

# **Director's Report of the Branch of UwB, Faculty of Economics and Computer Science, in Vilnius for the Year 2019/2020**

## **1. Preliminary Remarks**

The appointment by the Rector of UwB of the new management of the Branch of UwB in Vilnius, Faculty of Economics and Computer Science, in the persons of dr hab. Adam Doliwa, prof. UwB (Director of the Branch) and dr Arkadiusz Bieliński (Deputy Director of the Branch), took place in July and September 2019, in connection with the entry into force of new legal regulations (the Act of 20 July 2018 — Law on Higher Education and Science [Prawo o szkolnictwie wyższym i nauce], and the Statute of UwB of 26 June 2019) establishing new principles of operation and the organisational structure of the University with effect from 1 October 2019.

During that period (July–August 2019), the first preparatory steps were taken that were necessary for the new Branch management to commence their term of office smoothly and in continuity with the mission of the Branch of UwB in Vilnius, as well as for the commencement of the new academic year. These consisted primarily of coordinating activities with the Rectorate of UwB and holding meetings and discussions with the outgoing Branch management. A gracious gesture on the part of Prof. Mieczysława Zdanowicz, Dean of the Branch of UwB in Vilnius, was the invitation extended to the Director of the Branch of UwB in Vilnius *in spe* to participate, on 24 July 2019, in the ceremonial diploma ceremony organised for Branch graduates at the Dom Kultury Polskiej [Polish Cultural Centre] in Vilnius, with the participation of Branch staff and numerous distinguished guests. Attendance at this ceremony provided an initial opportunity to become acquainted with the people, the venue, and the operating conditions of the Branch.

In September 2019, the new Branch management organised and participated in a working meeting with staff of the Branch of UwB in Vilnius, the purpose of which was to ascertain the needs and expectations of the staff and to present the Branch Directorate's plan of action for the 2019–2020 term of office.

At that time, the Director of the Branch submitted a request to the Rector of UwB for the adoption of the necessary organisational decisions in accordance with the University Statute; in particular with regard to: the appointment of a Deputy Director; the definition of the organisational structure of the Branch through the establishment of the Department of Economics and European Studies and the Department of Computer Science; the appointment of heads of departments; the establishment of the Branch Library and the appointment of its head; and the appointment of the Branch Council.

In September 2019, the Branch Directorate also undertook necessary activities in the area of finalising student admissions and supporting (then) department heads in the process of determining the teaching loads of instructors who were to deliver the study programme in accordance with the timetable being prepared for the forthcoming academic year.

## **2. Inauguration of the Academic Year and Plan of Action**

In accordance with academic tradition and custom, on 1 October 2019 the solemn 13th inauguration of the academic year at the Faculty of Economics and Computer Science of the Branch of UwB took place, held at the Dom Kultury Polskiej in Vilnius. It opened with a welcome address to the assembled distinguished guests, staff, and students by the Director of the Branch, in which he declared that the goal of the Branch management in the commencing academic year would be to base cooperation within the Branch and in external relations on mutual respect, trust, and adherence to the law and good practice. The Director of the Branch also declared that the Branch would seek to cooperate and exchange experiences with Lithuanian universities, would seek to enrich the faculty library's collection, improve the organisation of the Faculty's work, encourage student engagement in professional practice, student research circles, and the organisation of social, cultural, and scientific events. The inauguration included an inaugural lecture entitled "European Principles and Standards of Territorial Organisation of the State", delivered by prof. dr hab. Mirosław Stec of the Jagiellonian University in Kraków.

## **3. Participation in the Work of the UwB Senate and in Meetings of the Rector-Dean College**

During the 2019–2020 term of office, the Director of the Branch of UwB in Vilnius participated (from September 2019 to August 2020), as a representative of the interests and affairs of the Vilnius Branch, in the monthly sessions of the UwB Senate as an invited guest, and in the monthly sessions of the Rector-Dean College as a member thereof. This provided an opportunity to inform the Rectorate and the University community of the activities and needs of the Branch in Vilnius, particularly with regard to the construction of a new headquarters.

## **4. Branch Council**

The Branch Council, composed of the Director of the Branch as its chair and — appointed by the Rector of UwB upon the motion of the Director of the Branch — dr Arkadiusz Bieliński (Deputy Director of the Branch), prof. Mieczysław Muraszkiwicz, dr Marek Kruk, and p. Olga Mindiul — as an advisory body, supported the Branch management in their activities and provided appropriate guidance throughout the term of office. During its sessions (21 October 2019, 16 December 2019, 9 June 2020, 17 July 2020), the most important formal matters were resolved and the directions of activity of the Branch of UwB in Vilnius were discussed. Sessions of the Council during the Covid-19 pandemic were held in remote mode on the Blackboard Collaborate platform.

## **5. Committees and Teams**

During the term of office, the management of the Branch of UwB in Vilnius established, for the purpose of carrying out routine tasks and specific, extraordinary objectives, various types of teams and committees, including in particular: the Faculty Quality of Education Team (2019/2020), the Faculty Team for the Assessment of Academic Teachers, the Scholarship Committee, and the team for admissions for the academic year 2020/2021.

During this period, representatives of the Branch management were also appointed to UwB Senate committees — the Director of the Branch to the Senate Committee on Employment and Academic Promotions; the Deputy Director of the Branch to the Senate Committee on Education.

## **6. Engagement with the Socio-Economic Environment and Support for Student Organisations**

In October 2019, with the support of the Branch management, an integration camp was held for first-year students of all fields of study at the Branch of UwB in Vilnius.

In early October 2019, in accordance with tradition, students and lecturers of the Branch of the University of Białystok in Vilnius, Faculty of Economics and Computer Science, together with the Director dr hab. Adam Doliwa, prof. UwB, and his Deputy dr Arkadiusz K. Bieliński, participated in the action of tidying military graves at the Rossa Cemetery [Stara Rossia] in Vilnius, thereby paying tribute to those who fought for our present freedom.

In November 2019, at the Dom Kultury Polskiej in Vilnius, the project "Your Own Path to Success 2019" was launched, financed from the funds of the Senate Chancellery of the Republic of Poland through the Foundation Aid to Poles in the East [Fundacja Pomoc Polakom na Wschodzie] and by Orlen Lietuva, in cooperation with the Warsaw School of Economics [Szkoła Główna Handlowa w Warszawie] and the Dom Kultury Polskiej in Vilnius, in which both the Branch management (a presentation by the Director and Deputy Director of the Branch on its activities formed part of the project programme) and Branch students were active participants. The principal beneficiaries of the project were Branch students, particularly members of the F. A. von Hayek Economics Student Research Circle and students of the Faculty of Economics and Computer Science of UwB interested in management, economics, or financial knowledge.

Also in November 2019, the main event in student life — namely the freshers' welcome [otrzesiny] for first-year students of all fields of study — was held at the Faculty of Economics and Computer Science of the Branch of UwB in Vilnius, with the support of the Branch management.

On 22 November 2019, in Vilnius, the burial ceremony of the ashes of the January Uprising insurgents took place. Following a solemn Mass at the Archcathedral Basilica of St. Stanislaus and St. Vladislaus, the ashes of the Insurgents — who had been secretly buried by the tsarist authorities at Łukiszki Square in Vilnius — were laid to rest at the Rossa Cemetery. On behalf of His Magnificence the Rector of the University of Białystok, prof. dr hab. Robert W. Ciborowski, tribute to the ashes of the heroes of the January Uprising was paid by the Director of the Branch of the University of Białystok in Vilnius, Faculty of Economics and Computer Science, dr hab. Adam Doliwa, prof. UwB, together with the Deputy Director dr Arkadiusz K. Bieliński.

In December 2019, representatives of the company GO-ERP visited the Faculty of Economics and Computer Science of the Branch of UwB in Vilnius; one of the company representatives present at the meeting was Edgar Jan Novogrodski, a computer science graduate of our Faculty, who presented the company's activities and the possibility of internships for Branch students.

In December 2019, as part of the traditional celebration of St. Nicholas Day, the Student Self-Government, with the support of the Branch management of UwB in Vilnius, organised a joint bowling outing for Branch students. Judging by student accounts, it was a well-spent time together, which served not only as entertainment but also as an opportunity for integration and better acquaintance among students from different years and fields of study. Also in December, a joint Faculty Christmas Eve gathering [Wigilia] took place with the participation of the Branch management.

During this period (October–December 2019 and early 2020), the Branch management held numerous meetings and discussions (with representatives of the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Vilnius, Lithuanian and Polish members of parliament, entrepreneurs, scholars, directors of Polish-language schools in Lithuania, and media representatives) with the aim of building a favourable image of the Branch, undertaking promotional activities, and seeking organisational and financial support for planned research initiatives.

The further development of active operations, including the implementation of events already prepared, was interrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic, which, in consequence, led at the end of February 2020 to, inter alia, the closure of state borders and the introduction of a so-called lockdown, which entirely curtailed the normal activities of the Branch.

It was only in July 2020 that the Branch of UwB in Vilnius, together with its partners — the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Lithuania, the Polish Entrepreneurship Forum "Korona", and the Local Government of the Šalčininkai [Solecznicki] District — implemented a project aimed at establishing close cooperation between pupils of Polish-language schools in the Vilnius region, the academic community of the Branch of UwB in Vilnius, and Polish businesses operating in Lithuania. The event finalising the project was a joint kayak trip by entrepreneurs, students, and pupils of Polish-language schools — participants in the aforementioned competition — which took place in the Šalčininkai District on 18 July 2020.

## **7. Organisational and Research Activities**

The management of the Branch of UwB in Vilnius during the 2019–2020 term of office undertook actions aimed at activating its staff in the area of research, including in cooperation with other bodies, including Lithuanian academic and didactic units and research organisations. The Branch Directorate established contacts and cooperation with:

- 1) the Association of Polish Scientists in Lithuania (the Branch of UwB in Vilnius assumed patronage over the 7th International Interdisciplinary Scientific Conference entitled *The Polish-Bolshevik War and Its Implications for Europe (Historical, Geopolitical, Economic, and Cultural Aspects)*);
- 2) Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas (joint organisation of a scientific conference on Sovietology);
- 3) the University of Vilnius (the Director of the Branch of UwB in Vilnius sent a congratulatory letter to the Rector-elect of UW; a meeting and discussions on cooperation were planned — which did not take place due to the pandemic; Prof. Vytautas Nekrosius of the University of Vilnius was to have participated in the

Vilnius Scientific Seminar);

4) the Warsaw School of Economics [SGH w Warszawie] (joint organisation of the Vilnius Business Academy).

The principal research project, which in the intention of the Branch management of UwB in Vilnius was to become the Branch's academic calling card and a platform for cooperation with Lithuanian academic circles, and was to be held as a regular, annual research event, was to be the Vilnius Scientific Seminars [Wileńskie Seminaria Naukowe]. The Vilnius Scientific Seminar 2020 was prepared in every respect — programmatically, academically, and organisationally — by the Branch management (including the preparation of a project website: [www.uwb.lt/piip2020](http://www.uwb.lt/piip2020)); its theme was to be the relationship between law and computer science, analysed against the background of the socio-economic and cultural phenomenon of the use of artificial intelligence by contemporary human beings. Regrettably, this event had to be cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The undersigned wishes at this point to express sincere gratitude to Prof. Mieczysław Muraszkievicz, Head of the Department of Computer Science, for his invaluable assistance, which stemmed from his extraordinary energy, initiative, and willingness to work selflessly for the benefit of the Branch of UwB in Vilnius.

In addition, the Branch of UwB in Vilnius was a co-organiser, together with the Department of Agricultural Law of the Faculty of Law of UwB, of the scientific conference entitled *The Concept and Subject Matter of Agricultural Law in the Twenty-First Century* [Pojęcie i przedmiot prawa rolnego w XXI wieku], which was due to take place from 13 to 16 May 2020 — again an event fully prepared but thwarted by Covid-19. It is worth noting that 14 May was designated as the date for a solemn scientific session dedicated to the life and scientific and organisational activities, including in the Vilnius region, of Prof. Andrzej Stelmachowski, which was to be held — at the invitation of Her Excellency Urszula Doroszevska — at the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Vilnius. This session was to be attended, in addition to the conference participants, by numerous invited guests, including the management of the Andrzej Stelmachowski School in Stare Troki [Trakai].

On 18 November 2019, students, lecturers, and other staff of the Branch of UwB in Vilnius, Faculty of Economics and Computer Science, had the opportunity to attend an open lecture delivered at the invitation of the Branch Directorate by the Head of the Institute of Social Research and Employment [Instytut Badań Społecznych i Pracy], Prof. Bogusław Gruzewski. The Professor captivated the audience with an engaging treatment of the factors of a successful career.

On 6 December 2019, at the Faculty of Economics and Computer Science of the Branch of UwB in Vilnius, an open lecture took place at the invitation of the Branch Directorate, delivered by dr Stefan Babiarz — a Judge of the Supreme Administrative Court [Naczelny Sąd Administracyjny] in Warsaw — on the subject of tax law in Poland and Lithuania.

On 26 February 2020, at the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Vilnius, the Branch Directorate of UwB participated in the ceremonial opening of a two-day scientific conference on the origins of Sovietology within the framework of the Eastern Institute [Instytut Wschodni] established in Vilnius in 1930. The conference was organised by the Faculty of Political Science and Diplomacy of Vytautas Magnus University, the

Centre for Eastern European Studies of the University of Warsaw, the Wróblewski Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, the Embassy of the Republic of Poland, and the Polish Institute in Vilnius. The Branch of the University of Białystok in Vilnius, Faculty of Economics and Computer Science, was also a co-organiser of the scientific conference. The Director of the Branch of UwB — dr hab. Adam Doliwa, prof. UwB — the Deputy Director dr Arkadiusz K. Bieliński, as well as lecturers and students (who actively assisted with the organisation of the conference) participated in the conference.

## **8. Decisions of the Branch Management on Distance Learning**

In view of the necessity of organising teaching activities at the Branch of UwB in Vilnius under conditions of the Covid-19 pandemic, and following the relevant decisions of the Rector of UwB and the orders of the state authorities of the Republic of Lithuania and the Republic of Poland, the Branch Directorate prepared and issued the following decisions:

- a) Decision of the Director of the Branch of the University of Białystok in Vilnius, Faculty of Economics and Computer Science, of 23 June 2020, amending the Decision of the Deputy Director of the Branch of the University of Białystok in Vilnius, Faculty of Economics and Computer Science, of 25 March 2020, the Decision of the Director of the Branch of the University of Białystok in Vilnius, Faculty of Economics and Computer Science, of 8 May 2020, and the Decision of the Director of the Branch of the University of Białystok in Vilnius, Faculty of Economics and Computer Science, of 4 June 2020;
- b) Decision of the Director of the Branch of the University of Białystok in Vilnius, Faculty of Economics and Computer Science, of 4 June 2020, on ensuring compliance with applicable safety requirements during the delivery of teaching activities in direct-contact format and on the principles governing the conduct of diploma examinations by 30 September 2020 at the Faculty of Economics and Computer Science of the Branch of the University of Białystok in Vilnius;
- c) Decision of the Director of the Branch of the University of Białystok in Vilnius, Faculty of Economics and Computer Science, of 8 May 2020, on announcing the organisational schedule of the summer semester of the academic year 2019/2020 for all fields of study offered at the Faculty of Economics and Computer Science of the Branch of UwB in Vilnius, and on teaching activities and the forms of verification of learning outcomes achieved in the summer semester of the academic year 2019/2020 at the Faculty of Economics and Computer Science of the Branch of UwB in Vilnius;
- d) Announcement of the Director of the Branch of UwB in Vilnius of 15 April 2020, on the rules governing the use of the Library of the Faculty of Economics and Computer Science;
- e) Decision of the Deputy Director of the Branch of the University of Białystok in Vilnius, Faculty of Economics and Computer Science, of 25 March 2020, on distance learning as a form of conducting teaching activities at the Faculty of Economics and Computer Science of the Branch of UwB in Vilnius;
- f) Decision of the Deputy Director of the Branch of the University of Białystok in Vilnius, Faculty of Economics and Computer Science, of 12 March 2020, on

distance learning.

## **9. Admissions**

The Branch management coordinated the development and implementation of a strategy for conducting information and promotional activities in the area of recruiting new students to all fields of study. On 11 February 2020, the International Educational Fair STUDIJS 2020 opened at the LITEXPO exhibition centre. As in every year, the Branch of the University of Białystok in Vilnius, Faculty of Economics and Computer Science, had its stand in the main exhibition hall (hall 5, sector D) — where all Lithuanian higher education institutions present their offerings — and presented its most recent educational offer. Staffing the fair stand alongside students and lecturers were the Director of the Branch of UwB — dr hab. Adam Doliwa, prof. UwB — and the Deputy Director dr Arkadiusz K. Bieliński. The Faculty of Economics and Computer Science stand was visited by Her Excellency Urszula Doroszevska, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Poland to the Republic of Lithuania.

The above activities yielded very good results; admissions across all offered fields of study were successful — approximately 120 persons were admitted in total; of particular value was the recruitment of 17 persons to the first year of second-cycle Economics.

## **10. Conclusion**

In conclusion, I wish to express my gratitude to all those who made it possible for myself and my Deputy to work for the development of the Branch of UwB in Vilnius during the 2019–2020 term of office and for the benefit of its entire social environment — within the framework and for the good of which the Branch fulfils its noble mission. I also wish my successor, Prof. Jerzy Halicki, every success in his work for the wonderful community of the Polish diaspora in Lithuania.

Białystok, 15 December 2020

**Adam Doliwa**

**Director of the Branch of UwB in Vilnius**

**Faculty of Economics and Computer Science**