

CONCERNING THE PROBLEMS OF LANGUAGE PREPARATION OF FUTURE EXPERTS IN AGRICULTURE AT THE CZECH UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE, PRAGUE, WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION (DIVERSIFICATION OF STUDY PROGRAMMES)

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INTRODUCTION

In the view of future entering the EU, the Czech University of Agriculture (CUA) responds to the call for a quality preparation of the Czech experts by offering an increased number of specializations connected with the European integration – apart from the prestige European Agrarian Diplomacy (EAD) it is the Extended Language Study focused on the Specific Language Study. The aim of these study modules is to train students in such a way that they are later able to solve tasks connected with the coordination of agrarian policies between the EU and CR at the international level.

The EAD has been opened this year and we are in the process of gathering experience, while the Extended Language Study has been in existence for four years already and the results of final exams show that this module has earned its place on the list of offered study specializations. Within the framework of this module 36 students could take part in long-term or short-term study stays abroad and 23 hosting professors from the partner-universities of the EU came to lecture at the Faculty of Economics and Management.

THE STUDY

The increasing cooperation of the Czech Republic with the EU in different branches, based on the European Agreement on Integration, requires a good preparation of the Czech experts and we can expect that this demand will be more and more pressing as the full membership of the Czech Republic will be approaching. Apart from advantages, we will face new responsibilities, and the basic prerequisite of success is that we will understand the diversity

of „Europeanism“. We will have to find our place in the political, economic and cultural environment of integrating Europe.

Our University tries to respond to this demand by offering a wider range of study programmes closely connected with the European integration.

The European Agrarian Diplomacy was opened last year and is a prestige specialization. It is a five-term MSc. study that follows a three-year basic engineering study or bachelor study. This specialization was opened as an answer to the request of the Ministry of Agriculture – to prepare engineers of a new type who will be able to take part in negotiations regarding the implementation and coordination of the new European agrarian policy. In accord with the demands of the Ministry of Agriculture their training must be focused on the study of:

Agrarian policies

- world and European agriculture
- world trade with agricultural and food commodities
- strategic management of economic processes
- rural policy
- environmental policy
- communication and information resources

Laws in the EU

- international law
- local law

Economics and management

- economics of the world agriculture
- marketing management
- economics of production and product processing
- planning and prognostics

Foreign languages

- English
- French

The graduate from this specialization should have a good acquisition of the named subjects, but first of all he/she should have a good language acquisition to have a solid base for further work. English and French are taught 4 hours a week for the period of three terms.

The suggested study follows a module system and uses the rules of the ECTS (Europeans Credits Transfer System). The students may thus set up their own study programme which must respect principles given by the study and examination order of the CUA in Prague.

The MSc. study programme of „European Agrarian Diplomacy includes:

1. Compulsory subjects – the core subjects answering to the demands of the Ministry of Agriculture

2. Elective-compulsory subjects – complex subjects according to the specialization of the faculty
3. Elective-complimentary subjects – subjects offered by the mother faculty as well as from the offer of other faculties, e.g.
 - Statistic surveys of the EU
 - Global environmental issues
 - Crosscultural differences
 - Basics of the structured dialogue

The last term is devoted to foreign stays and excursions. The diploma thesis is written both in the Czech and foreign language.

The extension of teaching is given by number of credit points. In each term the student must gain 30 points at the minimum, from the group of compulsory subjects most credit points must be gained for languages (English – 11 points, French – 10 points).

When we look at English, the group of 18 students can be evaluated very positively. It is a homogeneous, result-orientated, hard-working group. The knowledge of the language is very good. Generally speaking, the passive knowledge, i.e. understanding the written text and a speech, is much better than the active knowledge, which is naturally better among the students who had a chance to stay in English speaking countries. As it is a new type of study, teaching material must be collected continually from newspapers and journals and teachers must be in touch with the current development in this field. As the students have a good knowledge of grammar, our English teacher can make use of his knowledge from the field of diplomacy and organizes meetings with representatives of foreign companies and diplomats. Students in groups play „diplomatic games“ on current topics, such as joining the EU, commercial wars, negotiations. In the third term teaching is done by foreign lecturers.

As far as the second language is concerned – French – the situation is less rewarding, as the majority of students are just beginners, and four hours a week in the third term are not enough, according to the Department of Languages. If French is not given more teaching hours, the required level of knowledge will have to be achieved by means of intensive weekly courses.

The Extended Language Study with Professional Orientation is another good base that can equip the applicants for the Agrarian Diplomacy with a sufficient knowledge of languages. I would like to mention this specialization only in the context of achieved results and lecturing activities of hosting professors from EU universities.

A few words to characterize this form of study. The Extended Language Study (ELS) enables the study in a foreign language – in English, German, French – for the purposes of international communication. It takes place from the third year of the five-years study on and students have at least 6 hours of

the intensive study in a foreign language weekly. This type of study lasts three years and significantly improves the technical communication in a foreign language. Teaching is done both by Czech and foreign teachers of the Department of Languages by teachers of other departments of the FEM who studied or lectured the particular subject abroad, and by hosting professors from EU universities. The study is completed by writing a diploma thesis in the foreign language and in passing the state examination in the language. This state exam is one of the five state sub-exams of the Final State Examinations.

The results show that the subject has already earned its place on the list of subjects offered by the FEM. In connection with this type of study 36 students took part in short-term or long-term foreign stays.

Our foreign partners came to lecture here, among them being 6 Professors from ENESA Dijon, who lectured on the Economics of the agrarian and food sector, Agricultural policy of the European Union, Analysis of food chains, and Management of agricultural enterprises.

Three German professors from Rostock University dealt with the issues of the Agrarian reform within the framework of EU, Issues of the agricultural enterprising theory, Enterprising planning, Marketing and agrarian markets in the EU.

Two Danish professors from the Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University gave lectures in English Strategic planning and the management of agricultural farms, and Legal problems in agriculture.

Our partners from HU Berlin teach in German Marketing, including International marketing, and Transformative processes in agriculture.

Hosting professors from Plymouth finished a series of lectures on the Agricultural economics and policy a few months ago.

The above mentioned lectures equip our students both with the linguistic and specific knowledge, which is a solid basis for their further work on the tasks connected with agriculture in united Europe.

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