

**Dean's Report of the Branch of the University of Białystok in
Vilnius**
Faculty of Economics and Computer Science
on the Activities of the Branch in the Academic Year
2022/2023

1. Studies and Students

In the academic year 2022/2023, the Branch of the University of Białystok (UwB) in Vilnius offered exclusively full-time degree programmes with a practical profile across three fields of study:

- economics (first- and second-cycle programmes),
- European studies (first-cycle programme),
- computer science (first-cycle programme).

This diversity of fields of study is a defining characteristic of the Branch and has a significant bearing on its operation.

The ceremonial inauguration of the academic year took place on 13 October 2022 at the Dom Kultury Polskiej [Polish Cultural Centre]. The inaugural lecture was delivered by dr hab. Paweł Kowal of the Institute of Political Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences.

As of 31 December 2022, the Branch was educating 216 students, distributed as follows:

- first-cycle economics: 75,
- second-cycle economics: 20,
- European studies: 67,
- computer science: 54.

The Branch of UwB in Vilnius does not enrol students with physical disabilities, a circumstance that results from the building's lack of adaptation for persons with disabilities.

On 26 July 2023, a further diploma ceremony was held at the Dom Kultury Polskiej, marking the conferral of bachelor's degrees upon the XIV cohort and master's degrees upon the VII cohort of graduates of the Branch of UwB in Vilnius. In the academic year 2022/2023, a total of 34 students completed their studies: 9 in first-cycle economics, 11 in European studies, and 9 in computer science. Five students completed second-cycle programmes. Three students received honorary diplomas, and 10 were distinguished for their academic engagement and student activities. Since the Branch's establishment, a total of 907 students have graduated.

As a result of the admissions process for the academic year 2023/2024, 175 students were admitted, including: 39 to first-cycle economics, 35 to European studies, 42 to computer science, 41 to the integrated master's programme in pre-school and early childhood education, and 18 to the second-cycle programme in economics.

By decision of the Lithuanian Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (Studijų Kokybės Vertinimo Centras — SKVC), the integrated master's degree programme in pre-school and early childhood education was entered into the register of study programmes and into the open information system on studies, AIKOS. This decision made it possible to conduct admissions to this field of study for the academic year 2023/2024.

Pursuant to agreements concluded between the University of Białystok and the Archdiocese of Vilnius, and between the Branch of UwB in Vilnius and the Foundation "Samostanowienie" [Self-Determination], a Continuing Education Course in Theology and Catechetics was organised. This course is directed primarily at students of the pre-school and early childhood education programme, as well as at individuals holding pedagogical qualifications who wish to obtain additional credentials entitling them to teach catechesis in Polish-language schools in Lithuania.

In the academic year 2022/2023, teaching activities and consultations at the Branch of UwB in Vilnius were conducted, as a rule, in an in-person format. Upon a duly justified written request from the instructor, certain classes (primarily lectures) were permitted to be delivered in a synchronous remote format.

2. Quality of Education

The Branch of UwB in Vilnius, Faculty of Economics and Computer Science, holds the following accreditations:

- in the area of institutional assessment:

In 2015 — a positive resolution of the Studijų Kokybės Vertinimo Centras (the Lithuanian Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education) and accreditation for a period of 6 years; the next assessment is planned for 2023;

In 2015 — a resolution of the Polish Accreditation Committee [Polska Komisja Akredytacyjna] concerning institutional assessment; the next assessment was scheduled for the academic year 2020/2021;

- in the area of programme assessment:

Field of study: economics — Resolution of the Presidium of the Polish Accreditation Committee of 7 July 2011 — positive assessment;

Field of study: computer science — Resolution No. 779/2021 of the Presidium of the Polish Accreditation Committee of 13 August 2021 — positive assessment for a period of 2 years.

In January 2023, the programme assessment procedure for the field of computer science, conducted by the Polish Accreditation Committee, was initiated. A team appointed by the Director of the Branch prepared a Self-Assessment Report for the field of study, which was submitted to the Polish Accreditation Committee in April 2023. The visit of the Expert Panel was scheduled for 19-20 October 2023.

In accordance with an Order of the Minister of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania, the institutional assessment procedure for the Branch of UwB in Vilnius, conducted by the Studijų Kokybės Vertinimo Centras, was initiated in March 2023. The Self-Assessment Report was prepared by a team appointed for this purpose

and submitted, in accordance with the assessment schedule, on 15 September 2023. The visit of the Expert Panel was scheduled for 7–9 November 2023.

The accreditation teams for the individual fields of study, appointed in the academic year 2020/2021, continued their work, monitoring the educational process in the context of accreditation requirements.

The Branch of UwB in Vilnius operates a Faculty Quality of Education Team as well as field-specific didactic teams for economics, European studies, and computer science. These bodies function on the basis of the *System for the Assurance of Quality of Education at the Branch of the University of Białystok in Vilnius, Faculty of Economics and Computer Science* [System Zapewniania Jakości Kształcenia w Filii Uniwersytetu w Białymstoku w Wilnie Wydziale Ekonomiczno-Informatycznym], adopted by the Branch Council in the academic year 2020/2021. In connection with staffing changes that occurred during the academic year, the membership of the individual teams was updated.

3. Research and Teaching Activities

In the academic year 2022/2023, the Faculty's activities were focused primarily on teaching. Members of staff enhanced their didactic competencies by participating, inter alia, in training sessions conducted within the framework of the project "*Teaching Excellence at the University*" [Doskonałość dydaktyczna uczelni] (covering such topics as student research movements, curriculum design and syllabus preparation, a psychological module, modern technologies in teaching, and the university teaching process), as well as in lectures and workshops organised at UwB as part of the Days of Teaching Quality [Dni Jakości Kształcenia] (including sessions on enhancing remote teaching using the Zoom platform, improving the quality of education through the use of electronic resources, and psychological well-being in the academic workplace). Training sessions on the proper completion of syllabi and on the use of the Electronic Document Management System were also held at the Branch. Staff members additionally participated in open lectures organised at the Branch.

Members of staff at the Branch of UwB also published 14 articles and book chapters in monographs, participated in the editing of 3 monographs, and prepared 6 reviews of scholarly works. They also participated as presenters and attendees in academic and didactic conferences and seminars (20 in total).

In December 2022, the 3rd International Scientific Conference "*Current legal challenges: legislative response to geopolitical and historical problems*" was held in hybrid format, with the Branch of UwB in Vilnius serving as a co-organiser (together with the Faculty of Law of UwB, the Faculty of Law of Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University, and the Yaroslav Mudryi National Law University of Ukraine). The conference was attended by over 50 active participants from numerous research centres, including those from Ukraine, Lithuania, the United Kingdom, Norway, Georgia, Romania, the Czech Republic, Austria, Moldova, and Poland.

In May 2023, the 2nd Interdisciplinary Student Scientific Conference "*Statistics in Everyday Life*" [Statystyka na co dzień] took place, organised by the Faculty of Engineering Management of the Białystok University of Technology in partnership with the Branch of UwB in Vilnius, under the patronage of the Statistical Office in

Białystok, the Polish Statistical Society, and the Polish Section of INFORMS. The conference was held in hybrid format and was attended by over 30 students and doctoral candidates from several Polish universities.

The Branch of UwB in Vilnius also served as a co-organiser (together with the Association of Polish Scientists in Lithuania) of the 10th International Interdisciplinary Scientific Conference "*The Place of Vilnius and Warsaw in Regional and Euro-Atlantic Integration (Disintegration) Processes — Progress, Challenges, Perspectives*" [Miejsce Wilna i Warszawy w procesach integracji (dezintegracji) regionalnej i euroatlantyckiej — postępy, wyzwania, perspektywy], held in Vilnius from 1 to 3 June 2023. The conference was attended by nearly 80 scholars, primarily from Poland and Lithuania, as well as from the Czech Republic, Ukraine, and Belarus.

In the academic year 2022/2023 (18 May 2023), a scientific seminar was also held with the participation of staff and students of the Branch and invited guests, on the topic "*Human Rights of Particularly Vulnerable Groups — Legal and Practical Aspects*" [Prawa człowieka grup szczególnie wrażliwych — aspekty prawne i praktyczne].

From 23 to 25 May 2023, as part of the Erasmus+ programme, the Branch of UwB in Vilnius hosted Prof. Alexander Masharsky from the Baltic International Academy (Riga, Latvia), who delivered a series of open lectures for staff and students.

In May 2023, guest lectures by representatives of American universities were also delivered in remote format:

29 May 2023 — Prof. Robin Esposito J.D. (Faculty of Legal Studies, Quinnipiac University, USA), "American Bill of Rights in context of federalism";

15 May 2023 — Prof. Gedeon W. Werner (Central European Institute; Quinnipiac University, USA), "Regional Economic Integration — general overview with a bit more on EU-US Transatlantic Trade and Investment Pact".

In June 2023, two research and teaching staff members of the Branch participated in a training visit to the University of Ostrava under the Erasmus+ programme.

4. Student Activities

The Faculty is home to a Student Self-Government Council and three student research circles in the fields of economics, European studies, and computer science.

Members of the Computer Science Student Research Circle (KNSI) continued their work on the prototype of the *Student Research Archive ARPAS* system. The European Studies Student Research Circle (KNSE) also resumed its activities; its members held a substantive meeting on the role of Lithuania in NATO and visited sites associated with events accompanying the NATO Summit in Vilnius. The activities of the Economics Student Research Circle [Translator's note: both the economics and European studies circles share the acronym KNSE in the original Polish text] were suspended.

Within the framework of the Erasmus+ programme, two female students of European studies undertook study periods at Comenius University in Bratislava (Slovakia) and at the University of Split (Croatia).

The Faculty organised a series of guest lectures and meetings with representatives of the labour market, primarily from Lithuania as well as from other European countries:

- 26 January 2023 — meeting with a parliamentary assistant in the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania;
- 1 February 2023 — meeting with the Deputy Mayor of Vilnius;
- 28 February 2023 — open lecture: "How to Promote a Business Online?";
- 2 March 2023 — meeting with a representative of Microsoft Dublin;
- 8 March 2023 — meeting with representatives of the company GO-ERP;
- 9 March 2023 — meeting "On Work Experience" with a representative of an IT sector company;
- 13 March 2023 — open lecture: "Invisible Side of Telecommunication";
- 16 March 2023 — open lecture: "Mechanisms for Monitoring the Implementation of Human Rights under the European Convention on Human Rights and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, and the Role of Non-Governmental Organisations (with Reference to the European Human Rights Foundation)" by a representative of the European Human Rights Foundation;
- 17 March 2023 — meeting with a representative of UAB Medelsta;
- 15 May 2023 — guest lecture by Prof. Gedeon W. Werner (Central European Institute; Quinnipiac University, USA): "Regional Economic Integration — general overview with a bit more on EU-US Transatlantic Trade and Investment Pact";
- 18 May 2023 — meeting with a representative of the company Visma;
- 18 May 2023 — seminar: "Human Rights of Particularly Vulnerable Groups — Legal and Practical Aspects";
- 23-25 May 2023 — open lectures by Prof. Alexander Masharsky of the Baltic International Academy (Riga, Latvia);
- 29 May 2023 — guest lecture by Prof. Robin Esposito J.D. (Faculty of Legal Studies, Quinnipiac University, USA): "American Bill of Rights in context of federalism".

Preventive lectures on broadly understood safety, delivered by police representatives, were also continued.

Students of the Branch participated actively in the following events and projects, some of which they organised or co-organised:

- 21 October 2022 — annual clean-up of graves at the Rossa Cemetery [Stara Rossia];
- 11 November 2022 — celebrations of the National Independence Day of Poland at the Rossa Cemetery;
- 30 November 2022 — expert panel at the Palace of the Grand Dukes of Lithuania on the publication "Documents on the History of Polish-Soviet Relations 1939-1945";
- 13 January 2023 — commemoration of the Day of the Defenders of Freedom and the lighting of candles at the television tower;
- 19 January 2023 — business event "Let Us Together Build the Success of the Vilnius Region, Changing Our Lives and Business for the Better in 2023" under the

auspices of the Polish Business Leaders Academy;

- 24 January 2023 — visit to the National Museum — Palace of the Grand Dukes of Lithuania;
- 17 February 2023 — visit to the House of Signatories [Dom Sygnatariuszy];
- 1-3 March 2023 — integration and cultural training within the framework of the project "Local University, Global Opportunity — The University of Białystok on the Path to Internationalisation";
- 5 April 2023 — presentation of Mirosław Kapcewicz's book entitled "The Policy of the Belarusian Authorities towards the Polish Minority in the Years 1994-2022" in the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania;
- 28-30 April 2023 — workshops within the Erasmus+ partnership "Empowerment of Young People from National Minorities in the European, National and Local Context";
- 3 May 2022 [Translator's note: date as given in the original] — commemorations at the Rossa Cemetery on the occasion of the Day of the Polish Diaspora and Poles Abroad, Polish Flag Day, and the anniversary of the Constitution of 3 May;
- 6 May 2023 — parade of Polishness through the streets of Vilnius on the occasion of the Day of the Polish Diaspora and Poles Abroad and the anniversary of the Constitution of 3 May;
- 12-14 May 2023 — Training and Integration Trip "LIDER 2023".

The Student Self-Government Council also organised integration events for students, including a freshers' welcome [otrząsiny] for new students of the Branch, a St. Nicholas Day party at an ice rink, and a Christmas Eve gathering [spotkanie opłatkowe] for students and staff of the Branch.

In addition, students supported the management and staff of the Branch in promotional activities by participating in "Career Days" [Dni Kariery] at the Adam Mickiewicz Secondary School in Vilnius and in promotional visits to Polish schools in the Vilnius region. They also took part in the organisation and conduct, on 10 May 2023, of a computer science competition for pupils of years 10-12.

The Association of Polish Scientists in Lithuania awarded a prize for the best master's or bachelor's thesis to two graduates of the Branch.

The student internship programme organised by the Branch was carried out, within the framework of which study visits to the European Parliament continued at the invitation of Member of the European Parliament Waldemar Tomaszewski. In the preceding academic year, two students of the European studies field of study participated in these visits.

In the academic year 2022/2023, students made use of the UwB scholarship offer. In particular, 2 students received Rector's Scholarships. The scholarship programme in cooperation with the National Agency for Academic Exchange [Narodowa Agencja Wymiany Akademickiej — NAWA] was also continued, with 120 individuals receiving a scholarship each semester.

5. Faculty Staff

In the academic year 2022/2023, teaching at the Branch of UwB in Vilnius was carried out by 13 members of staff employed at the Faculty of Economics and Computer Science on a full-time or part-time basis, including 3 independent researchers [samodzielni pracownicy naukowi], 4 holders of the doctoral degree, and 6 holders of the professional title of master.

The Faculty was supported in its teaching activities by academic staff from five units of UwB: the Faculty of Economics and Finance, the Faculty of Mathematics, the Faculty of Law, the Institute of Computer Science, and the Institute of Management (34 individuals in total).

In the academic year 2022/2023, collaboration was also continued with external practitioners who conducted teaching activities at the Branch on the basis of civil-law contracts. There were 9 such individuals.

The Branch of UwB in Vilnius also employed 10 administrative staff members; during the year, a change occurred in the position of IT technician.

6. Engagement with the Surrounding Community

In the preceding academic year, staff and students of the Branch of UwB in Vilnius continued to hold regular meetings with pupils of Polish-language schools in Vilnius and the surrounding areas. Meetings with secondary school graduates and pupils of years 10–11 were attended by the Branch Directorate, staff of the Dean's Office and the Branch's Career and Promotion Office, and student representatives. In addition, the Directorate, staff, and students presented the Branch's educational offer during "Career Days" [Dni Kariery] at the Adam Mickiewicz Secondary School in Vilnius, at a meeting with pupils and parents from Polish-language schools organised at the Dom Kultury Polskiej in Vilnius, and at an online meeting with young people from a Polish-language school in Riga.

Open lectures and meetings of students and staff with representatives of companies and institutions operating on the Lithuanian labour market in various sectors, including IT, logistics, finance, and law enforcement, were organised. For the first time, meetings with representatives of the labour markets of other European countries also took place.

The Branch of UwB in Vilnius also co-organised, together with the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Vilnius and the Polish Entrepreneurship Forum "Korona", a meeting of Vilnius-based entrepreneurs with lawyers — research and teaching staff of the University of Białystok and the University of Wrocław — dedicated to forms of cross-border economic cooperation between Poland and Lithuania, with particular emphasis on cross-border company mergers.

Students and staff continued the tradition of participating in the maintenance of graves at the Rossa Cemetery, took part in the celebrations of Polish and Lithuanian Independence Days, the Day of the Defenders of Freedom on 13 January, the National Constitution Day of 3 May, the Day of the Polish Diaspora and Poles Abroad, and participated in other significant events of a civic and community character.

The Branch Directorate held a series of meetings with representatives of employers, Lithuanian universities, local government authorities, organisations, and associations,

including meetings with:

- Konstanty Radziwiłł, Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to Lithuania;
- Urszula Grebieniow, Counsellor at the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Vilnius;
- Andrzej Łuksza, member of the Polish Entrepreneurship Forum "Korona";
- Artur Ludkowski, Director of the Dom Kultury Polskiej in Vilnius, adviser to the Prime Minister of Lithuania on national minority affairs;
- Odeta Merfeldaitė, Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of Mykolas Romeris University in Vilnius, and Barbara Stankiewicz and Jolanta Urbanowicz, research and teaching staff of that university;
- Jan Jarecki, representative of the company GO ERP.

The Deputy Director of the Branch also attended the annual meeting at the headquarters of the National Agency for Academic Exchange [Narodowa Agencja Wymiany Akademickiej — NAWA], with representatives of institutions implementing Scholarship Programmes in cooperation with NAWA.

From 15 to 17 May 2023, events organised as part of the 19th Podlasie Festival of Science and Art [XIX Podlaski Festiwal Nauki i Sztuki] were held at the Branch of UwB in Vilnius. These comprised the following lectures:

- "Several Famous Economists Worth Knowing";
- "Career Planning — What Is Worth Reflecting On?";
- "Computer Science Mathematics";
- "Nicolaus Copernicus — Astronomer and Economist";
- "Statistics Is Not Difficult — Especially at the School-Leaving Examination!".

The events were open to the public and were attended, inter alia, by staff and students of the Branch as well as by pupils of Polish-language schools from Vilnius and the Vilnius region.

All events held at the Branch and related to its functioning were covered by Polish-language media, including: TVP Wilno, the radio station "Znad Wili", the Polish-language programme of Lithuanian Radio, the weekly "Tygodnik Wileńszczyzna", the newspaper "Kurier Wileński", and the online portals "zw.lt", "Wilnoteka", "l24.lt", and others.

7. Premises and Facilities

In the preceding academic year, intensive construction work continued on the new Branch headquarters at ul. Aguonų 22. Completion of the investment project is anticipated for the first half of 2024. Activities related to the implementation of the investment are overseen by UwB Chancellor Tomasz Zalewski, with the involvement of the Branch management.

The lease agreement for the premises at ul. Kalvarijų 135 was extended. Minor renovation works were carried out in a portion of the premises. Additionally, one further room was rented for use as a teaching classroom.

The remaining premises and facilities conditions remain unchanged.

DEAN

of the Branch of the University of Białystok in Vilnius

Faculty of Economics and Computer Science

dr hab. Jerzy Halicki, prof. UwB