



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
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Ανώτατης Εκπαίδευσης**
Hellenic Authority
for Higher Education

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Accreditation Report **for the Postgraduate Study Programme of:**

Primary Health Care: Social Medical and Pharmaceutical Care

Department: Medical School

Institution: Democritus University of Thrace

Date: 4 November 2023

Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the Postgraduate Study Programme of **Primary Health Care: Social Medical and Pharmaceutical Care** of the **Democritus University of Thrace** for the purposes of granting accreditation.

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PART A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE REVIEW

I. The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the postgraduate study Programme of **Primary Health Care – Social Medical and Pharmaceutical Care** of the **Democritus University of Thrace** comprised the following four (4) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

- 1. Prof. Efthimios Mitsiadis (Chair)**
Universität Zürich, Switzerland
- 2. Assoc. Prof. Stefanos Volianitis**
Qatar University, Qatar
- 3. Dr. Nicholas Ktistakis**
Babraham Institute, United Kingdom
- 4. Mr. Sotirios Mavromatis**
Postgraduate Student, University of Patras, Greece

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

The Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE) formed an external and independent Panel of experts to assess the compliance of the study postgraduate Programme of Primary Health Care – Social Medical and Pharmaceutical care of the Democritus University of Thrace in accordance with the HAHE Quality Assurance requirements (laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020). The assessment was conducted through document reviews plus onsite and online interviews. The method used was an evidence-based process centred on a sampling of the Department's activities and it was aimed at evaluating the fulfilment of the HAHE requirements of the relevant Quality Standard of the Postgraduate Study Programme and commenting on its compliance, effectiveness, and applicability for the scope of the requirements. The information provided by the Department was assumed to be factually correct. The entire evaluation and accreditation exercise was carried out remotely using the Zoom platform.

On 20 October 2023 the External Evaluation and Accreditation Panel (EEAP) received from HAHE the Accreditation support material from the HAHE Cloud Link, which contained the following:

1. Primary Health Care – Social Medical and Pharmaceutical Care – Democritus University of Thrace, consisting of the documents:
 - A0. Contents
 - A1. Proposal of Academic Accreditation
 - A2. Quality Policy of Postgraduate Study Programme
 - A3. Quality Objectives of the Academic Unit for the Postgraduate Programmes
 - A4. Senate Decision on the Establishment of PSP
 - A5. Study Guide
 - A6. Course Outline
 - A7. List of names of teaching staff
 - A8. Report of the internal evaluation
 - A9. Evaluation from students
 - A10. Regulation on complaints handling
 - A11. Operating rules of the academic adviser institution
 - A12. Internal rules of procedure of PSP
 - A13. Research ethics regulations
 - A14. Study Regulations
 - A15. Diploma Annex
 - A16. Summary report on teaching staff allowances
 - A17. Data reports from the Integrated System National Quality Information System (NQIS) for all of the previous academic years
 - A18. External evaluation of the postgraduate Programme

A19. Other documentation material

2. HAHE Material containing the following:

ACRONYMS

European Qualification Framework

M13A PMS Mapping Grid

Guidelines for Accreditation

Guidelines for the Members of the EAAP

Standards for Quality Accreditation of Postgraduate Study Programmes

Template Postgraduate Programme Accreditation Report

On Monday October 23, 2023, the EEAP members met remotely, from 15:00 to 16:00 (Athen's time) in view of getting to know each other and establishing a *modus operandi* regarding the exercise of accreditation.

On the same day, the EEAP Review of the PSP study Programme started formally via Zoom at 16:00 (Athen's time). In the first part of this virtual meeting (16:00-17:00), the Director of PSP Prof. Theodoros Constantinidis, the Head of the Department Prof. Konstantinos Vadikolias and the President of MODIP, Prof. Grigoriou Marirena familiarized the Panel with the department and gave an overview of the School's and PSP's origins, evolution, and current status. Members of the Steering Committee Prof. Ioannis Tentes, Prof. Maria Lambropoulou, Prof. Petros Skepastianos, Prof. Stella Mitka and OMEA member Assoc. Prof. Konstantinos Anagnostopoulos were also present in the meeting.

On Wednesday October 25, 2023, from 15:00 to 16:00, the EEAP met with the teaching staff of the postgraduate study Programme, Prof. Alexiou Chatzaki Aikaterini, Prof. Mpezirtzoglou Eugenia, Prof. Trypsianis Grigorios, Assoc. Prof. Nena Evangelia, Prof. Arvaniti Aikaterini, Prof. Dimitriou Dimitrios, Assoc. Prof. Douros Antonios, Ass. Prof. Tsigalou Christina and Dr. Tselemponis Athanasios to discuss about the professional development opportunities, mobility, the teaching methods etc. Later, at 16:00 the EEAP met with students of the PSP to discuss about their satisfaction and their study experience. At 17:30, the EEAP met with PSP graduates, Mr. Poulentzas Georgios, Mr. Lalagkas Panagiotis-Nikolaos, Ms. Sakalaki Anastasia, Ms. Koufantzidou Marianna, Ms. Niora Maria, Ms. Papageorgiou Dimitra and Ms. Dermiki-Gkana Foteini to discuss about their experience and their career path. After, at 18:30, the EEAP met with employers and social partners of the PSP, Mr. Katsogiannis Ilias, Mr. Terzis Anastasios, Ms. Oikonomou Rena, Ms. Tsanidou Eirini, Ms. Margietis Thanos and Mr. Petrakis Ioannis. Finally, after debriefing among Panel members in private, at 20:00 the EEAP had a closure meeting with the Director of the PSP Prof. Theodoros Constantinidis, the Head of the Department, Prof. Konstantinos Vadikolias, in presence of MODIP, OMEA members and the Steering Committee and discussed their major findings and recommendations.

During the following days (October 26 - 28 2023), the Panel members had meeting for the completion of the draft of the Accreditation Report.

III. Postgraduate Study Programme Profile

The postgraduate Programme “Primary Health Care – Social Medical Pharmaceutical Care” of the Democritus University of Thrace was established in 2018 and focuses on the training of graduates from Health Sciences and related departments in Primary Health Care. It aims on the education and specialization of young scientists, in order to be able to apply and develop Primary Health Care policies in Greece, to evaluate the patients; health problems, to apply preventive measures and instruments and deal with disease-causing pathogens. The total number of credits (ECTS) required for the award of MSc is 90. The award of MSc required compulsory attendance and successful completion of all compulsory courses, as distributed over the two semesters (A and B). during the second semester of study, postgraduate students are required to choose a subject-related direction of study: Social Medical Care and Social Pharmaceutical Care. The Programme includes 6 compulsory courses and 6 courses related to the chosen direction, which are all held online up to 70%. The thesis is carried out in the third semester and the total number of teaching staff is 45.

PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

PRINCIPLE 1: QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AND QUALITY GOAL SETTING FOR THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD APPLY A QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AS PART OF THEIR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT. THIS POLICY SHOULD EXPAND AND BE AIMED (WITH THE COLLABORATION OF EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS) AT THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT. THIS POLICY SHOULD BE PUBLISHED AND IMPLEMENTED BY ALL STAKEHOLDERS.

The quality assurance policy of the academic unit should be in line with the quality assurance policy of the Institution and must be formulated in the form of a public statement, which is implemented by all stakeholders. It focuses on the achievement of special goals related to the quality assurance of the study Programmes offered by the academic unit.

Indicatively, the quality policy statement of the academic unit includes its commitment to implement a quality policy that will promote the academic profile and orientation of the postgraduate study Programme (PSP), its purpose and field of study; it will realise the Programme's goals and it will determine the means and ways for attaining them; it will implement appropriate quality procedures, aiming at the Programme's improvement.

In particular, in order to implement this policy, the academic unit commits itself to put into practice quality procedures that will demonstrate:

- a) the suitability of the structure and organisation of postgraduate study Programmes*
- b) the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education - level 7*
- c) the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of teaching at the PSP*
- d) the appropriateness of the qualifications of the teaching staff for the PSP*
- e) the drafting, implementation, and review of specific annual quality goals for the improvement of the PSP*
- f) the level of demand for the graduates' qualifications in the labour market*
- g) the quality of support services, such as the administrative services, the libraries and the student welfare office for the PSP*
- h) the efficient utilisation of the financial resources of the PSP that may be drawn from tuition fees*
- i) the conduct of an annual review and audit of the quality assurance system of the PSP through the cooperation of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU)*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The quality assurance policy of this PSP operates within the guidelines of the Democritus University of Thrace and depends on the MODIP and OMEA committees of the institution. The subject matter of the PSP is in some ways ahead of its time since primary health care in Greece is still in its infancy. Nevertheless, this is a very useful area to focus a Programme of post graduate education.

The PSP via the University umbrella displays a strong commitment to setting and achieving concrete academic and professional goals for this Programme.

Several mechanisms exist for the continuous evaluation of this PSP and for keeping its aims and educational goals up to date and relevant. Such mechanisms include: (a) adherence to the description of the syllabus of studies with periodic evaluation, (b) selection of appropriate faculty, (c) utilising modern methods of teaching, (d) encouraging the students to participate in conferences, (e) internal evaluation of the PSP, (f) student-derived evaluation of faculty members, and (g) strong effort to improve the engagements of the students with the Programme of studies.

In terms of specific aims for the improvement of the PSP, the Panel was given a document titled “Στοχοθεσία Ποιότητας της ακαδημαϊκής μονάδας για το ΠΜΣ” with a small number of aims to be completed by the Programme by December 2023. The main aim is the increase in the numbers of students attending the PSP. Additional aims include the increase of the percentage of graduating students in comparison to the total student body (currently the number is at 20% with the target at 40%) and the increase in the rate of participation of the students in faculty evaluation (currently an impressive 80%).

The Panel was shown during the presentations a detailed breakdown of the income of this PSP, and how the funds are being spent. The fees right now are 3000 euros total. The majority of income is spent on salaries and on general expenses. Of note, the PSP is entirely self-sustaining by its tuition income.

II. Analysis

The PSP does a good job of evaluating its activities and whenever necessary it alters some of its academic aims. The Panel was left with the impression that the job of monitoring quality indicators of this PSP is taken seriously by the steering committee and by MODIP and OMEA.

III. Conclusions

This is a well-designed PSP that internally is frequently evaluated and modified. As will be discussed in later sections, the same cannot be said for the outside face/communication of this PSP.

Panel Judgement

Principle 1: Quality assurance policy and quality goal setting for the postgraduate study Programmes of the institution and the academic unit	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

None.

PRINCIPLE 2: DESIGN AND APPROVAL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD DEVELOP THEIR POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES FOLLOWING A DEFINED WRITTEN PROCESS WHICH WILL INVOLVE THE PARTICIPANTS, INFORMATION SOURCES AND THE APPROVAL COMMITTEES FOR THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES. THE OBJECTIVES, THE EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES AND THE EMPLOYMENT PROSPECTS ARE SET OUT IN THE PROGRAMME DESIGN. DURING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES, THE DEGREE OF ACHIEVEMENT OF THE LEARNING OUTCOMES SHOULD BE ASSESSED. THE ABOVE DETAILS, AS WELL AS INFORMATION ON THE PROGRAMME'S STRUCTURE ARE PUBLISHED IN THE STUDENT GUIDE.

The academic units develop their postgraduate study Programmes following a well-defined procedure. The academic profile and orientation of the Programme, the research character, the scientific objectives, the specific subject areas, and specialisations are described at this stage.

The structure, content and organisation of courses and teaching methods should be oriented towards deepening knowledge and acquiring the corresponding skills to apply the said knowledge (e.g. course on research methodology, participation in research projects, thesis with a research component).

The expected learning outcomes must be determined based on the European and National Qualifications Framework (EQF, NQF), and the Dublin Descriptors for level 7. During the implementation of the Programme, the degree of achievement of the expected learning outcomes and the feedback of the learning process must be assessed with the appropriate tools. For each learning outcome that is designed and made public, it is necessary that its evaluation criteria are also designed and made public.

In addition, the design of PSP must consider:

- *the Institutional strategy*
- *the active involvement of students*
- *the experience of external stakeholders from the labour market*
- *the anticipated student workload according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) for level 7*
- *the option of providing work experience to students*
- *the linking of teaching and research*
- *the relevant regulatory framework and the official procedure for the approval of the PSP by the Institution*

The procedure of approval or revision of the Programmes provides for the verification of compliance with the basic requirements of the Standards by the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU).

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The subject matter of this PSP, Primary Health Care - Social Medical and Pharmaceutical Care, concerns a subject that is fairly new for Greece, given the paucity of primary health care in the country. The Programme started in 2019 and it has only graduated a small number of students.

Length of studies is 3 semesters and 90 ECTS, with the third semester dedicated to the writing of a thesis. The format of the theses is not experimental but rather theoretical involving analysis of pre-existing or newly derived data. During the second semester the students are asked to choose one of two directions, social medical care (κοινωνική φαρμακευτική

φροντίδα) or social pharmaceutical care (κοινωνική φαρμακευτική φροντίδα). This likely reflects the professional experience of the students as well as the aims of the Programme.

The vast majority of the students of this PSP (90%) are professionals who desire to learn principles and characteristics of primary health care, and how to communicate with patients. Having such a professional student cohort necessitates several unique characteristics for this PSP.

The majority of course work is online, with 3 days of teaching (Friday/Saturday/Sunday) every two weeks and one session of in person meetings per semester.

The students and recent graduates of the PSP that were met by the Panel expressed strong level of satisfaction with the Programme. In some cases, this was manifested in better professional development and in others it was related to an advancement in their academic career. It was evident from these meetings that welfare of the students and an effort to accommodate their professional lives with the pursuit of this graduate degree are important for the leadership of the PSP.

This PSP does not offer practical training and mobility via Erasmus is non-existent due to the professional nature of the student cohort.

Exams are entirely via an online format; students expressed satisfaction for this.

External stakeholders of the PSP expressed strong satisfaction with the graduates of the Programme, and a desire to be more involved if asked by the steering committee in settings aims for the educational achievement of the students.

Although not formally an activity of the PSP, the annual conference on pharmacovigilance gives to the students the opportunity to listen to talks by prominent scientists and stakeholders in their field.

II. Analysis

The PSP is well-designed and run, especially given the fact that primary health care is relatively unknown in Greece, and that the medical school in Thrace does not have at the present time a specialty in general medicine. Graduates from such a Programme would be a good source of students for this PSP.

The length of studies is just about acceptable for a post-graduate Programme, and the Panel would not like to see going back to previous course work which was apparently once every three weeks. In fact, the Panel would like to suggest increasing the in-person frequency to two times per semester.

III. Conclusions

Important PSP that covers an area of need in Greek health studies.

Panel Judgement

Principle 2: Design and approval of postgraduate study Programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- Take advantage of the offer of the stakeholders to be more involved in the PSP by instituting either an advisory board or a forum to discuss those matters.
- Consider increasing the in-person sessions from one to two per semester.

PRINCIPLE 3: STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING, TEACHING, AND ASSESSMENT

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ENSURE THAT POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES PROVIDE THE NECESSARY CONDITIONS TO ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN THE LEARNING PROCESS. THE ASSESSMENT METHODS SHOULD REFLECT THIS APPROACH.

Student-centred learning and teaching plays an important role in enhancing students' motivation, their self-evaluation, and their active participation in the learning process. The above entail continuous consideration of the Programme's delivery and the assessment of the related outcomes.

The student-centred learning and teaching process

- *respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs by adopting flexible learning paths*
- *considers and uses different modes of delivery, where appropriate*
- *flexibly uses a variety of pedagogical methods*
- *regularly evaluates and adjusts the modes of delivery and pedagogical methods aiming at improvement*
- *regularly evaluates the quality and effectiveness of teaching, as documented especially through student surveys*
- *strengthens the student's sense of autonomy, while ensuring adequate guidance and support from the teaching staff*
- *promotes mutual respect in the student-teacher relationship*
- *applies appropriate procedures for dealing with the students' complaints*
- *provides counselling and guidance for the preparation of the thesis*

In addition

- *The academic staff are familiar with the existing examination system and methods and are supported in developing their own skills in this field.*
- *The assessment criteria and methods are published in advance. The assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. Students are given feedback, which, if necessary is linked to advice on the learning process.*
- *Student assessment is conducted by more than one examiner, where possible.*
- *Assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and conducted in accordance with the stated procedures.*
- *A formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*
- *The function of the academic advisor runs smoothly.*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The postgraduate Programme "Primary Health Care - Social Medical and Pharmaceutical care" has a total duration of 3 academic semesters. During the first academic semester all students are asked to attend 6 compulsory courses, while during the second semester they are asked to choose one of the two orientations (Social Medical Care and Social Pharmaceutical Care), each of which includes 6 courses. In the last semester, the postgraduate thesis is carried out. The majority of the students (90%) attending this Master's degree are employed and therefore the majority of the lectures (70%) are held online and exclusively on weekends. The lecturers in charge of delivering the course

lectures are qualified and skilled professionals and provide students with all the necessary knowledge about Primary Health Care. The language in which almost all lectures are given is Greek and rarely English. The assessment of the courses is carried out either by written, or oral examination, or assignments or a combination of the above, and can also be carried out by digital assessment. There are two examination periods in each year, one in January for the winter semester, one in May for the spring semester and finally a re-examination in September. Course evaluations by students are performed at the end of each academic semester, but the results of the evaluations are not made known to professors, regardless of whether the grade was good or bad. In any case, of course, each lecturer makes sure to ask the students for their opinion of the course.

II. Analysis

The timetable of the PSP is quite busy in a three-day period (1 day per month face-to-face and the rest online). Days, such as Saturday, include lectures from morning to evening, which makes it questionable whether the content of the courses is actually understood by the students, given that they already have a busy daily routine due to work. The language in which the lectures are held should also be English, so that people from abroad can also attend the postgraduate course. Concerning the courses evaluation, there are several methods applied, like written or oral examinations, and some courses include assignments, too. Finally, regarding student evaluations, it would be ideal if the results of these evaluations were made known to the teaching staff, so that each lecturer is aware of both good comments/observations and negative ones.

III. Conclusions

The PSP ensures that postgraduate students are trained in the best possible way in Primary Care. The timetable of the courses should be extended to more than a three-day course to make it possible for the students to attend all the courses qualitatively. Also, an internal evaluation committee could be appointed to discuss issues such as student evaluations of courses and lecturers and in this way inform lecturers of student comments.

Panel Judgement

Principle 3: Student-centred learning, teaching, and assessment	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- Distribution of lecture hours over several days and not just three days in a week.
- Creation of an internal evaluation committee.
- Introduction of English in lectures.
- Encourage for more in-person lectures.
- Encourage the presence of an academic advisor.

PRINCIPLE 4: STUDENT ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, RECOGNITION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES, AND CERTIFICATION.

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD DEVELOP AND APPLY PUBLISHED REGULATIONS COVERING ALL ASPECTS AND PHASES OF STUDIES (ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, THESIS DRAFTING, RECOGNITION AND CERTIFICATION).

All the issues from the beginning to the end of studies should be governed by the internal regulations of the academic units. Indicatively:

- *the student admission procedures and the required supporting documents*
- *student rights and obligations, and monitoring of student progression*
- *internship issues, if applicable, and granting of scholarships*
- *the procedures and terms for the drafting of assignments and the thesis*
- *the procedure of award and recognition of degrees, the duration of studies, the conditions for progression and for the assurance of the progress of students in their studies*
- *the terms and conditions for enhancing student mobility*

All the above must be made public in the context of the Student Guide.

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The admission and selection of the PHC (Primary Health Care) PSP students is based on clear criteria that include the study scores, diplomas obtained, recommendation letters, and candidates' interviews by an academic committee. These procedures, as well as information on student rights and obligations, ways to monitor their progression, ethics and studies regulations, internships, mobility, and student assignments, are described in the supporting documents. This information can be found on the web site of the DUT (Democritus University of Thrace) and Medical School. However, the Panel noticed that there is not an active web page for the PHC PSP. PHC informed the Panel after the evaluation that an active web page exists in Greek, but not in English. Eligible for admission are graduates from disciplines such as pharmacologists, medical doctors, dentists, veterinarians, allied health professions, biologists, etc.

The PHC PSP has established clear procedures concerning the degree, the duration of studies (3 semesters), and rules ensuring the progression of the students. Terms and conditions for student mobility with Erasmus+ or other equivalent mobility platforms (e.g., COST actions) are described in the related documents of the DUT.

Courses and mechanisms of supervision of the PHC PSP students' dissertation projects by academic staff within DUT or other Departments from abroad are operational within this PSP. A hybrid method of teaching applies, live (one Friday-Saturday-Sunday session per semester) and remote (two Friday-Saturday-Sunday sessions per month), which is helpful for the majority of the PSP students who have part-time or full-time jobs.

The DUT has in place appropriate processes and tools to collect and effectively analyse information concerning the processes of the PHC PSP students. This information is stored within the PSP students' registration system.

The duration of the PSP is three semesters (30 ECTS each semester), with lectures and seminars. The dissertation takes place during the last (third) semester. Students are evaluated remotely at the end of the courses (multiple choice questions, journal clubs, etc. for the first 2 semesters) and the end of their dissertation (third semester). Students are obliged to write a dissertation, which is either a literature-based work or a statistical analysis of biobanks, collected hospital material, etc. Most of the students do not require additional time to finish this PSP. The PHC PSP requires student fees (3.000 euros). Scholarships are available and attributed to PSP students with specific needs or to students who are excelling. The PHC PSP diploma allows the students to become specialists in the different domains of public health (there is a big societal need for these public health specialists) or to further develop a scientific or academic career by acquiring a PhD degree. The Panel had the impression that the communication between students and PHC PSP staff is excellent. Faculty is constantly available to inform, help and guide PSP students. The progress of the PSP students is closely followed by the PSP staff. However, the role of the academic advisor is not yet known or familiar to the PSP students.

Current and past PHC PSP students expressed their enthusiasm and spoke about the very positive impression of the utility of this PSP. The lectures appeared balanced, well-structured, and involve qualitative and experienced faculty. The vast majority of the lectures and seminars are delivered via the Zoom platform. The actual and past PSP students pointed out that the courses were of high quality, the number of courses was adequate, and all courses were clearly presented and were easy to follow. This is an important point because of the large heterogeneity of the students' backgrounds. All students mentioned that the PHC PSP is very rewarding and opens many horizons to a new health field, but that its function and utility are not yet understood by the majority of Greek society. Some concerns were brought up by the Panel about the limited physical presence of students (i.e., one Friday-Saturday-Sunday session per semester) during the PHC PSP, but this is mostly related to the location of DUT and the difficulties of the PSP students to reach the courses while living in other Greek cities. However, practical or research training is not needed for the PHC PSP, thus allowing communication via Zoom or similar communication platforms.

Erasmus+ and COST actions are available for students' mobility. The Panel was informed that some students have used the COST actions to reach foreign institutions within Europe. PSP faculty adopted methods to motivate students to participate in various meetings and encourage them to graduate in a timely manner soon after the 3rd semester. An annual international meeting in pharmacodynamics takes place every year in Alexandroupolis and is organised by the DUT. This gives the students the opportunity to participate and discuss with world leaders in this field. PSP graduation documents are obtained electronically

within a very short time. A simultaneous English translation of the PSP dissertation is obtained.

II. Analysis

The PHC PSP provides an important basis for primary health care issues and fulfils a crucial societal need for further education and training for medical professionals. This PSP also allows the students to follow a research/academic-oriented career or to get a specialised job in the public or private domain (pharmaceutical companies). The length of PSP studies (3 semesters) is considered appropriate.

Although students' mobility is satisfactory via COST actions, PSP staff should also promote the Erasmus+ platform. Similar, PSP staff should explore other opportunities for the mobility of the students within Greece or abroad. For example, some pharmaceutical companies or public health organisations could be interested in hosting PSP students for defined periods, thus allowing both students and employees to explore ways of interaction, specific needs, etc.

The Panel, upon consultation with students and stakeholders, believes that the PHC PSP could become stronger by delivering most of the courses and seminars in English and by encouraging the students to write their dissertations in English. This will offer more opportunities for international exchanges and increase the chances for the students to get positions or jobs in Greece or abroad.

A web page, specific to PHC PSP and containing all the information needed (courses, staff, research activities of staff, dissertations), should be created as soon as possible, in both Greek and English. This will increase the visibility of both the PHC PSP and DUT. Similarly, the existence of PHC PSP alumni will greatly increase the visibility of this PSP, both nationally and internationally. The Panel was informed after the evaluation procedure that this web page is now active in Greek.

III. Conclusions

This is an important PSP in primary health care. The length of the studies is appropriate. The physical presence of students during the first two semesters could be enhanced from one session per semester (from Friday to Sunday) to two sessions per semester. A committee of 4 to 5 persons (staff and students' representatives) should be created and meet once or twice per year in order to evaluate and reorganise the PHC PSP. It is advisable for alumni (PSP graduates) and important stakeholders with strict consultative functions (no voting rights) to participate in this quality assurance committee. Students' mobility towards the various European institutions via Erasmus+ and other well-established platforms, such as the various COST actions, is adopted and promoted. Similarly, mobility of the PSP students to public health care centres and pharmaceutical companies within Greece should be encouraged. The Panel believes that the English language for the lectures and seminars should be adopted by the PSP staff. Similarly, the staff should encourage the PSP students to deliver their dissertations in

English. The Panel was informed that a functional web page for the PHC PSP has now been created in Greek (but not in English).

Panel Judgement

Principle 4: Student admission, progression, recognition of postgraduate studies and certification	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- The Panel suggested the immediate creation and function of a PSP web page, both in Greek and English. The Panel was informed after the evaluation procedure that this page has now been created in Greek. The Panel suggests the creation of an English version.
- The Panel recommends that the physical presence of PSP students increase from one session per semester (from Friday to Sunday) to two sessions.
- The Panel suggests that the mobility of the PSP students to public health care centres and pharmaceutical companies should be encouraged.
- The Panel suggests that the PSP students should be informed by the PSP staff about the role and use of the academic advisor.
- A committee of 4 to 5 persons (PSP staff and students) should be established and function once or twice per year for evaluating and reorganising the PSP. The participation of alumni (PSP graduates) and important stakeholders is also advisable.
- The Panel recommends to the PSP staff that they deliver the courses in English. Similarly, PSP students should be encouraged by the staff to write their dissertations in English.
- The Panel suggests the creation of a library of topics where the candidates could choose their topic of interest. This library should be provided on the web page.
- Organisation of an informative open day, specific for the PHC PSP, where the various stakeholders (pharmaceutical companies, public health centres, hospitals) could explain the possibilities of mobility, specific needs related to public health, job opportunities, etc.

PRINCIPLE 5: TEACHING STAFF OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ASSURE THEMSELVES OF THE LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS OF THEIR TEACHING STAFF, AND APPLY FAIR AND TRANSPARENT PROCESSES FOR THEIR RECRUITMENT, TRAINING AND FURTHER DEVELOPMENT.

The Institution should attend to the adequacy of the teaching staff of the academic unit teaching at the PSP, the appropriate staff-student ratio, the appropriate staff categories, the appropriate subject areas, the fair and objective recruitment process, the high research performance, the training- development, the staff development policy (including participation in mobility schemes, conferences, and educational leaves-as mandated by law).

More specifically, the academic unit should set up and follow clear, transparent and fair processes for the recruitment of properly qualified staff for the PSP and offer them conditions of employment that recognise the importance of teaching and research; offer opportunities and promote the professional development of the teaching staff; encourage scholarly activity to strengthen the link between education and research; encourage innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies; promote the increase of the volume and quality of the research output within the academic unit; follow quality assurance processes for all staff (with respect to attendance requirements, performance, self-assessment, training, etc.); develop policies to attract highly qualified academic staff.

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

Actually, the staff of the PSP consists of 28 members, and in addition, courses/lectures are delivered by a significant number of invited lecturers. The list of PSP staff, Department of origin, and all necessary documents are provided. The PSP staff is composed of dedicated academics of high quality and experience whose teaching and accessibility are very much appreciated by current and former students. Employment regulations and obligations of the PSP staff are also provided and described in the corresponding official documents. A policy for staff's support and development is in place.

The Department and DUT adhere to meritocratic and transparent procedures (using the ΑΠΕΛΛΑ platform) for the selection and recruitment of PSP faculty. This recruitment is based on covering PSP teaching needs and well-defined research directions. The staff is very qualified and has experience in academic courses in other PSPs. The research activities of PSP staff are monitored *via* universally accessible tools (e.g., Google Scholar). The PSP staff is evaluated by means of student surveys carried out online. PSP student participation is high (around 80%), thus demonstrating the appreciation of the PSP students towards the staff and the quality of courses/lectures.

The Panel thinks that a quality assurance committee for the PSP should be established by a few staff members and a student representative. Members should meet formally once or twice per year in order to adapt the PSP to actual societal needs and reorganise lectures and

seminars if needed. There is constant contact with the PSP students during the lectures and dissertation period.

In general, staff's research activities and teaching quality are high. The teaching load is not high for this PSP. A percentage of the PSP faculty has been mobile by means of Erasmus+ and related Programmes (COST actions).

II. Analysis

The majority of the faculty body originates from the DUT. The staff is very experienced in teaching, has a very good research background, and can cover the various aspects of the primary health care of the present PSP. There is a core group that administers the PSP.

III. Conclusions

This PSP is crucial and very important in social health care education and administration within Greece. The Panel believes that the teaching and research qualities of the PSP staff should be promoted via a specific web page and regular media representations.

Panel Judgement

Principle 5: Teaching staff of postgraduate study Programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The Panel recommends the creation of a committee of 4 to 5 persons (PSP staff and students) who will meet once or twice per year to discuss progress, problems, and reorganisation of the PSP.

PRINICPLE 6: LEARNING RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE ADEQUATE FUNDING TO COVER THE TEACHING AND LEARNING NEEDS OF THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMME. THEY SHOULD –ON THE ONE HAND- PROVIDE SATISFACTORY INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES FOR LEARNING AND STUDENT SUPPORT, AND – ON THE OTHER HAND- FACILITATE DIRECT ACCESS TO THEM BY ESTABLISHING INTERNAL RULES TO THIS END (E.G. LECTURE ROOMS, LABORATORIES, LIBRARIES, NETWORKS, NETWORKS, CAREER AND SOCIAL POLICY SERVICES ETC.).

Institutions and their academic units must have sufficient resources and means, on a planned and long-term basis, to support learning and academic activity in general, so as to offer PSP students the best possible level of studies. The above means include facilities such as the necessary general and more specialised libraries and possibilities for access to electronic databases, study rooms, educational and scientific equipment, IT and communication services, support and counselling services.

When allocating the available resources, the needs of all students must be taken into consideration (e.g. whether they are full-time or part-time students, employed students, students with disabilities), in addition to the shift towards student-centred learning and the adoption of flexible modes of learning and teaching. Support activities and facilities may be organised in various ways, depending on the institutional context. However, the internal quality assurance proves -on the one hand- the quantity and quality of the available facilities and services, and -on the other hand- that students are aware of all available services.

In delivering support services, the role of support and administration staff is crucial and therefore this segment of staff needs to be qualified and have opportunities to develop its competences.

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The Department of Medicine of the University of Thrace (DUT) have excellent new state-of-the-art building facilities in the Alexandroupoli University Campuses which are fully equipped to allow both live and distance education of postgraduate students. The lectures are held in the halls of the PSP and Medicine of the DUT. All areas are easily accessible to people with disabilities.

To serve the purposes of education and research, a single, decentralized and independent Central Library Unit, the "Library and Information Centre of the University of Thrace", operates at the DUT. The Central Library (<https://lib.duth.gr/>) is based in Komotini. Due to the geographical dispersion of the University in four (4) cities of Thrace (Komotini, Xanthi, Alexandroupoli and Orestiada) the Central Library has developed nine (9) Library - branches. One of these nine Library branches belongs to the School of Health Sciences. Through the website of the Central library (https://opac.seab.gr/search~S4*gre) each student can search for material (books, magazines, etc.).

The PSP is supported by an online e-class system <https://eclass.duth.gr/>. Each course has its own online classroom, where course supervision material, announcements, and bibliography are posted. In the same system, there is a general bulletin board for

educational matters for each semester of studies. Students are invited to follow the above notice boards which are used to formulate the practical exercise groups in each semester.

The Wi-Fi service of DUT is available in all campus areas as well as in the Student Residences. At the same time, the DUT participates in eduroam that provides Wi-Fi access to all students when are visiting other University campuses that also members of eduroam. In addition, the intranet of the DUT is accessible through a Virtual Private Network (VPN), which allows secure connection to remote users.

The institution of the Academic Advisor of studies is not operating in this PSP. The advisory support of the professors of the Department to the post-graduate students includes issues related to academic life, their path towards the completion of their studies, their professional prospects, doctoral studies, etc.

Also, the institution of Student Advocate, who can be a Professor or Emeritus Professor appointed by the Senate, operates to mediate between students and professors or administrative services of the DUT, to observe legality in the context of academic freedom, to deal with phenomena of maladministration and to safeguard all operations.

Additionally, an Employment and Career Office offers to students the opportunity to get to know the environment of their future professional career and, at the same time, to acquire knowledge and skills that will enhance their employability. Students have also the possibility throughout the year to apply for scholarships granted by various foundations and award bodies.

Furthermore, an innovative electronic platform, Philologus, provides to all students, faculty and administrative staff members of DUTH linguistic correction and philological editing to texts written in Greek. This service is offered free of charge.

The Department of Medicine has established a regulation for the management of student complaints and appeals (document A10) relating to academic matters (teaching and course grading). Similarly, most of the administrative services of DUT include mechanisms for submitting appeals relating to supporting procedures and services, such as the time schedule, the state of infrastructure, the library, IT systems, etc.

Last but not least, DUT provides accommodation and board free of charge to a larger percentage of students, compared to other universities. DFT is the only University in the country that provides free transportation to and from Campuses. Additionally, some primary medical care is also provided to uninsured students.

II. Analysis

The PSP provides excellent and accessible infrastructure and services for learning and student support.

III. Conclusions

The PSP is fully compliant with Principle 6.

Panel Judgement

Principle 6: Learning resources and student support	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

None.

PRINCIPLE 7: INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

INSTITUTIONS BEAR FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR COLLECTING, ANALYSING AND USING INFORMATION, AIMED AT THE EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED ACTIVITIES, IN AN INTEGRATED, EFFECTIVE AND EASILY ACCESSIBLE WAY.

Institutions are expected to establish and operate an information system for the management and monitoring of data concerning students, teaching staff, course structure and organisation, teaching and provision of services to students.

Reliable data is essential for accurate information and decision-making, as well as for identifying areas of smooth operation and areas for improvement. Effective procedures for collecting and analysing information on postgraduate study Programmes and other activities feed data into the internal system of quality assurance.

The information collected depends, to some extent, on the type and mission of the Institution. The following are of interest:

- *key performance indicators*
- *student population profile*
- *student progression, success, and drop-out rates*
- *student satisfaction with their Programmes*
- *availability of learning resources and student support*

A number of methods may be used to collect information. It is important that students and staff are involved in providing and analysing information and planning follow-up activities.

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The DUT, and consequently the PSP, operates several information systems for the management and monitoring of data concerning students, teaching staff, course structure and organisation, teaching, and provision of services to students. Specifically, the basic information systems of the Department of Medicine are:

- i) Information System of the Electronic Secretariat (Universis),
- ii) The Integrated Information System (IPS) of MODIP of DUT,
- iii) The Project Management Information System (resCom) of ELKE of DUT,
- iv) The IT Library Information System,
- vi) The Electronic Assessment Information System of MODIP of DUT
- vii) The Integrated Information National Quality System of ETHAAE.

The OMEA of the Department collects, processes and utilizes data collected from the various systems and informs the Assembly of the Department to plan any follow-up activities.

II. Analysis

The PSP has excellent information management system and procedures.

III. Conclusions

The PSP is fully compliant with Principle 7.

Panel Judgement

Principle 7: Information management	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

None.

PRINCIPLE 8: PUBLIC INFORMATION CONCERNING THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD PUBLISH INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR TEACHING AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES IN A DIRECT AND READILY ACCESSIBLE WAY. THE RELEVANT INFORMATION SHOULD BE UP-TO-DATE, OBJECTIVE AND CLEAR.

Information on the Institutions' activities is useful for prospective and current students, graduates, other stakeholders, and the public.

Therefore, Institutions and their academic units must provide information about their activities, including the PSP they offer, the intended learning outcomes, the degrees awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures applied, the pass rates, and the learning opportunities available to their students. Information is also provided on the employment perspectives of PSP graduates.

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The primary means of communicating the activities of this PSP to an external audience (prospective students, prospective faculty, interested laypeople) is via the website. In an ideal world, this information would be in Greek and in English, the latter in case there are students or faculty from abroad who are interested in the content of the PSP. The website for this PSP is essentially non-existent. The Panel was informed after the evaluation procedure that this web-page has been created and is functional.

The Panel was not provided with access to any additional online route by which students are informed about the PSP, although from discussions with students it appeared that such information was available to them.

II. Analysis

Although the Panel accepts the reassurances that a website will be constructed as part of the overall reorganization of digital services of the University of Thrace, the fact remains that other PSPs within the University have managed with current resources to have a website that at least in the Greek version is adequate. Therefore, the Panel considers that having such a website was a very low priority for this PSP.

III. Conclusions

During discussions with the leadership of this PSP, it was pointed out that the number of students choosing the Programme is a concern that may affect its survival. One way to increase the visibility of the PSP is to have a decent website that describes the very good activities of the Programme in terms of its academic aims, its faculty, its publishing of a journal and the participation of its students in scientific meetings, etc.

Panel Judgement

Principle 8: Public information concerning the postgraduate study Programmes	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

Make a good website within the next few days/weeks.

PRINCIPLE 9: ON-GOING MONITORING AND PERIODIC INTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTIONS AND ACADEMIC UNITS SHOULD HAVE IN PLACE AN INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM FOR THE AUDIT AND ANNUAL INTERNAL REVIEW OF THEIR POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES, SO AS TO ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVES SET FOR THEM, THROUGH MONITORING AND POSSIBLE AMENDMENTS, WITH A VIEW TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT. ANY ACTIONS TAKEN IN THE ABOVE CONTEXT SHOULD BE COMMUNICATED TO ALL PARTIES CONCERNED.

The regular monitoring, review, and revision of postgraduate study Programmes aim at maintaining the level of educational provision and creating a supportive and effective learning environment for students.

The above comprise the evaluation of:

- a) the content of the Programme in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the PSP is up to date*
 - b) the changing needs of society*
 - c) the students' workload, progression and completion of the postgraduate studies*
 - d) the effectiveness of the procedures for the assessment of students*
 - e) the students' expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the Programme*
 - f) the learning environment, support services, and their fitness for purpose for the PSP in question*
- Postgraduate study Programmes are reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders. The information collected is analysed and the Programme is adapted to ensure that it is up-to-date.*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

MODIP and OMEA of the DUT are responsible for the consistent evaluation of this PSP, and their function is excellent. The learning environment and support services are excellent.

Feedback from the students is obtained formally via questionnaires and informally through discussions with faculty. Students and PSP faculty have close relationships, and faculty try to accommodate students' needs. Concerns of the PSP students upon questionnaire analysis are taken into account for potential future PSP changes as well as potential improvements of the materials taught based on new advances in science.

The PSP is focused on primary health care, and a good number of high-quality and experienced faculty from DUT or abroad are involved. The objective of this PSP is to provide knowledge to PSP students with diverse backgrounds such as pharmacists, medical doctors, dentists, veterinarians, and other medical professionals, biologists, etc about the best ways to introduce them to the field and the needs of primary health care. In this aspect, the present PSP is highly beneficial to Greek society.

Although each PSP student is assigned to a selected faculty member and a close interaction with the staff exists throughout the course, the role of the academic advisor is not known to the PSP students.

Employers and social partners of the PSP confirmed that this PSP is of high quality and that its existence has a remarkable societal impact.

II. Analysis

This PSP is well-designed and offers essential information and training for primary health care purposes. The overall management of the PSP is excellent. There is remarkable communication among students and faculty aiming to improve the PSP. However, a formal committee assuring the quality of the PSP does not exist. Ideally, there should be meetings of an established committee towards the end of each semester to evaluate the PSP, propose potential changes, and, if necessary, reorganise the PSP. The participation of a PSP students' representative is necessary. Overall, this PSP covers a huge medical and societal need. Good mechanisms are in place to monitor, evaluate, and alter PSP's training.

III. Conclusions

Although this PSP is well-structured and managed, some improvements are required for enhanced communication among students, faculty, alumni, and stakeholders.

Panel Judgement

Principle 9: On-going monitoring and periodic internal evaluation of postgraduate study Programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The PSP quality should be monitored by a committee formed by a few faculty members and a students' representative. This committee should evaluate and reorganise the PSP once or twice per year. The participation of alumni (PSP graduates) and stakeholders with no voting rights is advisable.

PRINCIPLE 10: REGULAR EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES SHOULD REGULARLY UNDERGO EVALUATION BY PANELS OF EXTERNAL EXPERTS SET BY HAHE, AIMING AT ACCREDITATION. THE TERM OF VALIDITY OF THE ACCREDITATION IS DETERMINED BY HAHE.

HAHE is responsible for administrating the PSP accreditation process which is realised as an external evaluation procedure, and implemented by Panels of independent experts. HAHE grants accreditation of Programmes, based on the Reports delivered by the Panels of external experts, with a specific term of validity, following to which, revision is required. The quality accreditation of the PSP acts as a means for the determination of the degree of compliance of the Programme to the Standards, and as a catalyst for improvement, while opening new perspectives towards the international standing of the awarded degrees. Both academic units and Institutions must consistently consider the conclusions and the recommendations submitted by the Panels of experts for the continuous improvement of the Programme.

Study Programme Compliance

The PSP “Primary Health Care – Social Medical and Pharmaceutical Care” has not been subjected to an accreditation and evaluation process before. In any case, the professors and the director of the Master's Programme were more than willing to participate in the accreditation process. They provided us in a timely manner with the necessary paperwork and were very detailed and honest during the questioning. The faculty seemed to agree with the committee's observations, and they had all the goodwill to correct any failures reported in order to improve the quality of the PSP.

Panel Judgement

Principle 10: Regular external evaluation of postgraduate study Programmes	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The Panel has no further recommendations.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

- This PSP is a timeless and very important Programme for the primary health care within Greece.
- Big diversity of high-quality courses.
- Existence of questionnaires about staff performance.
- Excellent mechanisms to follow up of the students' progression.
- Excellent faculty, highly respected and recognized in the field.
- Invitations for lecturing to several word-leaders in the field.
- Correct number of theoretical courses.
- Satisfactory time for the PSP accomplishment (3 semesters).
- Very high students' satisfaction rate.
- Enthusiastic faculty.
- High interaction between the students and faculty.

II. Areas of Weakness

- Web site does not exist in both Greek and English versions. The Panel was informed after the period of evaluation that a web page is now active in Greek, but not in English.
- Students' and faculty mobility low.
- Library of topics does not exist.
- Many students with partial/full-time jobs affecting the functioning of this PSP.
- No information and use of the academic advisor.

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

- Creation of a web page in both Greek and English. The Panel was informed that this has been done for the Greek version after the evaluation procedure.
- Introduction of several new topics of interest.
- Promotion of students' mobility via Erasmus+ or other similar platforms.
- Creation of an internal formal evaluation committee that will meet once or twice per year to discuss issues related to the improvement of the quality of the PSP.
- Involvement of PSP students, alumni, and stakeholders in the design of the PSP.
- Utilization of the academic advisor.
- Organisation of an informative day (open day) where the various stakeholders could explain the possibilities of mobility, job opportunities, etc.
- Creation of a library of topics.
- Distribution of lecture hours over several days and not just three days in a week.
- Promotion of formal connections with external stakeholders.
- Promotion of courses delivery in English and encouragement to write dissertations in English.
- Students' motivation to participate in more national and international meetings and competitions.
- Promote short-term mobility of PSP students to public health institutions and pharmaceutical companies within Greece.
- Consider increasing the in-person sessions from one to two per semester.

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: **1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10.**

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: **4, 8.**

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are: **None.**

The Principles where failure of compliance was identified are: **None.**

Overall Judgement	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

Name and Surname

- 1. Prof. Efthimios Mitsiadis (Chair)**
- 2. Assoc. Prof. Stefanos Volianitis**
- 3. Dr. Nicholas Ktistakis**
- 4. Mr. Sotiris Mavromatis**