

Željko Oset

UNIVERSITY OF
NOVA GORICA AND THE
SLOVENIAN ACADEMIC
COMMUNITY



University of Nova Gorica Press

2022

Title:

University of Nova Gorica and the Slovenian Academic Community

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Reviewed by:

Prof. dr. Iztok Arčon and prof. ddr. Igor Grdina

English translation:

Anglicus, Tomaž Eržen s.p.

Original title:

Univerza v Novi Gorici in slovenska akademska skupnost

Publisher:

University of Nova Gorica Press, Vipavska 13,
SI-5000 Nova Gorica, Slovenia

Printed by:

A-media d.o.o.

Publication year:

2022

Number of copies:

300

ISBN 978-961-7025-21-7

CIP - Kataložni zapis o publikaciji
Narodna in univerzitetna knjižnica, Ljubljana

378.4(497.4Nova Gorica)

OSET, Željko

University of Nova Gorica and the Slovenian academic community / Željko
Oset ; [English translation Anglicus]. - Nova Gorica : University of Nova
Gorica Press, 2022

Prevod dela: Univerza v Novi Gorici in slovenska akademska skupnost
ISBN 978-961-7025-21-7
COBISS.SI-ID 84037379

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- AThEME - Advancing the European Multilingual Experience
- AU - School of Arts
- CITIUS - Interregional Centre of Photonic Technologies for Ultrafast spectroscopy
- EPFL - École polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne
- ETH Zürich - Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich
- EU - European Union
- FH - School of Humanities
- FN - School of Natural Sciences
- FPŠ - Postgraduate School
- FTE - Full-time equivalent of employment (1700/annum)
- FVV - School for Viticulture and Enology
- HERA - Humanities in the European Research Area
- IJS - Institute Jožef Stefan
- InPrime - abbreviation for an initiative of innovation breakthrough of the Primorska region
- ISCED - International Standard Classification of Education
- LDS - Liberal Democrats of Slovenia
- MONG - City Municipality of Nova Gorica
- NAKVIS - Agency for quality assurance in higher education and for developing and consulting work in Slovenian higher education

- PNG - Nova Gorica Polytechnic
(in French Polytechnique de Nova Gorica)
- PRIMEX – Primorje Import Export (a company)
- PTP - Primorska Technology Park
- SAZU - Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts
- SES - School of Environmental Sciences
- SKD - Slovenian Christian Democrats
- SLS - Slovenian People's Party
- SUNGREEN - Strengthening University of Nova Gorica Research
Potential in Environmental Sciences and
Novel Nanomaterials
- SVŠ RS - Council for Higher Education of the
Republic of Slovenia
- ŠIPK - Students Innovative Projects for the Benefit of Society
- UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization
- ZLSD - United List of Social Democrats
- ZRC SAZU - Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy
of Sciences and Arts

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“PREHISTORY”: SLOVENIAN ACADEMIC COMMUNITY AND TRANSITION

Twenty-five years for a higher education institution (the School of Environmental Sciences between September 1995 and December 1998, Nova Gorica Polytechnic until March 2006, and the University of Nova Gorica since then) is a short period, but long enough for its genesis and role in Slovenian academic environment to be analysed, and, of course, for the opportunity to record the views and assessments of the generation of founders, a group that began to design its intervention in Slovenian higher education in the spring of 1993.¹

The group consisted of Danilo Zavrtanik, director of the Jožef Stefan Institute (IJS), an astrophysicist, the chemist Mladen Franko, who was a researcher at IJS (expert in the study of water pollution) and had just returned from doctoral studies in the United States (Marquette University), Boštjan Žekš, who was a physicist and an influential member of the Slovenian Academy

¹ Interview with Danilo Zavrtanik (15 June 2019), Boštjan Žekš (15 January 2020), Mladen Franko (11 July 2019); UNG Archives, Establishment of UNG; com. Franko (1997), p. 97-101.

of Sciences and arts (SAZU), especially in the research policy creation in the Republic of Slovenia and who was a chairman of the IJS board, and Mr. Borut Lavrič, a lawyer at IJS. The group's common denominator was the assessment of the necessity for structural reforms in the Slovenian academic system.² These protagonists therefore advocated the implementation of reform that would establish the conditions for broad autonomy, academic freedom and the decisive influence of researchers in the Slovenian academic system.³ For Zavrtanik and Franko, who originated from Primorska region, the establishment of a higher education institution in the domestic region was an added value and their contribution to their "home" region.

The necessity for systemic transformation was also pointed out by others, mostly those returning from study abroad, who expected that it would be possible to copy Western organisational patterns and consistently implement academic culture based on meritocracy due to ongoing political, administrative, legal and managerial breakthroughs, and last but not least Slovenia's independence.⁴

With the formal abolition of self-government and then with the adoption of the Institutions Act in 1991, the process of the status transformation of Slovenian higher education institutions began. This also included reforming higher education programmes, strengthening efforts for quality teaching and international cooperation, and establishing institutional conditions for (international) scientific cooperation. As well as, of course, the return of Slovenian scientists from studies or post-doctoral training to a newly established Slovenia.⁵ This tradition of post-doctoral training - as a kind of

² At the beginning of the 1990s, the Slovenian academic space consisted of two universities and research institutes which were established immediately after the Second World War within the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts.

³ Interview with Danilo Zavrtanik (15 June 2019), Boštjan Žekš (15 January 2020) and Mladen Franko (11 July 2019); UNG Archives, Establishment of UNG; see also Franko (1997), p. 97-101.

⁴ Turk (1990).

⁵ Oset (2016), p. 139-140; Oset (2017), p. 25-30.

Slovenian form of disabling the “inzucht” - was initially established among physicists and chemists, especially IJS associates.⁶

Slovenia’s academic potential was concentrated in Ljubljana (at the University of Ljubljana and the institutes established by SAZU, including the IJS, the Institute of Chemistry and the institute under the helm of the Research Centre of SAZU), and the Maribor centre was strengthened under the auspices of the University of Maribor.⁷ The general characteristics of the Slovenian community in the Yugoslav period were, initially, a reliance on established European academic standards, frequent reforms, relatively modest state investments into science, the growth of the Slovenian academic community after World War II - more dynamic only in the 1970s - and frequent threats of closure and downsizing.⁸ Above all, the latter contributed to the building of a “bunker” mentality in already established institutions, which a priori rejected “reforms” and the establishment of new institutions.⁹

Thus, the University of Ljubljana understood the establishment of higher education institutions in Maribor at the end of the 1950s as a form of pressure to implement higher education reform, resulting in the introduction of a three-tier system of higher education study. The main argument was the expectation that studies would be shortened; Aleš Gabrič calls this a Bologna reform before the Bologna reform.¹⁰ At the same time, SAZU understood the aforementioned reform, which heralded the focus of research at universities, as an attempt to take away its institutes. The reform was only partially implemented, and mistrust continued between the institutions.¹¹

⁶ Interview with Tanja Peterlin Neumaier (October 29 2019); see also Zupančič (1997), p. 73-76.

⁷ Bračič (1983), p. 247-256; Gabrič (2000), p. 55-56; Oset (2017), p. 57-148.

⁸ Oset (2017), p. 126-140.

⁹ Oset (2017), p. 113-118; Grafenauer (1969), p. 148-150; Gabrič (1994), p. 105-120.

¹⁰ Gabrič (1994), p. 105-120.

¹¹ Oset (2017), p. 113-118.

As the largest Slovenian research institute, IJS was financed from federal funds and remained outside these divisions, i.e., with substantial financial support, while maintaining its commitment to international cooperation. This was certainly a challenge after 1970, when financial maintenance was taken over from the Yugoslavian federal fund for nuclear research by the Slovenian budget, and afterward by the self-governing Research Community of Slovenia.¹²

The above-mentioned frictions, which were also the result of competition for limited funding, subsided in the early 1980s, due to stabilisation measures that drastically reduced funding for science, and severely limited the procurement of instruments and literature, as well as international cooperation. The difficult situation brought the academic community together, which resulted in a greater community investment in science.¹³ The situation improved somewhat after 1985, when science was included in the concept of the League of Communists of Slovenia under the strategy of the long-term development of Slovenia until 2000, also known under the slogan of “Europe now”. The biggest structural shift was made with a project involving 2000 young researchers and the systematic training of researchers for the rejuvenation of academic institutions and for greater academic flow. The aim was to transform the academic system and to strengthen cooperation with the economy in accordance with the Western European model.¹⁴

The 2000 Young Researchers project relaunched the discussion regarding Slovenian education and its relevance. Proposals for the structural adjustment of the Slovenian education system to modern European trends enjoyed a high degree of consensus, with less attention paid to implementation, with the exception of ensuring political support. The most sensitive question at the institutional level was whether research institutes would also be formally included in postgraduate studies. Until then, the postgraduate students of the

¹² ARS, AS_223, b. 4561, f. 69-12 / 66.

¹³ Oset (2017), p. 146-148.

¹⁴ Baškovič (2016), p. 18-23.

University of Ljubljana had only been able to undertake research work in laboratories, and some “institute people” were also lecturers at the University of Ljubljana, so they were being involved in both types of setting. However, research institutes certainly expected more, such as partnership, at least, in the implementation of postgraduate studies. Researchers led by SAZU advocated for strengthening the scope and quality of postgraduate studies and for reducing the structural development gap with the West.¹⁵

In May, 1990, after taking power, the Demos government which consisted of a wide-array of opposition figures to the communist led-governments in the late 1980s, dealt mainly with the status transformation of universities and institutes, which was a necessity after the abolition of self-governance. Governmental reforms were not always welcomed by academia, which accused the government of political bias,¹⁶ resulting in the government postponing the much-awaited reforms. The government therefore adopted the Public Research Institutions Act and the Research Activity Act and structural dilemmas had to be delayed for a couple for years.¹⁷

Already in 1991, the law on higher education had been agreed upon. Nevertheless, the University of Ljubljana then withdrew from the agreement. The rector of the University of Maribor, Alojz Križman, complained that the University of Ljubljana was withdrawing its consent to the solutions that had already been agreed upon, and that the minister was allegedly supporting this. On the other hand, the University of Ljubljana had again taken the position that the government was once again using the University of Maribor and its readiness to accept the government’s views in order to apply pressure on the University of Ljubljana concerning the reform.¹⁸

¹⁵ Oset (2017), p. 146-148.

¹⁶ Archives of SAZU, Presidency 1990-1992.

¹⁷ Interview with Borut Lavrič (14 May 2019).

¹⁸ Požar and Urh (1991), p. 26.

Representatives of Maribor's higher education have always emphasised the importance of decentralisation for the purposes of Slovenia's regional, more coherent and, above all, faster development, as the (centralist) decision-making system, in which local self-governing communities are the executors of the governmental decisions that openly favours the biggest Slovenian university in Ljubljana. The reluctance of the Slovenian government to establish a second higher education centre in Maribor in 1950s and 1960s, also linked to the rivalry between Maribor and Ljubljana representatives of higher education, was felt even decades later.¹⁹

In December 1993, the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia finally adopted the Higher Education Act. On its basis, the transformation of both state universities began, and for the first time, the establishment of independent higher education institutions was made possible. Former higher education programmes have been abandoned and, in addition to university study programmes, three-year higher professional programmes have been introduced. With the transformation of postgraduate study programmes, the possibility of obtaining a doctorate of science without an intermediate master's degree gradually began to emerge.²⁰

Pursuant to the Vocational and Professional Education Act, adopted by the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia in February 1996, the possibility of studying at a tertiary level has expanded due to new vocational colleges, both in the two universities and in some other regional centres. In November 1999, the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia adopted the Amendments to the Higher Education Act, in which it implemented the amendments that resulted from the assessment of the accomplished changes and further needs of higher education. In the decrees on the transformation of both universities, adopted by the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia in March 2000, in addition to broadly defined scientific research and artistic activities, the fields of study were classified

¹⁹ Ibid.; see also Kmecl (1997), p. 17.

²⁰ Higher Education Act, Legal Information System, <http://pisrs.si/Pis.web/pregled-Predpisa?id=ZAKO172>, 12. June 2020.

in accordance with the international classification, Isced (Unesco, 1997). In accordance with the legal principle that the university is an “autonomous, scientific research, artistic and educational higher education institution with a special position”, the decree regulates only the relations between the state and the university, and all internal relations of a university are regulated by statute.²¹

The Higher Education Act remained in force despite criticism, repeated amendments and attempts to draft a new, revised Higher Education Act; some articles have otherwise been repealed, such as the retirement age of professors. The fundamental issue of the financial autonomy of higher education institutions remained unresolved. The Act therefore determined the basic conditions for the further development of Slovenian higher education on the basis of general access to higher education. Moreover, the state encouraged enrollment in higher education programmes with benefits, which on the one hand, was intended to significantly increase the proportion of highly educated people, thereby accelerating the structural adaptation of the Slovenian society and the Slovenian economy to post-industrial challenges, and, on the other hand, to reduce the pressure of the younger generation on the labour market, especially in the early years of the transition.

The law enabled the strengthening of research at higher education institutions and the introduction of competition between programmes and Slovenian institutions. The latter was enacted in January 1995 with the adoption of the National Research Programme. This was a hint to experts that encouraged the establishment of new, additional research groups within existing institutions, as well as outside of them, within new institutions, both in Ljubljana and elsewhere.²²

²¹ Oset (2016), p. 140.

²² Ibid.

The University of Ljubljana was weary of the establishment of new independent “private” institutions, however, the leading officials were overburdened by regulating relations between the Rectorate and its faculties. Nevertheless, while the establishment of a new institutions without the consent of the first university and its professors was theoretically possible, it was an almost insurmountable task. There were quite a few visible and invisible systemic barriers, among them the fulfilment of a sufficient number of habilitated professors. The habilitation procedure is much more than just meeting of the criteria as stated in the rules. The accusation of habilitating unsuitable candidates can have a devastating effect on the institution - in the academic world, quantity does not give birth to quality, it is rather the contrary.²³

Ideas of a non-governmental, even private, initiative in the field of education was regarded almost blasphemous. The state monopoly remained an axiom of the Slovenian education system, and non-state institutions were always only adjunct to the system. Systemic resistance to change was pointed out by (young) scientists who wanted to return to Slovenia after completing their education or training and continue their careers in their own country - in their home region.²⁴ In short, they pointed out the systemic rigidity, the power of informal networks in a relatively small academic community and established management patterns, which academician Miha Tišler calls the Mandarin mentality, so that established patterns were perpetuated and changes were possible with a gradualist approach - evolution takes precedence over revolution.²⁵

²³ Ivelja (1995); see also Zupančič (1997), p. 71-76.

²⁴ Turk (1990); Pelicon (1990); Zidanšek (1992).

²⁵ Tišler (2001), p. 28-45; see also Adam (1999), p. 65.

Univerzi v Novi Gorici se zahvaljujem za
visoko priznanje, ki ga sproštam in cenim.
Posebej pa me pridelitev priznanja veseli, ker
se ob tem spominjam pionirskih časov univerze,
ozvroma prej Fakultete za naroski o okolju
in Politehniko. V spominu mi ostajajo mladi,
ambiciozni ljudje, ki so bili prapranjeni v
težkih pogojih marsikaj zgraditi in razviti
Univerzo in slovenskega visokega šolstva. Pri
tem so v veliki meri uspeli, za kar jim čestitam.
Na obetih teh prvotnih pače ni zmanjkalo dela,
posebej na drugem ne. Pa bomo skupaj tudi to
opravili ob boljši pomoči države in njenem
zavedanju, kaj nam manjka in kaj je treba
navediti.

Čestitam



Academic Prof. Dr. Boštjan Žekš's inscription to the Book of honorary guests on 15 October 2015, after being awarded the UNG gold plaque.²⁶

²⁶ UNG Archives, Book of honorary guests.

Of course, there were initiatives to establish new higher education institutions, especially in the Primorska region. The interest of local communities in establishing such institutions as means of faster economic development also increased, primarily through the repatriation of intellectuals.²⁷ But public opinion towards such projects was restrained. The rhetorical question of whether Slovenia could do it or could afford it was asked. Would it not be better to further develop another Slovenian university in Maribor, and only then think about other changes?²⁸

²⁷ See also Špacapan (1997), p. 19-22; see also Pečan (1998), p. 23-24; Krnel Umek (2004).

²⁸ Toplak (2000); see also Kontler Salamon (2005b).

THE PATH TOWARDS THE SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

The founding fathers of UNG, gathered around the IJS Director Danilo Zavrtanik, decided in the spring of 1993 to try to establish its own postgraduate school based on the institute's experience in training young researchers, excellent conditions for research work, opportunities to join international research groups and training at institutions abroad, while taking into account the immanent attractiveness of lecturing for some researchers who wanted to address the so-called pedagogical eros by transferring their knowledge outside the boundaries of their academic community.²⁹

In accordance with the reputation of IJS in the academic system, the initiators expected covert and open opposition to the project, so they partly linked it to older pedagogical projects³⁰ and the Network of Institutes of Slovenia project.

²⁹ Interview with Danilo Zavrtanik (15 June 2019), Boštjan Žekš (15 January 2020), Mladen Franko (11 July 2019) and Borut Lavrič (14 May 2019); UNG Archives, Reserach on Establishment of the Postgraduate School of Environmental Science.

³⁰ In 1988, three Yugoslav "nuclear" institutes tried to establish a postgraduate school, in addition to the IJS, in Zagreb and Belgrade (Vinča). In the spring of 1991, two proposals for the establishment of a postgraduate school were prepared by Danilo Zavrtanik; the first in collaboration with Peter Križan, and the second in collaboration with Gabrijel Kernel.

As part of the latter project, they examined the possibilities of cooperating with local communities in establishing their IJS postgraduate school.³¹

The initiators expected the University of Ljubljana to oppose the IJS project, as such a postgraduate school would present strong competition, because the largest Slovenian research institute met the academic requirements, had experience in training doctoral students, and its researchers could obtain habilitations at foreign institutions. Nevertheless, the initiators wanted to avoid an open conflict, so they looked for a suitable (as yet untreated) interdisciplinary field of study and a location outside Ljubljana. Thus, in the event of resistance within the academic community, the project could be presented as an “experiment” within the provisions of the Higher Education Act.³² The ambitions of the management were, of course, significantly greater, as was realised by attentive observers of the Slovenian academic system.³³

Through silent diplomacy, the initiators communicated their intentions and goals to key personalities in the Slovenian academic system. The key mediating role was played by the academic Robert Blinc, who was associated with both the University of Ljubljana and the IJS, and was at the same time the vice-president of SAZU, as well as being among the influential strategists of reforming the Slovenian academic community. He remained in the memory of many influential people as a Slovenian candidate for the Nobel Prize, i.e., after an ambitious but unrealised project by Milan Osredkar.³⁴

Blinc’s support was important, but the initiators realised that they could not count on the support of the University of Ljubljana. They decided to conduct the graduate school with American professors, who would also be involved in the preparation of the programme.³⁵

³¹ Franko (1997), p. 97-98.

³² Interview with Danilo Zavrtanik (15 June 2019), Boštjan Žekš (15 January 2020), Mladen Franko (11 July 2019), Borut Lavrič (14 May 2019).

³³ See also Koron (1997).

³⁴ Interview with Boštjan Žekš (15 January 2020).

³⁵ Interview with Danilo Zavrtanik (15 June 2019) and Mladen Franko (11 July 2019).

Due to the vague status of the provision of public service, which limited the implementation of higher education programmes in a foreign language, and the related funding of programmes, the IJS was looking for a partner in the local community which could address possible political reservations in the higher political arena. They ascertained the level of interest from local authorities in Novo mesto, Celje, Koper and Nova Gorica. The first and second local communities did not decide to participate, the third had selected designers of its own strategy (establishment of a state higher education institution - the University of Primorska in Koper), and the fourth community accepted the initiative to establish a higher education institution in the city.³⁶

The mayor of the Municipality of Nova Gorica (MONG), Črtomir Špacapan, immediately accepted the initiative, as he was considering a strategic transformation of the local economy, which relied on a service sector (gaming and tourism) that is mostly tied to Italian guests. The municipality expected the project to establish a bridge for the return of domestic experts from Ljubljana and abroad, including studies at Italian universities, and in the long run to establish a new knowledge-based development paradigm.³⁷ Of course, the issue of establishing a university in the Primorska region already existed as political topic at that time.³⁸

A cold shower for such ideas was the assessment by international experts that Slovenia needed only two universities. In contrast to other transition countries, Slovenia decided to address the increased interest in studying within existing institutions, in part by expanding part-time study, so that a portion of the financial burden would be taken over by part-time students, tuition payers.³⁹ Existing institutions were overcrowded, prompting some opinion leaders to point out the need to reform study and governance, but eventually supported the establishment of new higher education institutions that would offer quality programmes to relieve existing institutions.⁴⁰

³⁶ Franko (1997), p. 97-98; NM (2005).

³⁷ Špacapan (1997), p. 18-22.

³⁸ Krnel Umek (2004), p. 13-16; Plesničar (1997), p. 43-48.

³⁹ Bieber and Heppner (2015).

⁴⁰ Interview with Danilo Zavrtnik (15 June 2019) and Boštjan Žekš (15 January 2020).

At IJS, the desire was to design an internationally comparable postgraduate programme in which foreign students would be included and which would be carried out with the participation of foreign lecturers. A considerable obstacle to the realisation of this idea was the provision in the Higher Education Act that: “The teaching language is Slovenian.” The law stipulated that, with certain exceptions, the implementation of higher education programmes in Slovenian was an essential aspect of the provision of public service and thus for entitlement to public funds. The law restricted the implementation of the study process to the Slovenian language but provided exceptions as well. One of these was the implementation of parts of “study programmes [in a foreign language] if guest higher education teachers from abroad participate in its implementation or a larger number of foreign students are enrolled”. Doubtful legal diction, otherwise a compromise solution, significantly discouraged both the group of advocates of greater inclusion of foreign experts in the Slovenian higher education area and the advocates of Slovenian as the language of instruction.⁴¹

In the described situation, Zavrtanik’s group decided to choose environmental issues as a new field of study.⁴² In Slovenia in the early 1990s, Slovenian politics became greener, environmental legislation was adopted on the basis of the principle of sustainable management and the Aarhus Convention, and there was a lack of suitably qualified experts, especially those who could assess environmental issues in an interdisciplinary manner.⁴³

⁴¹ Higher Education Act, Legal Information System, <http://pisrs.si/Pis.web/pregled-Predpisa?id=ZAKO172>, 12. 6. 2020.

⁴² At the end of the 1980s, environmental activism attracted a wide range of the population, and members of the movement founded the political party The Greens, which joined the Demos government and contributed to the greening of Slovenian politics. Slovenia has modernised its legal order and has stepped up its efforts to protect the environment and transform its subsystems on the basis of the concept of sustainable management of natural resources. See also Oset (2019), p. 63-79.

⁴³ See also Marega and Kos (2002).

The initiators opted for the postgraduate level due to the experience of the IJS in training young researchers and the possibility of including foreign lecturers in the study process. University professors from the Biotechnical School of the University of Ljubljana were also invited to participate. Due to the stated format and staffing conditions, the programme was designed in the form of condensed and intensive lecture courses. Such a form facilitated the adaptation of the pedagogical part of the programme to the research work, and also enabled the inclusion of foreign students. In general, the fundamental component was international connectivity. A step in this direction was the introduction of a credit system, which enabled the student to adapt the study programme to personal interests and the field of research work.⁴⁴

American professors accepted the invitation and came to give free lectures, even though they knew very little about Slovenia. They trusted the information provided by the circle of initiators that a top academic educational institution was being established and that there was latent opposition to the new institution, so the reputation of the lecturers would help its emergence (and then development) in the initial phase. At the same time, a new pedagogical field would emerge, especially important for a transition country in which the environmental damage of aggressive management would have to be remedied and at the same time the understanding of environmental issues in a society in transition would have to be strengthened: politically, socially and economically - in post-industrial society.⁴⁵

With the postgraduate school as an independent higher education institution - the School of Environmental Sciences - the founders (IJS and the MONG) intended to supplement the offer of both Slovenian universities with a new complementary and internationally reputable study programme, as well as to meet the economic and social need for experts with a broad

⁴⁴ UNG Archives, Research on Establishment of the Postgraduate School of Environmental Science.

⁴⁵ Ibid.; interview with Danilo Zavrtanik (15 June 2019); see also Oset (2019), p. 63-79.

Vipava 13. 10. 2016

Zahvaljujem se za priznanje, ki ste mi ga podarili.
Ponosen sem, da sem pomagal utirati pot Univerzi,
ki je drugačna, ki je unikum v našem okolju in
goji vrednote, za katero mislim, da so prave in
dolgoročno edine smiselnost.



Prof. dr. Stanko Strmčnik, Professor Emeritus of UNG, on his contribution to the creation of UNG.⁴⁶

multidisciplinary knowledge of environmental science. An important aspect was the strengthening of the transfer of knowledge and experience from the research sphere to social subsystems, including the educational sphere, which would upgrade the education system and its integration into modern international educational trends. The institution had a strong regional character, both at the level of Slovenia - the creation of a higher education centre in Nova Gorica - and internationally - at the level of the deepening of existing cooperation between Italy, Slovenia and Austria, i.e., upgrading cooperation within the Alpe Adria regional initiative.⁴⁷

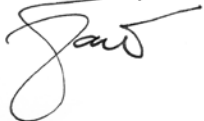
When planning the postgraduate school, the initiators expected that the postgraduate students would do research work in their home institutions, and as an alternative, the IJS envisaged, students would be included in

⁴⁶ UNG Archives, Book of honorary guests.

⁴⁷ Interview with Danilo Zavrtnik (15 June 2019) and Mladen Franko (11 July 2019).

Uspeli mlade a že tlo razvite
 Univerze v Novi Gorici po tyleh
 raziskovalnem okolju v Sloveniji in
 izven njenih meja. Program
 Univerze s svojo ritemostjo lepo
 dopolnjuje pomembno znanje, ki
 našim raziskovalcem odpirajo vrata
 doma in v tujini. Posebej smo
 lahko ponosni na prispevek Univerze
 k obravnavanju okolja in vključevanju
 okoljskih tem v gospodarstvo in
 vsakdanje življenje prebivalcev.

v Novi Gorici, 27.5.2011

Roko Žarnić
 minister za okolje
 in prostor, RS


Minister of the Environment Roko Žarnić on the role and importance of the School of Environmental Science in Slovenian society.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ UNG Archives, Book of honorary guests.

JULY 22 2006

TO PROF ZAVRTANIK

DEAR PROFESSOR ZAVRTANIK.

MY FAMILY AND MYSELF ARE VERY GRATEFUL TO BE ABLE TO VISIT THE UNIVERSITY. I AM ALSO GRATEFUL FOR THE HIGH HONOR THAT THE UNIVERSITY BESTOWED ON ME. THE UNIVERSITY, I AM SURE, IS STRUCTURED TO MAKE MANY SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARD A BETTER HUMAN SOCIETY. ON MY SHORT TOUR TODAY I SAW RESEARCH THAT WILL ACHIEVE THIS END. TO YOU AND YOUR STAFF MUCH HOPE FOR THE FUTURE



Joseph F. Sutter, Honorary Doctor of UNG, on the importance of science in society.⁴⁹

research groups and provided with the necessary research equipment and facilities. Already at the time of its establishment, the key goal was to establish the conditions for research work at the School of Environmental Sciences. The precondition for this was the acquisition of premises.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ UNG Archives, Book of honorary guests.

⁵⁰ UNG Archives, Reserach on Establishment of the Postgraduate School of Environmental Science.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES AND ITS EARLY YEARS

Operational preparations for the establishment of the SES were carried out in the autumn of 1994, when Zavrtnik's team officially invited foreign experts and institutions to participate. On November 14, 1994, a memorandum was sent to Rutgers State University in New Jersey. Professor Sidney A. Katz, who shared the memorandum with his colleagues, reported in a letter to Zavrtnik on December 4, 1994: »There is interest. I will provide you with names and curriculum vitae in January. As you might expect, I am most anxious to participate in these lectures«. The memorandum was also sent to Professor Werner Hofmann of the University of Salzburg, Professor Corrado Sarzanini of the University of Turin and Professor Burton C. Cross of the University of Iowa. Interest in the collaboration was expressed by professors from other American universities, such as Professor Elan Gandsman of Yale University.⁵¹

⁵¹ Ibid.



In September 2012, the contribution of Prof. Dr. Corrado Sarzanini in the formation and development of the SES (School of Environmental Sciences), PNG (School of Engineering and Management) and UNG was acknowledged with the title of professor emeritus.⁵² Photographer: Foto atelje Pavšič Zavadlav.

Talks with potential lecturers from Slovenian higher education institutions started when the basic network of lecturers had already been established. First, the IJS signed a Statement on Cooperation in the Implementation of Study Programmes with the Institute of Biology Ljubljana, on 16 June 1995, and then the statement was signed by a wide range of professors of the University of Ljubljana: Prof. Dr. Peter Stegnar, Prof. Dr. Janez Štupar, Prof. Dr. Boštjan Žekš, Prof. Dr. Franc Gubensek, Prof. Dr. Veljko Rus, Prof. Dr. Andrej Čokl, Prof. Dr. Jadran Faganeli, Prof. Dr. Stanko Strmčnik, Prof. Dr. Ivan Marušič, Doc. Dr. Danilo Zavrtanik, Doc. Dr. Alenka Malej, doc. Dr. Ana Gregorčič, Dr. Rafael Martinčič, Dr. Ivan Kopal, Dr. Mladen Franko, Dr. Radmila Milačič and Dr. Borut Smodiš. With the acquisition of consent, an application was prepared for the approval of the establishment of the Postgraduate School of Environmental Science as an independent higher

⁵² UNG Archives, photo library.



The signing of the founding agreement on 24 September 1995 at Kromberk Castle was followed by the inaugural session of the SES senate, which was attended by members of the SES senate (Prof. Dr. Franc Bizjak, Prof. Andrej Tokl, Prof. Dr. Ana Gregorčič, Prof. Dr. Franc Gubenšek, Prof. Dr. Nikola Kallay, Prof. Dr. Burton T. Kross, Prof. Dr. Ivan Marušič, Prof. Dr. Peter Stegnar, Prof. Dr. Janez Štupar, Prof. Dr. Boštjan Žekš - Dean), Representative founders (mayor of the MONG Črtomir Špacapan and director of IJS doc. Dr. Danilo Zavrtanik) and lawyer Borut Lavrič.⁵³

education institution. Prior to submitting the application, the initiators obtained the opinion of colleagues from the University of Ljubljana and from various American universities. The application was sent to the Council for Higher Education of the Republic of Slovenia (SVŠ RS) on 22 June 1995.⁵⁴

On 7 July 1995, the Council for Higher Education of the Republic of Slovenia (SVŠ RS) issued the consent for the establishment of the Postgraduate School of Environmental Science as a faculty. The formal establishment took place on 24 September 1995, when the representatives of the founders

⁵³ UNG Archives, UNG photo library.

⁵⁴ UNG Archives, Research on Establishment of the Postgraduate School of Environmental Science; interview with Boštjan Žekš (15 January 2020).



The inauguration ceremony was attended by representatives of Slovenian high politics and academia (President of Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts Dr. France Bernik and Rector of the University of Maribor Prof. Dr. Ludvik Toplak).⁵⁵

signed a contract on the establishment of the SES at Kromberk Castle: Danilo Zavrtanik for IJS and Črtomir Špacapan for the MONG. The School was entered in the register at the District Court in Nova Gorica in October 1995, and on 22 December 1995, SVŠ RS issued the consent to the introduction of the postgraduate study programme Environmental Sciences. On 6 June 1996, the SES was entered in the register of higher education institutions at the Ministry of Education and Sport under serial number 4. With this decision, minister Slavko Gaber confirmed the fulfilment of the conditions for the implementation of the postgraduate study programme Environmental Sciences, which began in the 1996/97 academic year. Yet, the study programme already started in summer of 1996.⁵⁶

The co-founder (MONG) provided the appropriate offices and material conditions for the lectures, thus demonstrating its intention to support the pro-

⁵⁵ UNG Archives, photo library.

⁵⁶ UNG Archives, Study Transformation of the School of Environmental Sciences.

ject long-term, thus fulfilling local desires for higher education in the Goriška region and for returning educated locals to the Goriška region, where a strong academic centre and generator of local development would be formed.⁵⁷

The SES decided to attract a wide range of associates to management, in addition to the core members who designed the School. In this spirit - and following the example of American universities - they appointed two leading officials: a dean and a president. Dean Academic Žekš was placed in charge of academic issues, and President Zavrtanik was placed in charge of management matters. Such a division between academic and managerial duties was formally in force until 2009, when, after the departure of Žekš, all managerial powers were combined in the function of the rector.⁵⁸

The first turning point in the development of the SES was the change in the leadership of the IJS. In July 1996, the Drnovšek government did not reappoint Zavrtanik as director of the IJS. Experts acknowledged Zavrtanik's success in the transition of the institute, including the appropriate structural adjustment and independence of companies, so they estimated that the government decided to reform the Slovenian academic system, as well as inter-personal relations at the IJS. In other words, the government (among other things) prevented the establishment of a higher education institution under the auspices of the IJS, while allowing a "non-state" higher education institution as a kind of experiment and encouragement to state institutions to emulate the SES in renewing programmes and fostering internationalisation.⁵⁹

Under the new leadership, IJS undertook to contribute 2 FTE⁶⁰ as a co-founder; after 2009, due to austerity measures, the financial contribution was gradually

⁵⁷ See also Špacapan (1997), p. 21-22; UNG Archives, Management Board, Minutes of the 11th meeting of the PNG Management Board (3 December 1999).

⁵⁸ Interview with Danilo Zavrtanik (15 June 2019) and Borut Lavrič (14 May 2019).

⁵⁹ Interview with Boštjan Žekš (15 January 2020); see also Marsel (1995).

⁶⁰ Full-time equivalent - the full-time workload of a researcher is 1700 hours per year. It is an accounting unit to cover expenditure. The Public Agency for Research of the Republic of Slovenia has six accounting categories, which differ from each other in the amount of expenditure on the costs of research work and the support system.

abolished.⁶¹ The impact of the IJS on the SES certainly exceeded financial contribution, because the academic culture within the IJS was “transplanted” to the new institution.

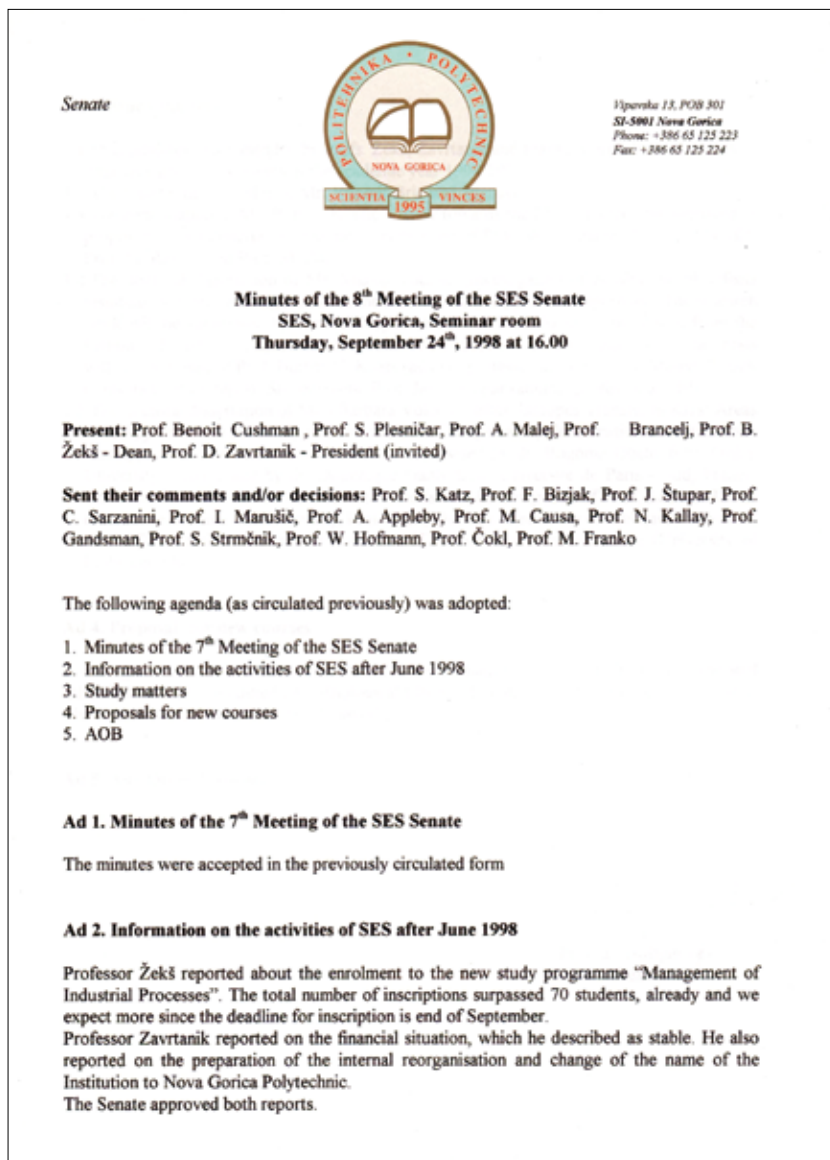
At the beginning, the MONG provided premises for management activities in the archives in Nova Gorica (two offices and a student room), and for pedagogical activities in the (old) Perla casino. A number of activities were still carried out at the IJS, mainly research work. Spatial issues have always been a significant issue in the development of the institution, initially due to the great interest in studying, and later due to attempts to establish a campus modelled on American universities. Such a model was foreign and unpopular to local and state decision-makers, and it was also a financially and (by placement in urban space) administratively and politically demanding project.⁶²

With this, a research-based higher education institution began to be built. The designers presented their plans at the principal level in the form of strategy and goals, primarily the achievement of international academic standards. At the same time, the city authorities secured the long-term ambition to build a university centre as an added value in the city, which, after the breakup of Yugoslavia, wanted to maintain its status as a Slovenian window onto the Slovenian border, while establishing a Slovenian cultural infrastructure that would match the intellectual potential of Italian higher education institutions. This is a period when borders were expected to fall, including in cultural terms, with the entry into the European Union (EU), in favour of free movement of goods and services and people. At the same time, of course, the border reflex has grown, which is most often placed in the positivist context of equal competition.⁶³

⁶¹ UNG Archives, 2009_Correspondence.

⁶² Interview with Danilo Zavrtanik (15 June 2019); see also Crnica (1999b).

⁶³ See also Alič (1998); Novak (2001).



The proceedings of the SES were mostly conducted in English, as foreign professors and experts were involved in the operation of the SES.⁶⁴

⁶⁴ UNG Archives, Senate of the SES, Minutes of the 8th meeting of the SES Senate (24 September 1998).

The interest of candidates in the Environment postgraduate study programme exceeded expectations, so restrictions were introduced; in the first round, students were selected based on evidence of performance, and in the second, interviews were conducted with candidates. Encouraged by the favourable response of the candidates, SES management began to assess initiatives for the introduction of new study programmes, such as economic management, woodworking, informatics and electrical engineering. The ministry under the leadership of Slavko Gaber was satisfied with the work of the SES.⁶⁵

The ministry, which was restrictive in regard to the establishment of new higher education institutions in comparison with other transition countries, wanted to prevent the creation of new institutions, especially non-state institutions. In public discourse, the loss of state monopoly over education and the insufficient quality control in new institutions are most often referred to as deterrents. According to for higher education in 1990s, Pavel Zgaga, there was a fear that there would be a repeat of the Maribor scenario in which, due to a political agreement, colleges were renamed as faculties without prior qualitative assessments.⁶⁶ Moreover, the greatly increased interest in tertiary education was thus solved by increasing enrollment for full-time study at existing universities and expanding part-time study, which in the first fifteen years of the independent state, contributed to strengthening non-state sources of higher education funding.⁶⁷

The Ministry wanted to gradually introduce internationally comparable criteria and take care of the internationalisation of Slovenian higher education. There was less attention paid to the systemic regulation of the autonomy of university institutions and their establishment in the Primorska region. At the same time, the idea of founding the University of Primorska gained political support among Primorska deputies. The project also enjoyed support from the academic community, including the rector of the University of Maribor, Ludvik Toplak.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ UNG Archives, Study Transformation of the School of Environmental Sciences; interview with Danilo Zavrtanik (15 June 2019); Koron (1997).

⁶⁶ See also Kontler Salamon (2001).

⁶⁷ Interview with Boštjan Žekš (15 January 2020).

⁶⁸ Toplak (2000).

Due to all the above, the SES management spoke publicly about their plans only when they exceeded the required criteria to a considerable extent and were convinced that their arguments would pass the proceedings before the Council for Higher Education of the Republic of Slovenia and possibly additional court proceedings.⁶⁹ In public appearances, the representatives of the SES spoke only about themselves, and diplomatically pointed out the systemic challenges in higher education without an unnecessary and disrespectful assessment of other higher education institutions.⁷⁰ As Ranka Ivelja wrote, they accepted the status of a creative shelter for those overlooked and marginalised by the media.⁷¹ Academic Boštjan Žekš, dean of the SES, later head of the Nova Gorica Polytechnic (PNG) and the University of Nova Gorica (UNG), a member of the core management until 2009, agrees with this position. For him, the SES represented an institution that enabled the return of Slovenian experts from abroad to Slovenia at the macro level, and from Ljubljana to its own regional centre at the micro level.⁷²

In a way, this was an espousal of developments toward decentralization within the Slovenian academic community, such as this had been established in the late 1960s in the field of economics.⁷³ With the transition and with independence, the centralisation of Slovenia was greatly strengthened.⁷⁴ With the concept of polycentric development, which was comparable to that on a European level, there was a new generation of senior managers (D. Zavrtanik, M. Franko, G. Bratina and Iztok Arčon). The SES used this as an argument as to why the North Primorska region needed an (independent) higher education centre.⁷⁵ At the same time, there was the general latent Primorska refugee status, tied to generations of Slovenian intellectuals who, after the Italian occupation and annexation of the western part of Slovenian ethnic territories, went to Yugoslavia while longing to return home to Primorska. Refugee status thus contributed to the formation

⁶⁹ Interview with Danilo Zavrtanik (15 June 2019) and Borut Lavrič (14 May 2019).

⁷⁰ See also Švagelj (1998).

⁷¹ Ivelja (1995).

⁷² Interview with Boštjan Žekš (15 January 2020).

⁷³ See also Prinčič and Borak (2006).

⁷⁴ See also Lorenčič (2012); see also Novak (2001).

⁷⁵ Interview with Boštjan Žekš (15 January 2020).

of a strong identity related to Primorska, which, after the Paris Peace Treaty in 1947 and the annexation of Primorska to Slovenia, developed separately in both cultural centres of Primorska.⁷⁶

Due to this, the SES was warmly accepted at its inception as a “noteworthy event” and announced that a third Slovenian university could be established. Journalists often asked Zavrtanik if the SES would develop into a third Slovenian university. He replied that, in principle, the new university must emerge from its foundations and not from the top, with academic standards being key, and the organisational status and organisational structure being subordinate to this.⁷⁷

The issue of the University of Primorska is always present in the public discourse related to the SES. The public expected that the success of the SES, including the ability to attract foreign professors and students and the publication of professors in reputable foreign journals, would contribute to the establishment of the University of Primorska as soon as possible.⁷⁸ At the SES, where new programmes were designed, it was diplomatically emphasised that the goal was not to compete with both Slovenian universities or to establish a university, but to give students knowledge that was not present in the Slovenian academic system or in those in its vicinity. This defined the mission and confirmed the homeland status of the SES within the Slovenian academic system.⁷⁹

Zavrtanik tested the response of the academic community in December 1996 when he asked himself the rhetorical question of whether science could thrive outside traditional centres (Ljubljana, Maribor). Had the digital revolution, which overcomes distances - which enthusiasts embraced in the metaphor of the creation of a “global village” - allowed changes in the Slovenian academic system? In short, whether the university was still based on something megalomaniac, urgently needing the broadest political consensus, or perhaps the time had come when stakeholders, primarily scientific, could decide

⁷⁶ See also Dolenc (2010), p. 197-198.

⁷⁷ See also Gerkšič (2000).

⁷⁸ See also Plesničar (1997), p. 43-48.

⁷⁹ Franko (1997), p. 97-99; Švagelj (1998).



*President of the SES Danilo Zavrtnik.*⁸⁰

independently, on the basis of clear criteria, on the most appropriate form of organisation, including the accomplishment of the highest ranked and recognisable status existing in the academic system - the status of a university.⁸¹

At the same time, Zavrtnik pointed out the importance of supporting the hinterland, both in the form of a well-rounded research group that was embedded in the local environment as well as local communities.⁸²

In the spring of 1997, the local community decided to make the SES as a core around which higher education and research and technology activities in northern Primorska would develop. The substantive assessment of proposals and the determination of conceptual development taken by the SES remained the responsibility of management at a higher education institution. In the first years of the SES's existence, science programmes were mainly those being discussed, although there was interest among the locals for the establishment

⁸⁰ UNG Archives, photo library.

⁸¹ Mušič (1998b).

⁸² Mušič (1998b).

of colleges in the field of social science and humanities.⁸³ The initiators of these programmes gained the attention of the media following successful efforts by coastal colleges, later members of the University of Primorska.⁸⁴

The SES was the cornerstone for shaping the research paradigm in the Goriška region. The management of the MONG, under the leadership of mayor Črtomir Špacapan, perceived the SES as an important building block in formulating a new development strategy based on the highest ideals of science. First and foremost, the MONG expected that the establishment of a higher education institution would contribute to a faster return of Primorska doctoral science graduates to their domestic region, where young people would revitalise the economy and create a dynamic economic environment, thus contributing to new businesses and thus prosperity. With the transition and facilitated crossing of people, goods and services across the border, the special geopolitical position of Nova Gorica seemed under threat.⁸⁵ In this regard, it is also necessary to understand the initiative for the establishment of the Primorska Technology Park (PTP), which, despite bold plans, initially caused a dispute in jurisdiction between the newly established municipalities in the old municipality of Nova Gorica.⁸⁶ Later, disagreements arose between the founders, mainly due to the failure to achieve set goals, a lack of vision and actions taken that were contrary to the project's basic mission. In the early years, the PNG invested considerable involvement in the operation of PTP, as the management was convinced that cooperation between stakeholders in the local environment was crucial for participation in national and European tenders, for local employment of graduates and doctoral students and for higher added value, i.e., companies initially cooperating with a higher education institution might eventually be able to donate funds to it and generally support its operation.⁸⁷

⁸³ UNG Archives, MONG; UNG Archives, Minutes of Board Meetings for the period 1998-2005.

⁸⁴ Žekš (2003).

⁸⁵ Špacapan (1997), p. 19-22.

⁸⁶ Mušič and Marussig (1999), p. 3.

⁸⁷ UNG Archives, Management Board, Minutes of the 19th meeting of the PNG Management Board (4 March 2002); see also Kovač (2005).

To Prof Zavrtnik and colleagues. It has been a special pleasure to visit this new and unique School for Environmental Sciences. I am confident that this "raw idea" to establish a post graduate school will lead to a successful result with other specialized topics being added as time goes on.

I enjoyed very much giving a lecture on the history of cosmic ray physics. The audience was alert and asked very good questions.

So with best wishes for the future

James W Cronin
University of Chicago
June 6 1997

Nobel laureate Prof. Dr. James W. Cronin supported the creation of the SES and its development, and in September 2000 he was the first in the history of UNG to receive the title of Honorary Doctor.⁸⁸

The SES managed to bring top scientists to the Goriška region, including Nobel laureate James W. Cronin. During his visit at the beginning of June 1997, at the end of the third academic year of the Environment master's programme, the SES was visited by a group of foreign journalists who were specialists in science. Public recognition for the SES and its final admission to the Slovenian academic community was represented by the recognition awarded by the Ambassador of Science of the Republic of Slovenia to the President of the SES, Dr. Zavrtnik on 24 June 1997.⁸⁹

The recognition gave the SES leadership additional motivation, especially in light of favourable media reports that the higher education institution was a success and the perception of Zavrtnik, who became the public face of the new higher education institution, as a cosmopolitan with a true sense of patriotism and who thought globally and acted locally.⁹⁰ The management took

⁸⁸ UNG Archives, Book of honorary guests.

⁸⁹ Crnica (1997).

⁹⁰ [Ano] (1997), p. 7.

advantage of the favourable conditions for structural growth by preparing new study programmes addressing initiatives in the local environment. First and foremost, this was the interdisciplinary field of economics and technology, i.e., a field that has been extremely popular in all transition countries, including Slovenia. Therefore, in the first decade, until the economic crisis, such programmes had a very good enrollment of Slovenian students, both from Goriška and central Slovenia. From this, the School of Business and Technology later developed, and after the transformation, when UNG became a university - the School of Engineering and Management.⁹¹ The second initiative led to the establishment of a centre for the sensory evaluation of wine under the auspices of the World Wine Organisation in Paris. This was the beginning from which the study programme Viticulture and Enology developed in 2003 (due to the long procedure before the Council for Higher Education of the Republic of Slovenia, it was implemented for the first time in the academic year 2006/07).⁹²

At the same time, the connection of the SES to the local region and especially with its economy was constantly sought, as is evident from the list of its first study programmes: the postgraduate study programme in Environmental Science and the undergraduate study programme Economics and Management of Production Technological Systems. The two programmes were chosen carefully, as they provided practical training and thus career planning for young people and (part-time) study opportunities for candidates who were already working for companies but who wanted to gain new theoretical knowledge and thus a more confident performance in their profession. The employability of graduates, masters and doctoral students was high, the result of quality work with students and highly motivated candidates.⁹³

This is one of the reasons why the SES was able to obtain funds from donors for the setting up of laboratories. The company Fotona d.d. helped to arrange the laboratory for semiconductors, and Agroind Vipava helped with the ultra-high-vacuum system.⁹⁴

⁹¹ UNG Archives, Minutes of Board Meetings.

⁹² UNG Archives, Minutes of Board Meetings.

⁹³ See also Švigelj (1998); Mušič (1999b).

⁹⁴ UNG Archives, Management Board, Minutes of the 8th meeting of the SES Management Board (1 December 1998).



Work with students on the then “modern” information devices - personal computers.⁹⁵

At that time, the SES created the public impression that it was a small institution with scientists who, despite modest conditions, do good science, transfer knowledge to young people, and are extremely ambitious and confident in their success. This mentality was embraced by the university motto adopted at the time *scientia vinces*. At the same time, the representatives of the SES represented an unusual mentality for the Slovenian academic system: young people will have to create their own jobs,⁹⁶ thus striving to create new research areas that could form the core of future research or educational units within a higher education institution and thus herald its transformation into a university.⁹⁷

⁹⁵ UNG Archives, photo library.

⁹⁶ Figelj (1998), p. 3.

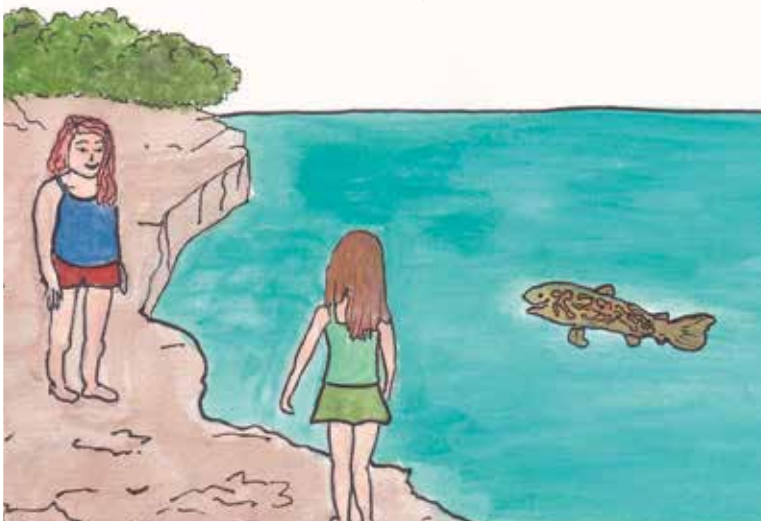
⁹⁷ Im (1998).

BISTRINE DOGODIVŠČINE

Nika Simčič, Klemen Levičnik in Tina Mahnič

*poučna ekološka zgodbica, nastala v sklopu projekta
Okoljsko ozaveščanje otrok z doživetji v naravi*

*Študentski inovativni projekt
za družbeno korist za študijsko leto 2017/18*



Students acquire a wider range of competencies within student projects, including within projects Creative Path to Knowledge and Students Innovative Projects for the Benefit of Society (ŠIPK). An instructive ecological story of the Bistra adventure, Environmental awareness of children with experiences in nature, was created within the ŠIPK project under the tutelage of Prof. Mladen Franko.⁹⁸

⁹⁸ Simčič (2018).



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Memo to Dr. R. Tate
from Dr. A. Appleby
date: May 4 1995
re: Dr. Franko's request for a letter of support re: Graduate
Study in Environmental Sciences in Slovenia

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "AA", located to the right of the memo header.

I have reviewed the proposed Program, provisionally titled "International Studies of Environmental Sciences" recently received from Slovenia. The program does appear to be comparable, with respect to material covered and credit hours required, to our Graduate Program. The curricula of ten graduate courses enclosed by Dr. Franko appear to cover very similar material to courses in our program with similar titles, with the exception of "Ecology", for which there is no corresponding course in our Graduate Program. I would expect that all these courses would be appropriate for credit transfer by any student taking them.

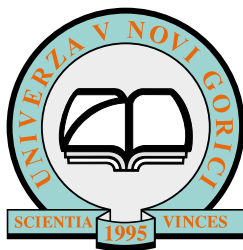
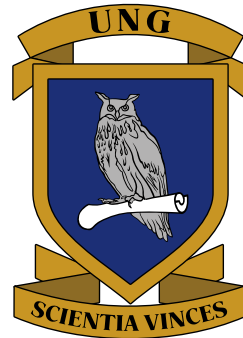
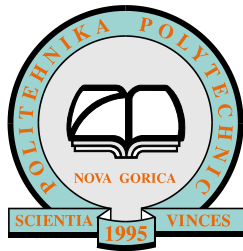
Opinion of Dr. Alan Appleby regarding a study programme based on the principle of the credit system. The curriculum enabled mobility for students, and professors encouraged the conducting of part of the study or research at other, including American, universities. The credit system in the Slovenian higher education area was introduced only with the Bologna reform.⁹⁹

At the same time that the SES, in cooperation with foreign experts, investigated the presence of radon in buildings,¹⁰⁰ measured the pollution of the Soča River with pesticides and halogenated hydrocarbons. Professors involved their students in these projects. As domestic experts, they were expected to significantly strengthen the presence of stakeholders on the non-governmental side, thus invigorated civic society.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ UNG Archives, Study Transformation of the School of Environmental Sciences.

¹⁰⁰ It (1998).

¹⁰¹ Mušič (1998a).



The logo of UNG and its predecessors (SES and PNG) was designed by Milena Gregorčič, and the coat of arms by Pia Zavrtnik.¹⁰²

¹⁰² UNG Symbols, <http://www.ung.si/sl/o-univerzi/simboli/>, 24 August 2020.

TRANSFORMATION OF THE SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES INTO THE NOVA GORICA POLYTECHNIC

In February 1998, the Council for Higher Education of the Republic of Slovenia approved the introduction of a multidisciplinary undergraduate study programme in Economics and Management of Technological Production Systems. With this, the SES added an undergraduate programme to the already-existing postgraduate programme in the field of technology, engineering, economics and management. With the introduction of this programme, it met the conditions for obtaining state funds for the implementation of the study process. In addition, the undergraduate study programme in Environmental Science was prepared (the programme was created in collaboration with American and European universities; these participated in the TEMPUS Phare project: Study Programme of Environmental Sciences and Management), as was the

postgraduate study programme in Instruments and Measurement Techniques (a result of cooperation between the SES and Trieste synchrotron, i.e., Elettro) as well as the postgraduate study programme in Radiation in the Environment (a result of cooperation between the SES and the International Atomic Energy Agency). The latter programme was related to the expert activity of the SES, which since the spring of 1997, had been monitoring the environmental impact of the reconstruction of the Plave Hydroelectric Power Plant and of the Dobljar Hydroelectric Power Plant, along with other institutions specialising in this field.¹⁰³

Due to the expansion of activities and staff reinforcement and the planned expansion of research activities on the occasion of the third anniversary of the establishment of the SES, on 28 September 1998, management decided to transform its status into a Polytechnic, a (small) university, specialized in natural sciences. The transformation of the institute was supported by SES's founders, partner institutions and supporters. The title "Polytechnic" was chosen, i.e., an organisational format that was not defined by the Higher Education Act.¹⁰⁴

With the transformation into PNG, the management of the SES also wanted to formally strengthen the institution's own characteristics, specifically, research excellence and international recognition, and to facilitate international cooperation with the new title. With the change, the management also deepened its internal organisation with the aim of a more efficient implementation of research and pedagogical activities. An accelerated development of PNG was also expected, due to successful candidacies in tenders of the Ministry of Science and Technology, the EU, the Ministry of Education and Sport, and the acquisition of company orders and donor funds.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ UNG Archives, Study Transformation of the Faculty of Environmental Sciences; see also Turel (2000a).

¹⁰⁴ UNG Archives, Management Board, Minutes of the 9th meeting of the PNG Management Board (17 February 1999).

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.; UNG Archives, Management Board, Minutes of the 11th meeting of the PNG Management Board (3 December 1999).

An essential innovation in the role of the SES's transformation into the PNG, as sent to the Council for Higher Education of the Republic of Slovenia, was the role of a higher education institution in a border area, also for Slovenian national minority in Italy. This became a subject of discussion with respect to the "brain drain" affecting the Goriška region. The management announced that it would attract (Slovenian and foreign) experts from the West to the Polytechnic, thus providing conditions for faster economic growth and establishment of a cultural focus for the North Primorska region. At the same time, it addressed the concept of a future international city after Slovenia's accession to the EU, a city at the crossroads of the Slavic, Romanesque and Friulian worlds. It was envisaged that a higher education institution would be a defender of Slovenian heritage on the western ethnic border as well as one of the platforms for economic, cultural and scientific coexistence along the border.¹⁰⁶

In December 1998, the SES was transformed into the PNG, an institution with two intertwined areas: research and education. The research work was organised within laboratories (Laboratory for Physical and Organic Environmental Chemistry, Laboratory for Astrophysics of Primary Particles, Laboratory for Epitaxy and Nanostructures) and the Centre for Cryptography, and pedagogical work was established within schools. When the SES was transformed into the PNG, four schools were envisaged (School of Environmental Sciences, School of Technological Management, School of Applied Science and School of Medical Physics and Radioecology), although the latter was not established.¹⁰⁷

The transformation was followed by a transformation in governing bodies. PNG bodies were collective (PNG senate, board of directors, council of statutory members, student council) and individual (president, dean). An essential innovation was the establishment of a council of statutory members, a consultative body with representatives of (domestic and foreign) higher education or research institutions who were interested in the long-term development of the PNG and enabled the institution's involvement in international research.

¹⁰⁶ UNG Archives, Study Transformation of the School of Environmental Sciences.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.



Prof. Dr. Gvido Bratina, Head of the Laboratory for Epitaxy and Nanostructures, presents the equipment and approach for the acquisition and manufacture of research equipment to Minister Jure Zupan.¹⁰⁸

Among the more important tasks of the council was the evaluation of applications for management positions at the PNG. This body replaced the participation of foreign experts, who, during the establishment and development of the SES, had evaluated study programmes and thus had made an important contribution to the international affirmation of the postgraduate study programme in Environmental Science and to the entire institution in general. There had been considerable interest in membership among foreign higher education and research institutions.¹⁰⁹

The Board of Directors, which consisted of representatives of the founders, associates and students, appointed members of the PNG Senate as the governing body at the proposal of the chairperson. Scientific disciplines and

¹⁰⁸ UNG Archives, photo library.

¹⁰⁹ UNG Archives, Management Board, Minutes of the 18th meeting of the PNG Management Board (28 November 2001); see also Crnica (2005).



In September 2011, UNG awarded the original members of the SES's Senate with the recognition of a gold plaque. Photographer: Foto atelje Pavšič Zavadlav.¹¹⁰

professional fields were set to be in equal representation. In the Slovenian academic community, special attention was paid to the position of presidents. The head, as the professional head of the PNG, was in charge of facilitating and coordinating educational and research activities, carrying out the study process, issuing documents, and awarding promotions and prizes. The President, as the managing body, was in charge of the administrative operations and the representation of the PNG. Both senior officials, appointed by the board of directors, had a four-year term. A statute stipulated that they consult with each other before making important decisions.¹¹¹ This was a formality, because the cooperation between Žekš and Zavrtnik had been successful since the establishment of the PNG's predecessor.¹¹²

¹¹⁰ UNG Archives, photo library.

¹¹¹ UNG Archives, Board of Directors, Minutes of the 18th meeting of the PNG Board of Directors (28 November 2001); UNG Archives, Management Board, Minutes of the 23rd meeting of the PNG Management Board (23 September 2003).

¹¹² Interview with Danilo Zavrtnik (15 June 2019) and Boštjan Žekš (15 January 2020).

The management has always strived for an institution that would be small (up to 5,000 students), managerially lean and content-oriented in the field of applications and science. With the transformation to the PNG, this goal has certainly been achieved.¹¹³

Educational activity was carried out at faculties and vocational colleges which were internal organisational units. Compared to faculties at state universities, “faculties” - officially schools - at the PNG were not legal entities. However, a senate was formed at each school, headed by the dean of each School. Research activity took place within laboratories and centres. Management has since strived to implement the 50-50 model of the division of working time, half of the working time being for research work and the other half for pedagogical activities.¹¹⁴

The PNG management presented its plans in December 1998 and announced the growth in the number of students (1000 by year 2004).¹¹⁵ In doing so, they wanted to encourage the MONG - their co-founder - to start procedures to build accommodation facilities for students. On this occasion, the idea of designing a campus following the American example was introduced into public discourse, with which the management, with its confident plans and forecasts, moved from its founding phase to the development of an independent higher education institution that was aware of its quality and potential.¹¹⁶ On a symbolic level, this was demonstrated by the production of representative symbols (coat of arms, flag and anthem) and the confirmation of the plan to move the headquarters to Laščak’s villa on Rafut.¹¹⁷

As the number of students grew, the management’s efforts to establish a U.S.-style university campus intensified. This represented a novelty in Slovenia, because the initiative to establish the campus of the University of Ljubljana

¹¹³ UNG Archives, Nova Gorica Polytechnic: *Smeri razvoja* (2003); see also V. D. (2003).

¹¹⁴ UNG Archives, Nova Gorica Polytechnic: *Smeri razvoja* (2003).

¹¹⁵ Novak (2001); see also Turel (2000b).

¹¹⁶ Mušič (1999a).

¹¹⁷ UNG Archives, Management Board, Minutes of the 15th meeting of the PNG Management Board (5 December 2000).

had failed in the 1920s due to a lack in money and the government's lack of support for scientific institutions, especially on the periphery, where privileged people were educated in a supposedly separatist spirit.¹¹⁸ The second attempt, in the 1950s, was also abandoned, this time due to the inconvenience perceived by the authorities in uniting students in one location.¹¹⁹ The idea of a campus was therefore first a cognitive and then a technical-operational morsel with significant financial effects. The campus issue became an integral part of all further discussions, with UNG seeming to have come closest to being a Nova Gorica campus in 2001. Operational steps were later taken, but there was a lack of political support for this project.¹²⁰

In principle, the initiative for the construction of the campus was supported by the Minister of Education Slavko Gaber, who expected that the development of the PNG would ease the pressure for the establishment of new higher education institutions in the Goriška region. The PNG also received an 80% share of a state grant for the implementation of undergraduate programmes.¹²¹

At the same time, the Polytechnic acted as a co-founder of the PTP, established for the needs of the North Primorska region. A conceptual design was set up at the PNG, where they wanted to establish an environment within the PTP company that could be at the crossroads of research and entrepreneurship.¹²² For Delo newspaper journalist Slavica Crnica, the establishment of the PTP was a confirmation that Nova Gorica had become a university town. The establishment of the PTP was somewhat overshadowed by the rivalry between the municipalities of Nova Gorica and Šempeter - Vrtojba, even with the establishment of another technology park (Tehnološki park Plejade d.o.o.) two days after the establishment of the PTP. Rather than for reasons

¹¹⁸ Oset (2014), p. 64-65; Dolenc (2005), p. 285-286.

¹¹⁹ ARS, AS_223, 18th session of Slovenian government (12 December 1958).

¹²⁰ UNG Archives, Management Board, Minutes of the 11th meeting of the PNG Management Board (3 December 1999); see also Turel (2000a).

¹²¹ UNG Archives, Management Board, Minutes of the 12th meeting of the PNG Management Board (28 February 2000); Mušič (1999a); Dravinec (2003).

¹²² UNG Archives, Management Board, Minutes of the 11th meeting of the PNG Management Board (3 December 1999); see also Dimic (1999).

of conceptual divergence, the rivalry largely arose due to the possibility of obtaining a European grant from the Phare programme.¹²³

Through my friendship with Drs. Mladen FRANKO, Ivan KOTAL and Peter STEGNAR, I have been associated with this University since it was the School of ENVIRONMENTAL sciences and then Nova Gorica Polytechnique to the present name of Univ of Nova Gorica. Through your hard work and dedication, you have greatly, quickly established the university, solidified its reputation as well as expanding its infrastructure from one building in ROSNA DOlina to the present many campuses. Personally I enjoy coming to this country, and working with my many friends at your university. I have been treated extremely well, eaten many, many tasty meals, drank many excellent wine. More importantly through collaboration we have done many good work, published many good papers. I will ~~do~~ do my best to keep this collaboration going. Keep up the good work.

Oct 16, 2015, Chieu Tran
Milwaukee, Wisconsin USA

Chieu D. Tran, recipient of the Honorary Doctor title, on his collaboration with UNG.¹²⁴

¹²³ Crnica (1999c).

¹²⁴ UNG Archives, photo library.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A STATE UNIVERSITY IN PRIMORSKA AND THE PNG

In just four years of operations, the PNG became a well-rounded and respected institution. This was why Stojan Plesničar, a member of the board of the PNG and president of the Academic Society for the Third University of Primorska, publicly took the initiative by proposing a university with two campuses - one on the coast and the other in Nova Gorica.¹²⁵ This later became the official position of PNG leadership, especially after the time of Drnovšek's third government.¹²⁶ Plesničar, as an advocate of freedom and academic autonomy, thought that such a plan enabled the achievement of goals while maintaining a latent rivalry between the two regional centres that would create long-term competition between the two campuses, thus adding value to the university and academic community in Slovenia in general.¹²⁷

The establishment of the University of Primorska received strong impetus from the formation of Bajuk's government in June 2000, and even more so in the pre-election period taking place in the autumn of the same year.¹²⁸ At that time, the PNG had already decided privately to foster further in-

¹²⁵ UNG Archives, Management Board, Minutes of the 15th meeting of the PNG Management Board (5 December 2000); Im (1999).

¹²⁶ UNG Archives, Management Board, Minutes of the 18th meeting of the PNG Management Board (28 November 2001).

¹²⁷ Im (1999).

¹²⁸ Kontler Salamon (2000b); Kontler Salamon (2000č).

dependent development, but it indicated its readiness to hold talks with colleagues on the coast and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, which had been headed by Minister Lucija Čok since December 2000.¹²⁹

The establishment of the University of Primorska was one of the unresolved issues of the second Drnovšek government, as well as the subject of a dispute between the Minister of Education Slavko Gaber (LDS) and the Minister of Science and Technology Lojze Marinček (SLS). The PNG expected the support of minister Marinček, who, in his public speeches, emphasised the research success and integration of the PNG into the international community.¹³⁰ But the success of the PNG was a double-edged sword; on the one hand, it provided a path toward further independent development, and on the other, it threatened its independence, because Gaber insisted it ought to be the bedrock for a new state university in Primorska. The issue of establishing a state university in Primorska thus became one of the key political issues in the (pre)election period, especially because of the Primorska opposition deputies who demanded government action.¹³¹

The progress of Slovenia's accession negotiations with the EU certainly contributed to the intensity of discussion, thus strengthening a border reflex that was more pronounced on the coast. The discussions suggested that there was a whole series of well-organised higher education institutions on the Italian side that were attracting Slovenian students, and that, with the entry into the EU and the opening of the border, the brain drain was only expected to intensify.

On 17 February 2000, Minister Marinček, then a member of Drnovšek's government, publicly supported the establishment of the University of Primorska for the first time. He blamed Minister Gaber, a member of the largest government party, for the slow resolution of the issue. Gaber was supposed to direct school policy toward establishing higher education schools on the coast, thereby reducing the chances of establishing a university, as this type of a school institution cannot be the basis for establishing a uni-

¹²⁹ Crnica (2000b); Krebelj (2000); Cergol Bavčar (2000).

¹³⁰ See also Marinček (2000).

¹³¹ Crnica (2000b).

versity or at least representing its core.¹³² At the same time, Marinček hinted that it would be better to define the PNG as a matrix for the new state university. The management of the PNG reiterated its commitment to further organic development in accordance with the vision of remaining a small, specialised, internationally successful and competitive university.¹³³

Minister Marinček then publicly - especially in the Ljubljana newspaper *Delo* - and repeatedly suggested that the PNG take the lead in the campaign for the establishment of the University of Primorska. In this context, he supported the planned construction of the University of Nova Gorica and pointed out the possibilities brought by the introduction of the so-called technological fund.¹³⁴ As response to Marinček's suggestion, President Zavrtnik emphasised that the PNG was strongly research-oriented, especially in new, emerging interdisciplinary niche areas. The PNG had therefore been ready to participate in this meaningful political project, provided that it could develop organically within a newly built campus in Nova Gorica.¹³⁵

As already mentioned, with the disintegration of Drnovšek's second government and the formation of Bajuk's government in June 2000, the issue was further politicised. On 1 August 2000, ten weeks before the parliamentary elections, six (opposition) deputies from the LDS and ZLSD submitted a bill seeking the establishment of a state university in Primorska that would include all higher education institutions in Primorska. Its inclusion criteria were not set. Opposition lawmakers criticised the government for delaying the adoption of the national higher education programme, especially Minister Marinček and Duša Krnel Umek, head of the government commission. Krnel Umek blamed previous Drnovšek's governments, which were not in favour of establishing a university in Primorska as well as the approach toward establishing new institutions (higher vocational schools) by expanding the circle of stakeholders, something that, conversely, delayed the establish-

¹³² Krebelj and Kasal (2000).

¹³³ Gerkšič (2000); see also D. V. (2003).

¹³⁴ Crnica and Roš (2000), Božič (2000), Dr. Marinček at Nova Gorica Polytechnic (2000).

¹³⁵ Gerkšič (2000).

ment of the university. A representative of the centre-right government accused six deputies of seeking state funding for private schools through the campaign; in the public discourse of the time, all non-state higher education institutions, regardless of their founder, were to be labelled private. However, Krnel Umek pointed out that the PNG lacked the humanities and social sciences programmes that would be necessary for a state university.¹³⁶

The PNG also responded publicly as part of the round table on the University of Primorska and the role of Nova Gorica in the organisation of the SLS + SKD party. Zavrtanik pointed out that the Polytechnic was already carrying out the mission of the university, and that it simultaneously enjoyed the support of the local community. Similarly, President Žekš pointed out that state support for the PNG had decreased, but that this would not change the commitment of its leadership to further independent organic development. He reiterated that the only possible solution was the creation of two campuses, and, in addition, indicated the readiness of the Polytechnic for the development of social sciences and humanities programmes, such as the establishment of a school for translation, interpretation and intercultural studies. This was a patch on the wound of the people of the Goriška region, who were proud of their mediating position between Slovenia and the borderlands. With this, the PNG management announced that it was ready to strengthen institutional cooperation between Nova Gorica and Gorizia. The point of connection between the two cities would have been the seat of the Polytechnic in the Villa Rafut, a villa built at the beginning of the 20th century at a time when different nations coexisted in Gorizia and architecture in the neoclassical Arabic style was acceptable.¹³⁷

The PNG managed a big coup before celebrating its fifth anniversary on 21 September 2000. At that time, two competing coastal technology parks merged, and the PTP became the leader (with the support of the Polytechnic).¹³⁸ At the celebration, Nobel laureate James W. Cronin was honoured with an honorary doctorate for his key contribution to justifying symmetry

¹³⁶ Kontler Salamon (2000e).

¹³⁷ Crnica (2000b).

¹³⁸ Crnica (2000a).

violation to the inversion of space and the transformation of a particle into antiparticles, and for outstanding achievements in high-energy cosmic rays. At the ceremony, which was attended by President Milan Kučan, the support of the Nobel laureate in establishing the PNG at the international level as a top research and higher education institution was emphasised.¹³⁹

In these circumstances, on 26 September 2000, less than three weeks before the elections, a cooperation agreement was signed between the Polytechnic and the School of Humanities in Koper in the establishment of the University of Primorska. An agreement was reached on a state university with two campuses, the introduction of modern management concepts and a close connection between research and pedagogical process. The signatories (Zavrtanik for the PNG and Lucija Čok for the School of Humanities in Koper) publicly committed to the idea that the emerging state university would not be a copy of Ljubljana or Maribor, and that it would instead be a new, modern network university.¹⁴⁰

Zavrtanik defined attracting world class researchers as the biggest challenge, meaning the implementation of the habilitation procedure, which would be in accordance with internationally accepted standards, and such a procedure would be supported by the University of Ljubljana or the University of Maribor. The idea was spread that the habilitations would be awarded by the largest Slovenian university, which would gain credibility in this procedure, and at the same time serve as a protection against the criticism of non-compliance with high academic standards. Of course, this was envisaged as a temporary solution, because Zavrtanik was mainly thinking of creating a new institutional framework in which to abandon hyper-normality. At the PNG, it was expected that the emerging (state) university would accelerate the reform of higher education legislation, which was in fact a snapshot of the situation when the Higher Education Act (1993) was adopted. This is one of the reasons why Zavrtanik announced in the newspaper *Delo* in September 2000 that the establishment of the University of Primorska would take (only) five years.¹⁴¹

¹³⁹ Crnica (2000c).

¹⁴⁰ Kontler Salamon (2000c); Mušič (2000); Krebelj (2000).

¹⁴¹ Kontler Salamon (2000c).

Devetnajstega septembra leta dva tisoč sta predstavnik

Fakultete za humanistične študije Koper in
Politehniko Nova Gorica
podpisala

SPORAZUM O SODELOVANJU

I

Fakulteta za humanistične študije Koper in Politehniko Nova Gorica si prizadevata, da skupaj s primorskimi visokšolskimi zavodi oblikujeta temeljne razmere za ustanovitev avtonomne Univerze na Primorskem, ki bo s svojo strokovnostjo in odprtostjo v mednarodno akademsko skupnost uveljavljala slovensko akademsko delo.

II

S pomočjo svojih sodelavk in sodelavcev se bosta zavzemali za nastanek dveh enakopravnih in avtonomnih visokšolskih središč v Koprju in Novi Gorici, ki se bosta po postavitvi predhodnih potrebnih spremljajočih ustanov in sprejetju ustreznih zakonodajne povezali v univerzo na podlagi svobodne volje in vzajemnega interesa ter pri tem v celoti ohranili svojo avtonomijo.

III

Podpisniki tega sporazuma se bosta zavzemali za oblikovanje skupnih raziskovalnih projektov, ki bodo postavili temelje bodoči raziskovalni univerzi na Primorskem.

IV

V procesu nastajanja Univerze na Primorskem se bosta podpisniki dogovarjali o sodelovanju tudi z drugimi samostojnimi univerzitetnimi ustanovami na Primorskem in obema slovenskima univerzama. Podpisniki tega in nadaljnjih sporazumov bodo branili interese partnerskih ustanov.

Skupno strategijo razvoja bosta podpisniki usklajevali v okviru skupnega strokovnega (koordinacijskega) telesa, ki ga bosta imenovala senata obeh ustanov.

V

Sporazum sta podpisala v.d. dekanice Fakultete za humanistične študije Koper in predsednik Politehniko Nova Gorica v dveh enakoprednih izvodih.

VII

Sporazum velja z dnem podpisa.

Koper, 19. 9. 2000

Nova Gorica, 19. 9. 2000

v.d. dekanice Fakultete za humanistične študije Koper predsednik Politehniko Nova Gorica

doc. dr. Lucija Čop



prof. dr. Danilo Zavrtanik



The agreement on the cooperation between the Nova Gorica Polytechnic and the School of Humanities in Koper set the goal of creating two equal and autonomous higher education centres in Koper and Nova Gorica.¹⁴²

¹⁴² UNG Archives, Management Board, Minutes of the 15th meeting of the PNG Management Board (5 December 2000).

They had a more institutionally ambitious agenda in Koper, especially after the signing of the intention to establish the University of Primorska at SAZU on 4 October 2000. Less than a week before the elections, Lovro Šturm, Minister of Education and Sports, announced the establishment of a state university that would significantly contribute to structural changes in Slovenian society, primarily in raising the proportion of the population with a higher education from 15% to 30%. The Minister welcomed the support of the local community. With this statement, the support in both political camps shifted in favour of the Koper group.¹⁴³

Among politicians, this was most strongly opposed by the mayor of the MONG, Špacapan, who sought to locate the university campus in Nova Gorica.¹⁴⁴ With the defeat in the municipal elections in October 2002, the PNG lost a staunch advocate and supporter. The general impression was that the decision to establish a third state university had already been made, and the help of the University of Ljubljana for the University of Primorska was announced (with personnel and the permission for the free choice of its members to leave and then join the newly founded university), but the issues of management and location remained unanswered. The debate was sparked, especially after the appearance of Drnovšek's third government and the election of Lucija Čok as Minister of Education, Science and Sport.¹⁴⁵

PNG management presented the initiatives for inclusion in the newly established university to the public as an attempt at centralisation, with which the Polytechnic would include its top brass staff in the newly established institution, contribute to international repercussions, gain more financial support but lose its autonomy. This would have jeopardised the successful higher education institution put on the map by the MONG with its financial and political support, as well as the plans of PNG staff.¹⁴⁶ Local politicians in Nova Gorica warned that such efforts either completely contradicted the plans for

¹⁴³ Kontler Salamon (2000d).


¹⁴⁴ See also It (2001); see also Turel (2001c).

¹⁴⁵ Pajnik (2001), Figelj (2001).

¹⁴⁶ UNG Archives, Management Board, Minutes of the 23rd meeting of the PNG Management Board (23 September 2003); interview with Borut Lavrič (14 May 2019).

Ob obisku na prvi posvetilni dan v letu 2000
Svo mnogo povzeli o preteklosti in o prihodajem
sodelovanju med Politehniko in Univerzo v Ljubljani.
Čeprav smo zelo različni, vendar v bodoči
dobro sodelovanje med obema institucijama,
Politehniko v Gorici pa želimo razvoj na temelju
temeljnih, ki jih je s poravnovanostjo učiteljev
in ustanoviteljov zgodile v nekaj preteklih
letih

V Gorici, 21. marca 2001



Prof. dr. Janez Mencinger, Rector of the University of Ljubljana.¹⁴⁷

more harmonious regional development or supported the concept of the regionalisation of Slovenia with three regions (strengthening the coastal region based in Koper).¹⁴⁸

The enthusiasm of initiators in Koper was somehow curbed by the rector of the University of Ljubljana, who set the PNG as an example for a newly established university that had built its teaching staff gradually and had expanded its offer of pedagogical programmes in accordance with the achieved level of internal consolidation. After the arguments presented by minister Čuk, however, the largest Slovenian university revised its position.¹⁴⁹

The PNG management had been repeatedly called upon to revise its position. For the leading PNG protagonists, the question of the seat, to which the public discussion was reduced, was a false dilemma, and key conceptual issues were

¹⁴⁷ UNG Archives, Book of honorary guests.

¹⁴⁸ See also Crnica (2001č), Turk (2001), Crnica (2001c).

¹⁴⁹ UNG Archives, Sodelovanje z univerzami; see also Pajnik (2001).

Izredno presenečeno med razvojem, inovativnostjo,
 vztrajnostjo in marljivostjo vodstvenih
 Politehniške ter managerskim sposobnostim.
 vodstve izrazem čestitke in spodbujaji,
 iskreno želim nadaljnju željo in dolga
 letna razvoj in uspešnost, čim več
 študentov - dobiti in razpisnik ter dobiti
 profesorjev in mlade, ki so razumeli postalo
 znanosti

2.11.1999

Verica Trstenjak

Verica Trstenjak, State Secretary at the Ministry of Science and Technology.¹⁵⁰

not debated or eliminated by announcing relations between members would be determined in the statute, after the establishment of the university.¹⁵¹

In July 2001, however, there was an escalation of pressure, including the suggestion, on the part of the newspaper Delo, that smaller higher education institutions needed greater exposure to the market, which necessitated (financial) support from the state. However, the PNG management, which accepted market exposure into its academic culture (with openness to the international arena) through cooperation with the business sector and through success in EU tenders, only reiterated the creation of two separate universities that could later merge. The PNG's performance had been key to maintaining independence, as was the absence of administrative penalties, including passivity in handling applications and processing financial claims.¹⁵² The reputation of the

¹⁵⁰ UNG Archives, Book of honorary guests.

¹⁵¹ UNG Archives, Senate Sessions, Minutes of the 12th PNG Senate Session (14 December 2001); see also Crnica (2001b), Vidmar (2001).

¹⁵² UNG Archives, Senate Sessions, Minutes of the 12th PNG Senate Session (14 December 2001); see also Čič (2002).

Polytechnic was illustrated by the article on the opening ceremony in Štanjel Castle; the PNG is presented as the Oxford of the Karst.¹⁵³

The PNG advocated an amendment to the umbrella higher education law which would allow autonomy at the level of (two equivalent) campuses, but this was rejected by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport. Stanko Strmčnik's discussion at the 12th session of the UNG Senate in December 2001 was the best summary of the PNG's position: "Inclusion means a definitive loss of identity and an already established place in the domestic and international university space."¹⁵⁴

Subsequently, the management of the Polytechnic repeatedly pointed out the need to change higher education legislation. The head of the Polytechnic, Boštjan Žekš, was even sharper. On 26 April 2002, when he was elected president of SAZU, he assessed that the transition in Slovenian higher education was on hold. At the same time, he advocated for quality domestic schools, thus giving priority to quality over organisational issues, which must provide the conditions for quality operations at the institutional level.¹⁵⁵

The episode with the establishment of the University of Primorska had a positive effect on the internal consolidation of the PNG, proving its vitality in a politically demanding environment. Of course, since 1999, when the PNG obtained concessions for the implementation of study programmes, revenues had grown rapidly, their structure had changed and the scope of pedagogical activity had increased with an otherwise conservative approach, and a commitment to maintaining high academic standards, especially in replacing distinguished lecturers with younger ones. This meant hiring new permanent collaborators, which led to the establishment of joint services, but the collaborators had to continue to perform various tasks in addition to their basic ones, as well as research and pedagogical work. The biggest obstacle to bold plans was the unresolved issue of suitable premises, i.e., the issue being dealt with by the co-founder - the MONG.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵³ Uršič Zupan (2001).

¹⁵⁴ UNG Archives, Senate Sessions, Minutes of the 12th PNG Senate Session (14 December 2001); Crnica (2001b); Šuligoj (2001); see also Turel (2001a).

¹⁵⁵ Bošnjak (2002); see also Kontler Salamon (2003).

¹⁵⁶ Interview with Danilo Zavrtanik (15 June 2019) and Gvido Bratina (26 June 2019).

CONTINUATION OF THE INDEPENDENT PATH - TO THE STATUS OF A UNIVERSITY

The episode with the establishment of the University of Primorska was used by PNG management to reflect on its development and key advantages, while recording opportunities for structural expansion. As President Zavrtnik said: “We do not strive for greater enrollment of students, we strive primarily for the quality of studies.”¹⁵⁷

Local political actors, although they publicly supported PNG and its decision, were disappointed with this decision on the part of the management of an autonomous higher education institution. The support of the municipality was less pronounced in the following years, and, at the same time, the municipality supported the creation of new institutions - in December 2003 it established a Higher Education and Research Centre,¹⁵⁸ even though the PNG, in cooperation with the Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (ZRC SAZU), had established the Stanislav Škrabec School of Slovenian Studies, later renamed the School of Humanities, thus addressing the interest of stakeholders in the local region.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁷ See also Crnica (2001č); Uršič Zupan (2001).

¹⁵⁸ UNG Archives, MONG; Turel (2003); see also Turel (2001b).

¹⁵⁹ UNG Archives, Study of Slovene Studies; see also Krošelj (2005).

In February 2001, PNG management established a foundation to implement its plans and limit potential negative economic and political effects on the structural stability of the institution. Preparations for the establishment had been underway since autumn 2000 due to a favourable financial situation, on the one hand, and significant risks, on the other. The mission of the Edvard Rusjan Foundation was to ensure long-term stability. Simultaneously with the establishment of the foundation, the board of directors approved an anthem for the institution.¹⁶⁰

With the establishment of the foundation, PNG management neutralised the pressure of the founders even before it could escalate into an open dispute over the warning regarding the MONG unfulfilled promises to arrange suitable premises. The MONG had promised to temporarily solve the space shortage caused by the loss of study space by purchasing the Primex building in Rožna Dolina and by allocating Villa Rafut to the PNG until the construction of a campus in the centre of Nova Gorica. At the above-mentioned November 2001 session, the Board of Directors allowed the use of the premises outside PNG headquarters, as well as outside the Nova Gorica area, which was a consequence of space constraints, offers from the local region and was also a reflection of dissatisfaction with the slow resolution of the issue of space constraints. It also represented a symbolic break which later led - due to the failure to implement the campus project - to the polycentric development of the PNG (from 2005 the UNG) in the Vipava Valley (at the Rožna Dolina, Ajdovščina and Vipava locations), with branches in Gorizia and Venice.¹⁶¹ In February 2005, Primorske novice published an article entitled *The Polytechnic may be going to Gorica*. It emphasised the active approach of the municipality of Ajdovščina, which provided appropriate spatial conditions, while in Nova Gorica there was some tilting at windmills (Villa Rafut, Primex and the spatial location of the campus), which upset the management of the MONG. In the article, Zavrtanik's assessment is given in support: "I often have the feeling that the Polytechnic is more ambitious than its environment in Nova Gorica."¹⁶²

¹⁶⁰ UNG Archives, Management Board, Minutes of the 15th meeting of the PNG Management Board (5 December 2000); Crnica (2001a).

¹⁶¹ UNG Archives, Board of Directors, November 2001.

¹⁶² Željanič (2005a); see also Turel (2005b); see also Crnica (2005).



Minister Jure Zupan at the opening of the Centre for Astrophysics in Otlica.¹⁶³

The decision to establish the foundation paved the way for new opportunities in the decade that the institute gained university status, while expanding cooperation with new Slovenian partners, the most important of which were the Municipality of Ajdovščina and the ZRC SAZU. At the same time, the PNG was committed to remaining a high-quality and student-friendly institution. This was one of the cornerstones of the institution's vision, which the Management Board began discussing in the spring of 2002 - the vision itself was adopted in September 2003.¹⁶⁴

Cooperation with the municipality in the centre of the Vipava Valley intensified in July 2002 when mayor Marjan Poljšak donated land to the Polytechnic in Otlica (with the name Sibirija), on which an observatory was set up. This was the basis for the development of the Centre for Atmospheric Research

¹⁶³ UNG Archives, photo library.

¹⁶⁴ UNG Archives, Senate Sessions, Minutes of the 21st PNG Senate Session (28 August 2003); UNG Archives, Board of Directors, Conclusions and Positions of the 23rd Meeting of the PNG Board of Directors (23 September 2003); see also Željanič (2004b).



Slovenian studies were first taught at the Stanislav Škrabec School of Slovenian Studies. The linguist's great-grandnephew Janez Škrabec (pictured with - from left to right - PNG president Danilo Zavrtanik, mayor of Ajdovščina Marjan Poljšak, PNG head Boštjan Žekš, ZRC SAZU director Oto Luthar, mayor of the MONG Mirko Brulec) allowed the use of the name of his relative and donated a sculpture to the PNG.¹⁶⁵ Photographer: Foto atelje Pavšič Zavadlav.

(including remote measurement of air pollution by the lidar method), thus establishing a fourth area of research and teaching (after the environment, business and technological processes and epitaxy).¹⁶⁶

The long-term adoption of the vision was the result of the existing academic culture and plans for the structural expansion of the PNG into the field of humanities. It was concerned with preparing a programme for Slovenian studies or, more broadly, a programme for Slovenian studies designed in response to initiatives in the local region and relating to the historical period prior to Slovenia's accession to the EU. Since its establishment, the PNG

¹⁶⁵ UNG Archives, UNG photo library.

¹⁶⁶ Imi (2002); see also Jal (2002), Crnica (2002b), Tratnik (2002), Željani (2005).



In October 2009, Academician Prof. Dr. Andrej Kranjec was awarded the degree of Professor Emeritus.¹⁶⁷

had been accepting new study programmes under its auspices, based on the research success of the programme proponent.¹⁶⁸

The Slovenistika study programme helped to establish by the ZRC SAZU, the largest Slovenian research centre for humanities and social sciences.¹⁶⁹ The ZRC SAZU role was crucial since the University of Ljubljana after 2001 set stricter conditions for the participation of its colleagues than in the pedagogical process at other institutions.¹⁷⁰

After the disappointment of ZRC SAZU at the establishment of the University of Primorska on the coast and its already existing activities to include

¹⁶⁷ UNG Archives, UNG photo library.

¹⁶⁸ Crnica (2002a), Rijavec (2002).

¹⁶⁹ UNG Archives, Study of Slovene Studies; see also Mušič (2002b); see also JZ (2002); D. V. (2003).

¹⁷⁰ UNG Archives, Cooperation with Universities.

researchers in the pedagogical process, an agreement was reached on cooperation with the PNG. The introduction to this cooperation was the transfer of the postgraduate Karstology study programme from Koper to the PNG. The programme had begun in the 2003/04 academic year and had then been strengthened through research cooperation, in particular within the UNESCO Karstology Study Centre, established in 2014.¹⁷¹

With the announced expansion of offered study programmes, the newspaper *Primorske novice* reported that the Polytechnic was taking a new path.¹⁷² This was indeed true in the sense of an expansion beyond the natural sciences, but less so of the model involved in the establishment of new study programmes, that is, through a research institute. This model was tried at the time of the establishment of the SES (by involving the IJS and its staff pool). In the decade since the establishment of the SES, the attitude of the University of Ljubljana towards the pedagogical activity of its own colleagues at other higher education institutions had changed the most - it had started restricting the cooperation of its professors with other institutions or setting conditions that were not acceptable to other Slovenian higher education institutions.¹⁷³

Due to the above changes, the PNG accelerated its own network of lecturers, taking into account Monnet's thesis: Nothing is possible without people, but nothing is lasting without institutions. In doing so, it initially tried to attract researchers with completed doctoral studies or postdoctoral training at a foreign higher education institution. Undoubtedly, the contribution of researchers who transferred their knowledge directly into the study process within the framework of a supplementary employment relationship (the so-called one-fifth additional load) was important.¹⁷⁴ The golden age of "fives" occurred in the years 2006-2009, when the inclusion of researchers in the study process was financially stimulated by the Public Agency for Research of the Republic of Slovenia.

¹⁷¹ Archives of ZRC SAZU, Faculty of Humanities.

¹⁷² Crnica (2002b).

¹⁷³ UNG Archives, Cooperation with Universities.

¹⁷⁴ Interview with Danilo Zavrtnik (15 June 2019).



Lanthieri Palace in Vipava. First, the mansion was renovated, and later, the utility rooms where the UNG administration has been housed since 2018. The study process, lectures, symposia and promotions of the School of Business and Technology and the School of Viticulture and Enology now take place in the mansion.¹⁷⁵ Photographer: Miha Godec.

After 2002, when the management of the Polytechnic was disappointed with the slow solution of the issue with space - and with the simultaneous offers of other municipalities - a pragmatic approach was adopted to the consideration of offers for the occupation of representative facilities (Vipolže Manor, Štanjel Manor, Lanthieri Palace, Visoko Manor and Srečko Kosovel Barracks in Ajdovščina). Among them, the offers of the Municipality of Ajdovščina and the Municipality of Vipava are definitely worth mentioning; both were looking for suitable content to fill two representative complexes in the urban environment. The first one drafted plans for the Srečko Kosovel barracks complex,¹⁷⁶ the other for Lanthieri Palace.¹⁷⁷ During the renovation of both facilities, content was sought that would convince the evaluators to award European grants.

¹⁷⁵ UNG archives, photo library.

¹⁷⁶ See also SH (2003).

¹⁷⁷ Crnica (2003c); Tratnik (2003).

The story of Vipava unfolded quickly, mainly due to the possibility of obtaining European funds for the mansion, which was included on the list of the one-hundred most exposed monuments of the World Monuments Fund. In the spring of 2003, a contract of intent was signed, and in November of the same year, another contract, for the implementation of the higher education activity of the Polytechnic in the mansion. The building was leased to the Polytechnic for 85 years.¹⁷⁸ The dynamics of acquiring premises in Ajdovščina, where the municipality had donated the building to the PNG, was slower. The path to obtaining student accommodation in Nova Gorica was even more complicated. The private company Presta, d.o.o. built a student dormitory, but did not receive the announced state support. PNG initially pledged funds to complete the facility as a loan, which was later transformed into an investment.¹⁷⁹

As already mentioned, a vision for the development of the PNG was adopted in September 2003. The management publicly confirmed that the institution wished to remain a non-state, research and student-friendly university, where knowledge is created in a harmonious relationship between students and researchers and passed on to younger generations and the business environment. At the same time, the institution was cohesive, with common services for all organisational units; in short, a gradual transformation was planned along the lines of a modern company. The key measure for the realisation of the vision were the researchers, who were expected to have a wide view and be integrated in the international research context and to have completed postdoctoral training abroad. In pedagogical work, the focus was on the transfer of knowledge in small, compact groups and the involvement of students in research work and practical training in companies. As a result, a high level of employability of PNG graduates was expected - the vision set an 80% employability rate within six months of graduation.¹⁸⁰

In the vision, management committed to diversified methods of financing. Above all, they wanted to avoid dependence on state funding, so they relied

¹⁷⁸ Interview with Danilo Zavrtanik (15 June 2019); Tratnik (2003).

¹⁷⁹ Im (2003); Crnica (2003b); Rijavec (2003); Božič (2005).

¹⁸⁰ UNG Archives, Senate Sessions, Minutes of the 21st PNG Senate Session (28 August 2013).



Grand opening of the premises on Via Croce in Gorizia.¹⁸¹

heavily on European funds, local community grants, donations and, of course, their own Edvard Rusjan Foundation. To a limited extent, the PNG relied on the tuition fees of part-time students, but the funding available from this source was modest throughout, which was the largest difference in the revenue structure compared to that of state universities.¹⁸²

Thus, the by-now internally consolidated higher education institution was prepared for the challenges of the post-transition period. Aware of their success and importance, the PNG management expanded its range of study and research programmes. On 8 December 2003, a renewed founding agreement was

¹⁸¹ UNG archives, photo library.

¹⁸² UNG Archives, Senate Sessions, Minutes of the 21st PNG Senate Session (28 August 2013); Turel (2004b).



Awarding of the UNG gold plaque to Mag. Mitja Jermol for his important contribution to the development of the material possibilities of UNG (12 December 2017).¹⁸³ Photographer: Miha Godec.

signed with which the existing co-founders (IJS and MONG) were joined by the Municipality of Ajdovščina and the ZRC SAZU. In the spring of 2004, the Centre for Atmospheric Research and the Stanislav Škrabec School of Slovenian Studies (later the School of Humanities) were established.¹⁸⁴

The new reality was outlined in December 2003 in an interview conducted with President Žekš for the newspaper Delo. For President Žekš, the PNG was an expansion of opportunities to address the population needs at the border region, as well as a response to the demands of the historical period and a consideration of the interests of the local region.¹⁸⁵ The central fields still

¹⁸³ UNG Archives, photo library.

¹⁸⁴ UNG Archives, Board of Directors, Conclusions and views of the 25th meeting of the PNG Board of Directors (11 May 2005); see also Crnica (2003a); Figelj (2004b).

¹⁸⁵ Kontler Salamon (2003); Sorta (2003); prim. Figelj (2004a).

V nečernih urah zadržanja je človek
 vesel sepa, kar mu sporocin, da ni zitel
 in obkol ramay!
 Kot Slovenca mi je ne posebno ljubo,
 da s meem rokoloveti pri vročevanju notičej,
 Gorice na merita, ki pa je imelo!
 Istremu kralju in najplbje spostovanje!

Stane Granda

In September 2015, UNG awarded Prof. Dr. Stane Granda the title Professor Emeritus.¹⁸⁶

remained in the natural sciences, and the focus was on research work and the direct transfer of research findings into the study process. Due to the growth of the student population, and partly also as information for the co-founders, especially the MONG, the management publicly emphasised the commitment of small and manageable institutions to a maximum of 2,000 students.¹⁸⁷

In 2003 and 2004, the PNG developed programmes in cooperation with the ZRC SAZU for interculturalism and comparative studies of ideas and cultures, and they also prepared an application for a tender to the European Regional Development Fund for the construction of a modern development and university centre in the area of Srečko Kosovel Barracks. This reaffirmed the commitment to take into account the range of local interests, while the aim was to create an innovation-oriented research environment that would allow for the implementation of a variety of initiatives.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁶ UNG Archives, Book of honorary guests.

¹⁸⁷ Sorta (2003).

¹⁸⁸ Interview with Gvido Bratina (26 June 2019); Sorta (2003); see also Crnica (2004).

Due to its achievements, the PNG has defended competition and complementarity in traditional universities with poorly connected research and teaching. In doing so, they referred to good practices, including the practical training of students in companies and interviews with doctoral candidates. Management predicted that the future is in small, dynamic universities that responded to the needs of the local region.¹⁸⁹

Since July 2004, PNG management has noted MONG's interest in developing new higher education institutions. The municipal leadership wanted to attract programmes from members of Slovenian universities (School of Mechanical Engineering, School of Electrical Engineering, School of Social Welfare, College of Health), and at the same time act in a paternal manner towards a public that regarded the PNG as its own institution.¹⁹⁰ PNG management responded to such public appearances by promoting the results of its research work and presenting bold plans.¹⁹¹ In September 2004, they presented a plan for the construction of a so-called lidar observation centre for atmospheric research in Otlica in the Municipality of Ajdovščina. The centre planned to research pollution, especially in western Slovenia, and thus gain a better understanding of pollutants detected by lidar technology.¹⁹² The centre itself was the result of cooperation between PNG researchers of the Pierre Auger project and the Municipality of Ajdovščina. Professor Gvido Bratina spoke about this for the *Finance* newspaper in September 2004 - a month before the parliamentary elections. Bratina presented the construction of the centre as an example of good practice, calling on the Slovenian government to encourage donations. At the same time, he added that the Polytechnic does not regret the decision to take an independent path, but criticised the state, which encouraged the mass departure of young people to Ljubljana, while being indifferent to the strengthening of the branch of the University of Trieste in Gorizia.¹⁹³

¹⁸⁹ See also Tratnik (2004a); see also I. K. (2004).

¹⁹⁰ UNG Archives, MONG; see also Turel (2004a); Turel (2003).

¹⁹¹ Željanič (2004a).

¹⁹² Bergant and Veberič (2004); Tratnik (2004b).

¹⁹³ Ručna (2004).

Št. 51-1/2003

Nova Gorica, september 2003

Mestna občina Nova Gorica, Trg Edvarda Kardelja 1, 5000 Nova Gorica, ki jo zastopa župan Mirko Brulc in

Institut »Jožef Stefan«, Jamova 39, 1000 Ljubljana, ki ga zastopa direktor prof.dr. Vito Turk ter

Občina Ajdovščina, Cesta 5. maja 6A, 5270 Ajdovščina, ki jo zastopa župan Marjan Poljšak, univ.dipl.inž. in

Znanstvenoraziskovalni center SAZU, Gosposka 13, 1000 Ljubljana, ki ga zastopa direktor prof.dr. Oto Luthar

se dogovorijo in na pobudo ter v soglasju s Politehniko Nova Gorica, z namenom, da se zagotovi:

- širitev univerzitetne dejavnosti, ki bo zagotavljala enakomeren in usklajen gospodarski in kulturni razvoj goriške regije
- razvoj novih študijskih programov in širitev raziskovalne in znanstvene dejavnosti na področje družboslovja in humanistike

sklenejo kot dopolnitev ustanovitvenega akta Politehnike Nova Gorica, naslednjo

POGODBO

1. člen

Podpisniki se dogovorijo, da s sklenitvijo te pogodbe, poleg Mestne občine Nova Gorica in Instituta »Jožef Stefan«, kot nova soustanovitelja Politehnike Nova Gorica pristopita še Občina Ajdovščina in Znanstvenoraziskovalni center SAZU.

2. člen

Za uresničitev namena, določenega s to pogodbo, bo:

Občina Ajdovščina:

- za izvajanje študijske in raziskovalne dejavnosti s področja naravoslovja in tehnike predala Politehniko Nova Gorica stavbo na parceli št. 1252/22 k.o. Ajdovščina, ki se nahaja v sklopu kompleksa bivše vojašnice »Srečko Kosovel« in uredila komunalno infrastrukturo za potrebe univerzitetne dejavnosti do tega objekta
- v okviru svojih zmožnosti in v skladu z uspešnostjo razvoja dejavnosti Politehniko Nova Gorica, pomagala pri pridobivanju bližnjih objektov in zemljišč, ki se nahajajo v sklopu kompleksa bivše vojašnice »Srečko Kosovel«.

Znanstvenoraziskovalni center SAZU:

- za širitev raziskovalne in znanstvene dejavnosti na področju družboslovja in humanistike, v okviru svojih zmožnosti, zagotovil potrebne kadre, opremo in prostore ter potrebna finančna sredstva.

Prenos lastništva stavb in zemljišč, ki jih bo zagotovila Občina Ajdovščina in zagotovitev kadrov, opreme in prostorov ter potrebnih finančnih sredstev, vezanih na širitev raziskovalne in znanstvene dejavnosti, ki jih bo zagotovil Znanstvenoraziskovalni center SAZU, bosta nova soustanovitelja s Politehniko Nova Gorica uredila z ustreznimi pogodbami.

Nepremičnine, ki jih bo v Politehniko Nova Gorica vložila Občina Ajdovščina, je možno odsvojiti ali obremeniti le s soglasjem Občine Ajdovščina.

3. člen

Poleg obveznosti in pravic, določenih s to pogodbo, Občina Ajdovščina in Znanstvenoraziskovalni center SAZU, s pridobitvijo statusa soustanovitelja Politehniko Nova Gorica, prevzemata tudi vse obveznosti in pravice, ki iz tega statusa izhajajo in so določeni v aktih Politehniko Nova Gorica.

4. člen

Podpisniki se prav tako dogovorijo za novo sestavo upravnega odbora, kot organa upravljanja Politehniko Nova Gorica.

Po pristopu novih soustanoviteljev ima upravni odbor Politehniko Nova Gorica sedem članov.

Upravni odbor sestavljajo po en predstavnik ustanoviteljev, dva predstavnika sodelavcev Politehniko Nova Gorica, ki opravljajo visokošolsko dejavnost in raziskovalno delo ter predstavnik študentov.

5. člen

Ker se s to pogodbo določajo novi soustanovitelji Politehnike Nova Gorica in ker se s tem spremenijo tudi obveznosti in pravice ustanoviteljev, se ta pogodba šteje kot dopolnitev in sestavni del pogodbe o ustanovitvi Politehnike Nova Gorica z dne 24.9.1995, ter aneksa št. 1, z dne 24.9.1998 in aneksa št. 2, z dne 15.1.2003 k tej pogodbi.

Politehnika Nova Gorica je dolžna zagotoviti vpis novih soustanoviteljev v sodni register in konstituirati nov upravni odbor v skladu z določili te pogodbe ter uskladiti statut najkasneje v roku 90 dni od sklenitve te pogodbe.

6. člen


Pogodba velja z dnem, ko jo podpišejo vsi podpisniki in ko senat Politehnike Nova Gorica sprejme ustrezno soglasje.

7. člen

Pogodba je napisana v desetih, vsebinsko enakih izvodih, od katerih prejme vsak od podpisnikov po dva izvoda.

Ljubljana, dne 30-10-2003

Institut »Jožef Stefan«

direktor  Institut "Jožef Stefan" 2
Ljubljana, Slovenija
prof.dr. Vito Turk

Ajdovščina, dne 24-11-2003

Občina Ajdovščina

župan

Marjan Poljšak, univ. dipl. inž.



Nova Gorica, dne 5.11.2003

Mestna občina Nova Gorica

župan 

Mirko Brulc



Ljubljana, dne 08-12-2003

Znanstvenoraziskovalni center SAZU

direktor

prof.dr. Oto Luthar



Nova Gorica, dne 4.11.2003

Politehnika Nova Gorica

predsednik

prof.dr. Danilo Zavrtanik



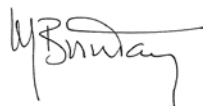
The founding contract determined the obligations and rights of the founders, especially for a couple of new founders: Municipality of Ajdovščina and the ZRC SAZU.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹⁴ UNG Archives.

To Danilo and his astroparticle group with all
my sympathy :

- because they are nice and clever persons ;
- because they were among the most solid and faithful pillars of the Auger project since the beginnings ;
- because Danilo's good sense and his legendary talents in diplomacy prevented several times the Auger collaboration from sinking like the Titanic .

My most sincere wishes for their successful future,



Dr. Murat Boratav, the first honorary member of the UNG (2008).¹⁹⁵

This position was later reiterated by President Zavrtanik, who drew attention to the unperformed transition in science, culture and higher education, and among the key challenges emphasised the establishment of an appropriate method of financing science. He estimated that the state prefers to invest in projects to which the media pays a lot of attention and those whose results are apparent in the short term.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁵ UNG Archives, Book of honorary guests.

¹⁹⁶ UNG Archives, Senate Sessions, Resolutions and Positions of the 54th Session of the UNG Senate (20 November 2013); see also Maličev (2004).

TRANSFORMATION INTO THE UNIVERSITY OF NOVA GORICA

Institutional enlargement in December 2003 reopened the issue of transforming the PNG into a university, also in formal terms. This was especially true after the Janša government took office in December 2004, with the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Sport, Jure Zupan. The government at the time was very much in favour of private economic initiative and investments, including to higher education, referring to general European trends.¹⁹⁷

As stated in the Resolution on the National Higher Education Programme for the period 2007-2010, the purpose of opening the higher education area was to facilitate the creation or arrival of new, smaller, quality private universities, primarily from the EU. Increasing the number of higher education institutions was expected to increase competition between study programmes and thus positively affect their quality. As part of the plan of economic and social reform to increase Slovenia's prosperity, a gradual expansion of the network of higher education institutions and an increase in the number of state and private universities from seven to ten were envisaged. The network would first need expand regionally by supporting the

¹⁹⁷ Resolution on the National Higher Education Programme of the Republic of Slovenia 2007-2010, available at: <https://www.uni-lj.si/mma/20070118RNPVS/2013070110010162>, 15 January 2016.

activities of individual regions and the local economy. The integration of existing education and development units should also lead to the establishment of higher education and innovation centres in the region, which would support the local economy. The centres would carry out research and development projects that would contribute to the development of the technological level and the progress of the region.¹⁹⁸

According to the Resolution, regional higher education and innovation centres should consider the economic interest in the pedagogical and study needs (reduction of the number of students) by organically expanding higher education centres, innovation centres, technology incubators and local satellite programmes for larger universities as well as establish or expand their activities into regional centres. It was planned that these centres would develop into universities that would be specialised and highly research-oriented, with at least half of them being private.¹⁹⁹

Despite the ministry's support in principle, it took almost 12 months to obtain university status. The application initially surprised the ministry and the public, as well as opinion leaders, who initially suspected that the PNG might be counting on state funding. In fact, it was a deliberate move by the management, which, when joining new international consortia - and also when awarding an honorary doctorate to Romano Prodi - found that this organisational type of university would be more recognisable in international terms. Discussions on this began in November 2004 as part of an update of the statutes in light of new, more diversified PNG activity. Among these changes, the establishment of the School of Postgraduate Studies for the implementation of all university postgraduate studies should definitely be highlighted. The application for the status of a university was prepared by April 2005, when the board of directors won the opinion of the head

¹⁹⁸ National Higher Education Programme 2011-2020 and the Research and Innovation Strategy of Slovenia

2011-2020, available at: <http://www.drznaslovenija.mvzt.gov.si/>, 15 January 2016.

¹⁹⁹ Resolution on the National Higher Education Programme of the Republic of Slovenia 2007-2010, available at:

<https://www.uni-lj.si/mma/20070118RNPVS/2013070110010162>, 15 January 2016.



In June 2004, the PNG Senate decided to award an honorary doctorate to Romano Prodi, President of the European Commission, for his contribution to the development and enlargement of the European Union and to the advancement of science and higher education in Europe. The award ceremony reflected the hope that Slovenia's accession to the European Union would be a symbolic turning point and an opportunity to strengthen cooperation in the Nova Gorica region.²⁰⁰ Photographer: Foto atelje Pavšič Zavadlav.

Žekš that the institutional framework for a higher education institution had already been exceeded, and that it made sense to obtain the status of a (non-state) university.²⁰¹

The status change application, prepared in April 2005, highlighted the strong and broad support of the founders, its eligibility and a wide range of activities that complemented and enriched each other. In short, it met the highest academic standards. The application presented the organisational structure, vision and advantages of the PNG, with its innovation being the existence of two campuses and the implementation of postgraduate studies at the School of Postgraduate Studies, thus pursuing uniform standards for the imple-

²⁰⁰ UNG Archives, photo library.

²⁰¹ UNG Archives, Management Board, Conclusions and views of the 28th meeting of the PNG Management Board (12 April 2005).

mentation of postgraduate studies. The importance of the institution to the coastal, Slovenian and international context and thus also to the creation of a strong centre on the western edge of Slovenia, at the crossroads with the border and the Italian context, was also emphasised. At the very end of the introductory presentation, it was stated that the language of instruction would be Slovenian, but that individual study programmes or parts thereof could be conducted in English, if so determined by the study programme. The text fully corresponded to the provisions of the Higher Education Act, so the statement in the application was redundant. This was a deliberate move to reject in advance the allegations about the implementation of the study process in a foreign language, which confirmed the seriousness of the applicant about obtaining the status of a university.²⁰²

In June 2005, two months after the application was submitted, Minister Zupan inaugurated the Centre for Atmospheric Research. The Minister welcomed the research work and recognized the importance of the Centre for the Involvement of Slovenian Researchers in International Cooperation. A He shared only the official news about the role of PNG as this had been discussed at the Council for Higher Education of the Republic of Slovenia under the leadership of President Peter Jambreč. In September 2005, President Zavrtanik stated in a report on activities since the last meeting that “the procedures at the Council for Higher Education are slow and the role needs to be supplemented using the same data”. The role was symbolically supported by Prime Minister Janez Janša with an address at the celebration of the tenth anniversary of PNG in September 2005.²⁰³

While waiting for the final assessment of the application before the Council for Higher Education of the Republic of Slovenia, in December 2005 President Janez Drnovšek awarded Zavrtanik with the Order of Service, specifically for his successful research work and merits in the establishment and operation of the Polytechnic, as well as his contribution to the development of higher edu-

²⁰² UNG Archives, Application for the change of the status of the independent higher education institution Polytechnic Nova Gorica into a university; see also Alič (2005), Kontler Salamon (2005a).

²⁰³ UNG Archives, Senate Sessions, Minutes of the 34th PNG Senate Session (7 September 2005); see also Željan (2002).

cation in the Goriška region.²⁰⁴ During this time, Mladen Franko also received an important accolade; the Zois award. Meanwhile, there was a complication in assessing the application. The Council for Higher Education of the Republic of Slovenia appointed members of expert groups for the evaluation of already accredited programmes at PNG, which was understood by the Polytechnic to be a delaying tactic. Later, the length of the process was attributed to interdisciplinary programmes.²⁰⁵ Then, on March 8, 2006, President Žekš and President Zavrtanik informed Prime Minister Janša about the slow resolution of their application for the transformation of PNG into a university. They pointed out that they understood the slowness of the application process, but that such a long application had become the predominant pattern and that the institution found it difficult to plan the introduction of new study programmes such as the Viticulture and Enology programme, which had been discussed at the Council for Higher Education of the Republic of Slovenia two years previous. According to the signatories, such procedures do not lead to “the much-desired increase in the quality of higher education in our country”.²⁰⁶

On 17 March 2006, the Council for Higher Education of the Republic of Slovenia issued a decision approving the transformation of the Nova Gorica Polytechnic into the University of Nova Gorica - UNG. The mayor and the president received congratulations for their success, and the mayor of Nova Gorica Mirko Brulc sent a letter to the academician Žekš in which he polemically responded to the mayor’s statement about the waning support of the mayor of Nova Gorica as expressed in an interview with the newspaper Delo. Brulc reiterated that the domicile municipality had always supported the institution materially, morally and declaratively, but could not overcome “some short contacts in arranging Rafut Park and some, in your opinion, too slow procedures for evicting current tenants in your building” (Primex in Rožna Dolina). At the same time, the mayor complained that the highest representatives of the Polytechnic did not publicly emphasise the support of the MONG. Private thanks from management had not been enough.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁴ Prof. Dr. Danilo Zavrtanik, University of Nova Gorica, <http://www.ung.si/sl/novice/753/prof-dr-danilu-zavrtaniku-je-predsednik-republike-slovenije-podelil-red-za-zasluge/>, 5. 6. 2020.

²⁰⁵ UNG Archives, Interview with Danilo Zavrtanik (15 June 2019).

²⁰⁶ UNG Archives, Correspondence - various, 2006; Željanič (2004c).

²⁰⁷ UNG Archives, Correspondence - various, 2006; Turel (2005a).



In a letter to the Prime Minister Janša, Zavrtanik and Žekš advocate that state bodies decide on applications on the basis of law and merit.²⁰⁸



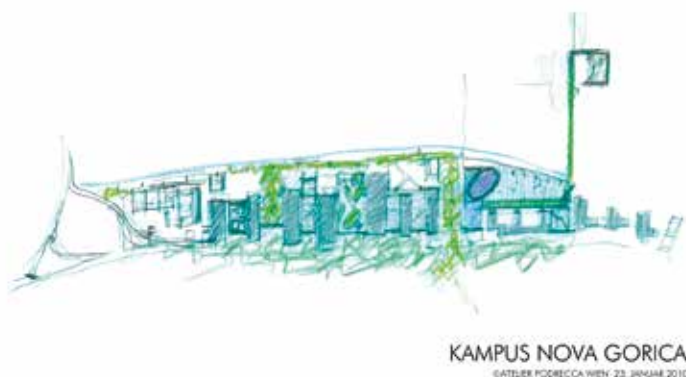
Mirko Brulc, Mayor of Nova Gorica, honours Danilo Zavrtnik on occasion of the tenth anniversary of the higher education institution in Nova Gorica.²⁰⁹

UNG leadership wanted to “cash in” on the announced support of the mayor and informed Brulc on April 26, 2006 that the institution had also become a *de jure* university, and Nova Gorica a university town. Zavrtnik emphasised the importance of infrastructure for carrying out activities and attracting students to Nova Gorica. He asked the MONG to donate the Primex building to UNG, while initiating procedures to determine the location of a campus in Nova Gorica.²¹⁰ The first request was granted only in November 2008, after UNG had lost its use permit as a tenant due to the owner’s inept management of the building, which had made its operations very difficult. The placement of the campus within its detailed spatial plan turned out to be too hard a nut to crack and the “magic tricks” used in compiling the municipal budget were exhausted.²¹¹

²⁰⁹ UNG Archives, photo library.

²¹⁰ UNG Archives, Correspondence - various, 2006

²¹¹ UNG Archives, Correspondence - various, 2008



KAMPUS NOVA GORICA
GATELER PODRECCA WIEN 23. JANUAR 2010

The conceptual plan for the UNG campus was prepared by Boris Podrecca.²¹²

Despite its positive reception, the Council for Higher Education of the Republic of Slovenia continued to conduct the accreditation process for the School of Business and Technology separately. There was an awkwardness in this, as the reviewers publicly presented their views and made value judgments before the procedure was completed. After the protest, the process started regularly and ended with the accreditation of study programmes.²¹³

According to the academician Žekš, management of UNG paved the way for other higher education institutions, including those that did not meet the conditions to the same extent as the Polytechnic did when it submitted the application in April 2005.²¹⁴

With a number of managerial takeovers of blue-chip companies since 2007, there had been a growing dislike for private higher education institutions that were said to be of lower quality than state universities and whose mission was rumored to be the enrichment of their founders. Some had even begun to talk about the 'tycoonisation' of the higher educational context, which was thought

²¹² UNG Archives.

²¹³ UNG Archives, Correspondence - various, 2006

²¹⁴ Interview with Boštjan Žekš (15 January 2020).



On 6 July 2011, the UNG Senate selected Evgen Bavčar as an honorary doctor of UNG for his outstanding artistic achievements in the field of photography. Congratulations were also expressed by the writer Boris Pahor.²¹⁵ Photographer: Foto atelje Pavšič Zavadlav.

to be field-oriented in an era of widespread managerial buyouts by companies. Initially, the movement against non-governmental institutions was led by students or student organisations (at the largest Slovenian universities) and it later gained the support of some opinion leaders. All critics of non-state institutions made hints at the idea of enrichment and lower standards in non-state higher education institutions. However, this was a form of opposition to all irregular forms of study that had formed the reaction of the Slovenian academic community to the authorities' attempts to shorten studies and abandon the old approach and goals since the mid-1950s (including the formation of a generally humanistically educated scholar). This later expanded, especially due to the availability of part-time forms of education.

UNG had to face these allegations in public for the first time since gaining university status. The academic community recognised the research and

²¹⁵ UNG Archives, photo library.



In 2006, the town of Nova Gorica became a university town Nova Gorica into a university city.²¹⁶

pedagogical excellence of UNG as the institution had been accepted into the Rectors' Conference of the Republic of Slovenia, the representative body of Slovenian universities. In public, however, management often pointed out that it was a non-governmental and non-profit organisation that invested its surpluses in the purchase of new equipment and the introduction of new programmes. The arguments of UNG were drowned out, however, by the clamour of founding a New University based in Nova Gorica. The delicate balance between state and non-state institutions performing public service that was established in the 1990s had been upset. If the establishment of non-state institutions (first the SES) in the 1990s was a part of the reformation of higher education from within, after 2005, it served the function of cutting the Gordian knot or launching a decade of discussions on adopting a new law on higher education with the aim of establishing a new higher education area comparable to that of the wider European area. The systemic revolt by established state institutions that was steering public discourse had a negative effect on UNG.²¹⁷

²¹⁶ UNG Archives, UNG photo library.

²¹⁷ Interview with Boštjan Žekš (15 January 2020).

The change of public opinion towards UNG, which until then had received correct presentations of its mission and, above all, its successes, surprised its management, which had otherwise enjoyed a rich and diverse experience. They found that such an incorrect presentation of UNG had a negative impact on student enrollment and also on cooperation with stakeholders in the local region. They decided to tighten their criteria for habilitating their colleagues, to place them above the level of Slovenian state universities, to establish a communication strategy for presenting the results of research work and to transform their vision. Through enhanced public action, they wanted to neutralise the zeal against non-state institutions, which was another such experience; the first was at the founding of the University of Primorska.²¹⁸

They also responded to the changed attitude of the founders - the local community. Relations with the MONG revolved relentlessly around the question of the location of the campus and the use of the Primex building in Rožna Dolina. The relationship with the mayor of the Municipality of Ajdovščina deteriorated due to different views on the status of UNG in the InPrime project. The municipality invited UNG as a partner on the project consortium, i.e., to apply for the tender for the development of the region's centre. The tender enabled the establishment of an innovation infrastructure, with UNG expecting an important, if not leading, role in the light of its experience with this type of activity and research references. UNG, however, wanted the status of lead partner, which led to friction between stakeholders, mostly between the UNG and the municipality.²¹⁹ In the summer of 2012, the municipality of Ajdovščina gave its provisional consent to the appointment of a new UNG board of directors with an annex to the gift contract with which the local community sealed the donated UNG building in the Srečko Kosovel barracks complex. This concluded the story of the construction of a campus in Ajdovščina on the barracks area; the remaining two buildings of the former barracks are still awaiting adequate renovation.²²⁰

²¹⁸ UNG Archives, Senate Sessions, Minutes of the 18th UNG Senate Session (17 September 2008); UNG Archives, Senate Session, Minutes of the 19th UNG Senate Session (20 October 2008).

²¹⁹ UNG Archives, 2007_Correspondence - various.

²²⁰ UNG Archives, Senate Sessions, Minutes of the 27th PNG Senate Session (19 January 2012).



The Primex building in Rožna Dolina is home to the School of Environmental Sciences, the School of Humanities, the Laboratory for Environmental and Life Sciences, the Centre for Cognitive Language Sciences and the Research Centre for Humanities. Photographer: A-media, d.o.o.

However, the relationship of MONG with UNG remained multifaceted. The MONG developed its strategy for the development of higher education after the establishment of the University of Primorska, while maintaining a stable grant for the Polytechnic and later - until 2020 - for UNG. MONG regulated its basic location conditions, albeit at a slower pace than planned and differently from the expectations of the PNG / UNG management. The relationship cooled as PNG / UNG management spent a disproportionate amount of time and energy on administrative activities (such as evicting tenants from the Primex building) that were reminiscent of tilting at windmills.²²¹

UNG's tolerance threshold was exceeded in October 2008, following the withdrawal of the use permit for the Primex building. Researchers were left without access to laboratories and the implementation of the study process was disrupted. The municipality intervened and resolved the complication, but UNG management identified the spatial issue as one of its key challenges. Management had wanted to use the resulting complication as an argument

²²¹ UNG Archives, Senate Sessions, Minutes of the 16th PNG Senate Session (29 October 2012).

Danilo Zavrtanik wrote:

Dear Ms. Croasdell,

Thank you very much for your reply to professor Veneziano's letter and for the readiness of professor Hawking to attend the Time and Matter 2007 conference which will take place in Slovenia. The attendance of professor Hawking is a great event for our conference and in particular for our country.

The conference will take place from August 26th to August 31st at Grand Hotel Toplice at Lake Bled, easily accessible from the Ljubljana airport. All the details about the conference can be found at its web site (<http://tam.ung.si/>) but please do not hesitate to contact us at any time should you need help, information, etc.

Regarding the conference agenda; participants are expected to arrive to Bled on Sunday, and a formal reception will be held on Sunday evening. We hope professor Hawking could give the opening lecture on Monday morning, when the scientific programme of the conference starts. We will provide the agenda for the whole week as soon as it is finalized. May we at this time add professor Hawking's name to the list of invited speakers, which is presented on the conference home page?

Let me take this opportunity to extend our invitation to professor Hawking to visit our university and/or to have a public lecture for a broad audience. If professor Hawking feels to stay a few more days in Slovenia, we can also arrange meetings with our high rank officials and politicians, for example president of the Republic or/and president of our government, minister of science, president of Slovenian academy of sciences and arts, etc.

In closing, we would be honored if professor Hawking would be willing to accept a Doctor Honoris Causa degree from the University of Nova Gorica. Since we are a young institution, the list of DHCs is short but contains great names as Nobel prize winners James W. Cronin and Paul J. Crutzen, father of the Jumbo Jet Joseph F. Sutter, scientist and astronaut Christer Fuglesang and the former president of the EU Commission Romano Prodi. We are attaching a formal letter of invitation from the UNG president, which has been sent to you before by surface mail, since we are not certain it has reached you.

Looking forward to host professor Hawking in Slovenia, we remain,
Yours sincerely,

Danilo Zavrtanik, Chair of TAM2007 International Advisory
Committee and President of the University of Nova Gorica

Samo Stanic, Chair of TAM2007 Local Organizing Committee

*Stephen Hawking accepted an invitation to make a speech at the 2007 Time and Matter conference. Due to health reasons, he did not attend the conference in Bled.*²²²

²²² UNG Archives, Correspondence - various, 2007.

2. verzija: za mešani zbor a capella
Žiga Stanič (2000)

Himna UNG

Svečano (♩ = 44)

sopran
alt

f

V_ve - sol-je za-mi-sli pri - na - ša - mo no - ve, po - sta-vlja-mo svet brez me -

tenor
bas

f

ff

ja in vztra-ja - mo v du - hu is - ka - nja, ne skre - ne - mo z_na - še po -

ff

ti. Ta šo - la nam da - je sve - ži - no za - ve-tja, pre -

f

f

(refren)

13

ff

bu - ja nam no - ve mo - či, da za - sle - du - je - mo mi - sli sve - ta, o -

17

f

hranjamo ve - ro vanj. Ro - do - vi štu - den - tov gra - di - mo ro - do - ve in

17

f

(refren)

22

ff

ci - klu - se no - vih i - dej, ne ustav - lja nas strah pred ne -

ff

25

ff

zna - nim, pri - ži - ga - mo no - ve lu či.

ff

ritardando

(refren)

for the transfer of ownership of the Primex building to UNG. This was done after intensive negotiations that lasted until the summer of 2009.²²³

Relations were further burdened by the decision of PNG or UNG to continue independently and to defend its autonomy in the field of research and pedagogy. In the second half of 2007, MONG decided to support the planned higher education institutions in Nova Gorica while maintaining a financial grant for UNG.²²⁴ This was a period during which UNG operated well financially and completed the renovation of the building in Ajdovščina, as well as beginning talks with representatives of the gaming company Harrahs of Las Vegas, a company described as a strategic partner of Hit d.o.o. It also set up a technology transfer office, which strengthened cooperation with companies, i.e., for marketing technologies, and at the same time they were looking for donors who would be willing to financially support UNG or the Edvard Rusjan Foundation.²²⁵

As already mentioned, management of UNG lost confidence in the ability of MONG to solve the issue of space shortage, so they looked for a solution within a wider radius. Thus, they accepted the offer of the Municipality of Vipava to participate in the tender for obtaining grants for the renovation of the Lanthieri Palace, and in April 2008 a public tender was published by UNG to find a location for the campus. During this economically stimulating period, several interviews were conducted with representatives of local communities, but no municipality was able to offer a suitable communal space equipped for the needs of UNG.²²⁶

²²³ UNG Archives, Senate Sessions, Minutes of the 25th UNG Senate Session (16 September 2009); UNG Archives, Board of Directors, Conclusions and Positions of the 10th Meeting of the UNG Board of Directors (27 October 2008).

²²⁴ UNG Archives, Management Board, Conclusions and views of the 10th meeting of the UNG Management Board (27 October 2008).

²²⁵ UNG Archives, Management Board, Conclusions and views of the 7th meeting of the UNG Management Board (2 April 2008); UNG Archives, 2007_Correspondence - various.

²²⁶ UNG Archives, Various correspondence, 2008; UNG Archives, Board of Directors, Decisions and views of the 14th meeting of the Board of Directors (20 May 2009).

LEADERSHIP CHANGES, THE ECONOMIC CRISIS AND BEYOND

In November 2008, after being appointed Minister for Slovenians Abroad, the academician Žekš resigned due to incompatibility between his two executive functions. UNG had an established administration and management decisions fell within the competencies of President Zavrtnik. The resignation had only a significant symbolic effect, as Žekš continued to be a member of the board and continued to have an impact on UNG's strategic decisions in this capacity. The Board of Directors had decided to assign the powers of one President to the other President until the approval of the new statute, and appointed two Assistant Presidents: Gvido Bratina for the research field and Mladen Franko for the pedagogical field.²²⁷

At the beginning of the economic crisis, the Slovenian government wanted to help Slovenian higher education, which was in a most stressful period at the time due to the implementation of the Bologna reform. Therefore, in 2009 the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Sport allocated public funds to state universities within the tender for centres of excellence. Specifically, the Ministry of Higher Education decided to encourage state universities

²²⁷ UNG Archives, Management Board, Decisions and views of the 13th meeting of the UNG Management Board (19 March 2009); interview with Danilo Zavrtnik (15 June 2019).



Meeting of researchers from the Traveling Texts 1790-1914 project group: The Transnational Reception of Women's Writing at the Fringes of Europe, which included associates of the School of Humanities Prof. Dr. Katja Mihurko Poniž, Dr. Tanja Badalič, Dr. Megi Rožič and Prof. Dr. Aleš Vaupotič. The HERA project was implemented from 1 September 2013 to 31 August 2016. Photographer: Megi Rožič.²²⁸

to strengthen their quality of research and pedagogical activities, i.e., to reward excellence or to support it at the systemic level. However, the call was intended only for state universities, which meant that funds were allocated only to previously established applicants. UNG, meanwhile, had to finance the modernisation of pedagogical activities from its own resources following the introduction of the Bologna study programmes, which intensified dissatisfaction with media coverage of non-state institutions.²²⁹

The Bologna Process was a turning point in the development of Slovenian higher education. The Ministry based the entire process on the nomotechnical level,

²²⁸ HERA project. UNG, <http://www.ung.si/sl/raziskave/raziskovalni-center-za-humanistiko/literarne-avtorice/>, 20 August 2020.

²²⁹ UNG Archives, Management Board, Conclusions and views of the 16th meeting of the UNG Management Board (29 October 2009).



Signing of a cooperation agreement between Rene Rusjan, head of the Famul Stuart School of Applied Arts, and Rector Danilo Zavrtanik (12 September 2008).²³⁰

which was followed by the largest Slovenian university. UNG also recognised the process as an opportunity for the substantive renewal of study programmes, so as part of the Bologna reform it developed new quality programmes and used new approaches, among which the key one was student-centred education - student-centred learning.²³¹

However, UNG adopted new initiatives to mark the end of its first decade, such as the establishment of its own vineyard for the needs of the higher

²³⁰ Following the signing of the agreement, the UNG established the College of Arts, and in the 2009/10 academic year, the undergraduate programme Digital Arts and Practice was launched. Later, a master's programme in Media Arts and Practice was added, and the school was transformed into the UNG Academy of Arts. UNG Archives, photo library; Andreja Leban: Signing of the cooperation agreement, UNG, <http://www.ung.si/sl/novice/878/podpis-dogovora-o-sodelovanju/> (18 August 2020).

²³¹ UNG Archives, Management Board, Conclusions and views of the 16th meeting of the UNG Management Board (29 October 2009).

education study programme in Viticulture and Enology.²³² The Art School known as the Famul Stuart School of Applied Arts also became integrated into UNG at this time, first as a College of Arts, and from 2018, renamed the Art Academy.²³³

The first decade of the 21st century was symbolically concluded by UNG in October 2009 with the adoption of a development plan for the period 2010-2025 which consisted of a medium-term, five-year plan and a vision for development within the 2015-2025 period. Its key points were: strengthening the quality of research and intertwining research work and pedagogical activities as implied by a 50:50 ratio set between research and pedagogical work. With the aim of strengthening the reputation of study programmes, management decided to renew plans to complete the studies with a doctoral dissertation in English. Such an orientation had already been indicated in the 2003 vision; doctoral students in natural sciences had chosen English.²³⁴

Concerns about the mandatory writing of doctoral dissertations in English were expressed by representatives of the ZRC SAZU, who defended the interests of candidates in the field of Comparative Studies of Ideas and Cultures. The first time such a discussion took place was in September 2009, during the examination of the dissertation of the candidate Luka Vidmar, also a young researcher at the ZRC SAZU. In his case, a compromise solution was reached - a longer summary in English. But from then on, candidates had to either write a dissertation in English or, if they wrote a dissertation in Slovenian, to publish an article in a journal with a high impact factor. Representatives of the ZRC SAZU unsuccessfully advocated that the decision regarding the language of the dissertation be made by the

²³² UNG Archives, Management Board, Conclusions and views of the 14th meeting of the UNG Management Board (20 May 2009).

²³³ UNG Archives, Management Board, Conclusions and views of the 13th meeting of the UNG Management Board (19 March 2009).

²³⁴ UNG Archives, Management Board, Conclusions and views of the 16th meeting of the UNG Management Board (29 October 2009).



Conversation of the vice-rector Prof. Dr. Mladen Franko with Prof. Dr. Antonin Abrami, the recipient received the title of Professor Emeritus. Photographer: Foto atelje Pavšič Zavadlav.²³⁵

candidate after consultation with the doctoral supervisor. The UNG Senate, however, insisted on the belief that writing a dissertation in English demonstrated important competencies that would contribute toward the inclusion of a doctoral candidate within the international academic context.²³⁶

In September 2009, it was agreed upon that ZRC SAZU would conduct postgraduate studies within its (newly established) Postgraduate School ZRC SAZU, and that UNG would enable the defence of candidates with doctoral dissertations in Slovenian during a period of transition if the candidate published an article in a reputable journal with a high impact factor before the defence and added a longer summary in English to the dissertation. In 2012, candidates enrolled in the above-mentioned postgraduate study programme had the choice of either completing their studies at UNG

²³⁵ UNG Archives, photo library.

²³⁶ UNG Archives, Senate Sessions, Minutes of the 25th PNG Senate Session (16 September 2009).

or the ZRC SAZU Postgraduate School. The final conclusion of institutional cooperation between the two institutions followed in March 2015, when ZRC SAZU resigned as a co-founder of UNG. Its associates nonetheless remained involved in the implementation of the pedagogical process at the School of Humanities and the Karstology postgraduate study programme.²³⁷

In June 2010, the board of management adopted a new UNG statute. Adopting the title of university acquired in 2006, the leading official became the rector, his two assistants and a vice-rector. Structured and efficient management of the institution was further emphasised. Following the adoption of the statute, the Board of Directors, following the opinion of the Council of Statutory Members, appointed Danilo Zavrtnik Rector of UNG for a four-year term.²³⁸ Subsequently, in November 2012, the appointment of organisational units acting independently from the board of directors was added to the rector's responsibilities. The statute and changed the university symbols (coat of arms, flag) and anthem.²³⁹

The Board of Directors intended to update the founding treaty to make a clean copy from which obsolete articles and provisions would be deleted. Both academic institutions supported the proposal, while the municipalities opposed it.²⁴⁰

At the same time, management had to solve the liquidity problems of the institution that were a consequence of the success of the strategic direction and the acquisition of European projects in which institutions were required to pre-finance research. Of course, the change to a practice of state funding of postgraduate studies and the delay in the adoption of the state decree on the financing of higher education institutions also contributed

²³⁷ UNG Archives, Management Board, Conclusions and views of the 41st meeting of the UNG Management Board (9 April 2015).

²³⁸ UNG Archives, Management Board, Conclusions and views of the 19th meeting of the UNG Management Board (23 June 2010).

²³⁹ UNG Archives, Management Board, Minutes of the 31st correspondence meeting of the UNG Management Board (16 November 2012).

²⁴⁰ UNG Archives, Management Board, Conclusions and views of the 20th meeting of the Management Board (29 September 2010).



Research work of the Laboratory for Materials Research on the transmission electron microscope, which was obtained from earmarked funds within the SUNGREEN project (2011-2015).²⁴¹ Photographer: CasarsaGURU.

to this. UNG addressed the problem by setting up a scholarship fund to which it contributed its own funds, and additional funds were contributed by donors in the following years. Due to the important role of financial contributions, especially during the ongoing economic crisis, reviews of the founders' contributions had been prepared since 1997. This then became a regular practice.²⁴²

Due to the economic crisis, which was deeper and longer lasting in Slovenia than it was abroad, the key emphasis in the rector's vision of UNG's development start in August 2011 was internationalisation, which became the leitmotif of the following years. For this, the Rector explicitly drew on the accomplishments of the introductory period of the institution, when it had

²⁴¹ UNG Archives, photo library.

²⁴² UNG Archives, Management Board, Conclusions and views of the 28th meeting of the UNG Management Board (5 April 2012).

paved innovations within the Slovenian academic system due to expanded international cooperation, thus distinguishing it from its competitors. The key measures were identified: to acquire foreign lecturers and to attract motivated foreign students. To this end, the rector proposed strengthening the scholarship fund and revitalising the operation of the Edvard Rusjan Foundation, which became less effective after the transformation of PNG into UNG. At the same August session, the management board presented awards to the members of the first senate of SES and agreed to transfer the Comparative Studies of Ideas and Cultures study programme to ZRC SAZU.²⁴³

Management of UNG was again dissatisfied with the decision of MONG to locate the Campus of Knowledge in the centre of Nova Gorica, resulting in an administrative procedure for the placement of a campus for UNG.²⁴⁴ At the same time, UNG received an offer to establish a campus in Gorizia. Further review and investigation of the conditions were carried out, but the price for the purchase of the real estate was too high. UNG management solved the space shortage by accelerating the renovation of the Lanthieri Palace and by finding suitable premises in Nova Gorica, at least for the needs of the Materials Research Laboratory and the CITIUS project and the Art Academy. The latter organisational unit had the most success, as it was given the premises in the Alvarez Palace. With this, UNG again strengthened its presence in Gorizia after the period 2005-2008. During this time, an agreement was reached between SES and Ca 'Foscari University of Venice regarding double degrees programme.²⁴⁵

²⁴³ UNG Archives, Management Board, Conclusions and views of the 24th meeting of the UNG Management Board (24 August 2011).

²⁴⁴ UNG Archives, Management Board, Conclusions and views of the 27th meeting of the UNG Management Board (19 January 2012).

²⁴⁵ UNG Archives, Management Board, Conclusions and views of the 32nd meeting of the UNG Management Board (27 August 2013).



The first generation of doctoral students of the Cultural Heritage Study programme in the company of Professor Dr. Jukka Jokilehto in Venice, where he hosted the programme from 2005 to 2019.²⁴⁶ Photographer: Marco Acri.

Nakvis renewed accreditation for UNG for seven years in the fall of 2013, noting in its commentary the deviations from other, state-run universities. UNG management, which had always advocated modern concepts of institution management comparable to those of companies, emphasised in its response that the university was a whole, and that the joint services were designed to serve all the organisational units. However, there were changes in the formation of the School senates. Initially, all members of the senate were habilitated associates, but with the growth of the number of associates and the necessary operation of the body, a range of seven to twelve members was introduced.²⁴⁷

²⁴⁶ UNG Archives, photo library.

²⁴⁷ UNG Archives, Management Board, Conclusions and views of the 36th meeting of the Management Board (18 December 2013).

The common thread of all activities at UNG is the unity of criteria and the cohesiveness and compactness of the institution, and, of course, the persistence of its management. Also, because of this, in the fall of 2013, they again started looking for (communally equipped) land for a campus that would have an area of at least six acres. The tender, published in September 2013, received bids from Nova Gorica (MONG and the bankrupt Primorje, d. d.) and the Municipality of Vipava. The bids did not meet expectations and significant risks to the project were recorded. In Vipava, the land was endangered by flooding, and measures to ensure flood safety and other mitigation measures were not specified. The complex of Primorje, d.d., in bankruptcy, was overpriced, so attention was again focused on MONG.²⁴⁸

In June 2013, UNG organised its second strategic consultation to discuss the general situation in Slovenia given the second wave of recession in the midst of a protracted economic crisis, a change of government and a related budget revision. These and delays in payment for completed European projects were the reason behind liquidity problems at UNG. The intersection between national and cross-border challenges was discussed on consultation. Extended management was officially briefed on the Nakvis report for re-accrediting UNG for seven years.²⁴⁹

The Bologna reform brought extensive growth in the number and scope of regulations at UNG (and also at other Slovenian higher education institutions) while insufficiently addressing interconnectedness of research and pedagogical work. UNG strived for high, internationally comparable standards of lecturer excellence. They have been always advocated through measures including the training of its staff at foreign universities under the Erasmus+ programme and the involvement of visiting researchers in the study process. This was the institutional basis for the regular quality renewal of curricula,

²⁴⁸ UNG Archives, Senate Sessions, Minutes of the 25th UNG Senate Session (18 December 2013); UNG Archives, Board of Directors, Conclusions and views of the 37th Meeting of the UNG Board of Directors (16 April 2014).

²⁴⁹ UNG Archives, Management Board, Conclusions and views of the 34th meeting of the Management Board (9 July 2014).



Researchers of the Centre for Cognitive Language Sciences with Language Experiments (project AThEME, 2014-2019) investigate the effect of the link between bilingualism and musical proficiency on the ability to distinguish sentences in an unknown language.²⁵⁰ Photographer: Matic Pavlič.

the introduction of new subjects and non-formal methods of learning, and the inclusion of new lecturers in the study process. Nakvis representatives even estimated that UNG gave too much weight to the research success of an individual candidate. However, UNG implemented the state-supported projects “Quality in Higher Education” and “Creative Cores”. With this, they later renewed their study programmes and prepared the basis for the introduction of e-learning. With this, they wanted to address an increasing number of foreign students and student-athletes who undertook study obligations continuously and on an ongoing basis.²⁵¹ Since the outbreak of the coronavirus and the declaration of the epidemic on 12 March 2020, the agenda has greatly expanded.

²⁵⁰ UNG Archives, photo library.

²⁵¹ Ibid.; interview with Danilo Zavrtanik (15 June 2019).

The core issue of Slovenian higher education, however, remained unresolved: the financing of higher education and the academic system in general. With the establishment of the government of Alenka Bratušek, the preparation of a new law on higher education and thus a new model of financing higher education began. This was discussed in November 2013 by the UNG Senate, which jointly adopted the rector's position that the law should only determine the funding criteria, while abandoning the etatistic component.²⁵² (The new Higher Education Act is yet to be adopted despite multiple attempts.)

During this period, the emphasis on integration into the international context was even more pronounced, both in research work and in the enrollment of students. Doctoral students were expected to write their dissertation in English. This led to changes, especially at the School of Humanities, where the homogenisation of our own research potentials took place. The changes condensed in the spring of 2014, both in the pedagogical and research fields. Both humanities programmes have been renamed: Linguistics in Cognitive Sciences of Language, and Comparative Studies of Ideas and Cultures in Humanities; the third programme, in which the collaborators of the ZRC SAZU - Migration and Intercultural Relations - played a leading role and was carried out in the same form and with the same staff. In the field of research, the Institute of Ideas and Cultures was renamed the Research Centre for Humanities, with the group of linguists separated off into an independent research unit, the Centre for Cognitive Language Research.²⁵³

UNG also paid more attention to its public image by looking for external evaluators unencumbered by the organisational structure of Slovenian state universities. They had decided to do so due to noticeable changes in the state's attitude towards non-state higher education institutions, which were increasingly treated as a group, mainly in accordance with their founding status, and

²⁵² UNG Archives, Senate Sessions, Resolutions and views of the 54th Session of the UNG Senate (20 November 2013).

²⁵³ UNG Archives, Management Board, Conclusions and views of the 39th meeting of the UNG Management Board (10 July 2014).



Promotion of doctor of science Dr. Neža Zajc (in the photo, next to the doctoral student, Rector Prof. Dr. Danilo Zavrtanik, the Dean of the School of Postgraduate Studies Prof. Dr. Iztok Arčon and the doctoral supervisor Prof. Ddr. Igor Grdina).²⁵⁴ Photographer: Foto atelje Pavšič Zavadlav.

less so in accordance with measurable, internationally comparable criteria.²⁵⁵ The country, which favoured UNG and its prior institutional forms as a higher education institution that could promote quality renovation of Slovenian higher education, fell into the trap of public discourse, which, after 2005, and even more so after 2008, strongly rejected non-state higher education institutions. Within the discourse, however, there was a qualitative differentiation: non-state institutions at lower levels were labelled elitist, and higher education institutions, of supposedly lower quality. Critics of non-state forms of education did not have UNG in mind, but this had a significant impact on the higher education institution, which ranked high on various international scales for assessing the excellence of universities. UNG thus received less

²⁵⁴ UNG Archives, photo library.

²⁵⁵ UNG Archives, Management Board, Conclusions and views of the 41st meeting of the UNG Management Board (9 April 2015).

funding from the state, and in July 2014 the initiative to connect with the University of Primorska was mentioned again.²⁵⁶

UNG's management preferred to focus on achieving its strategic goals, while also counting on the help of foreign partners, both donors and strategic investors. Even greater shifts were made within UNG. It is asserted that the period from the economic crisis to 2015 was one in which a whole series of internal acts were created as a result of the introduction of the Bologna reform and related changes, as well as structural adjustments to the new financial and human resources situation. UNG, which reduced the circle of its founders during this time, has substantially reshaped the structure of its revenues. If, in the early years, key sources for revenue were derived from projects within the business sector, tuition fees and founders' contributions, then from 1999 to 2008, concessional funds for pedagogical activity contributed the most to its development, and, after 2008, European research funds represented a dynamic additional component. In addition, funds for the renovation of Lanthieri Palace were related to UNG - although financially implemented within the Municipality of Vipava. In 2014, funds from EU projects amounted to 40%, which was a structural challenge for UNG, due to the provision of liquidity or the implementation of pre-financing of project activities.²⁵⁷

In 2013, the European Commission published a report entitled *Scientific Output and Collaboration of European Universities*, an analysis of the research performance of European universities for the period 2007-2011. Based on bibliometric indicators (in sets: number of scientific publications, average citation of scientific papers, standardised by scientific fields, average impact factor of published scientific papers and the share of articles that are among the 10% most cited in the database) UNG was ranked at the top among 303 European and Israeli universities surveyed.

²⁵⁶ UNG Archives, Management Board, Conclusions and views of the 39th meeting of the UNG Management Board (10 July 2014).

²⁵⁷ UNG Archives, Management Board, Conclusions and views of the UNG Management Board (9 April 2015).



The President of the Republic of Slovenia, Borut Pahor, awarded UNG the Order of Merit for its exceptionally successful development and the achievements with which it enriched the Slovenian higher education area. The decoration was awarded to UNG on the occasion of its 20th anniversary.²⁵⁸ Photo: Miha Godec.

UNG ranked first in terms of the average number of scientific articles cited and in terms of the share of articles that are among the 10% most cited in the database, i.e., ahead of the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL) and ETH Zurich, who landed in second and third place. In the category of average impact factor of published scientific works, it ranked second, behind Weizmann Institute of Science and ahead of the University of Oxford and the University of Cambridge in third and fourth place. The report of the European Commission also states that, according to the absolute number of scientific publications, UNG does not achieve the scientific production of distinguished and older European universities, but that, according to the criteria of scientific excellence and the scientific impact of its scientific publications, the best-rated Slovenian

²⁵⁸ Andreja Leban (2015): The University of Nova Gorica received the Order of Merit. *University of Nova Gorica*, <http://www.ung.si/sl/novice/1649/univerza-v-novi-gorici-prejela-drzavno-odlikovanje-red-za-zasluge/>, 12 May 2020.

university ranks among the four best European universities, including the University of Oxford, EPFL and ETH Zurich.²⁵⁹

A group of evaluators of the European University Association came to similar conclusions in terms of content, and, in June 2015, they conducted an evaluation of UNG. In their report, they wrote, among other things: “We have found a small, young, active and enthusiastic university with happy and satisfied students.”²⁶⁰

In March 2015, a new vision was presented, which had an academic component (research and internationally recognized academic excellence) and staff component (reliance on own collaborators and stricter habilitation criteria) and that dealt with the issue of the campus. Concerning this issue, UNG received an offer from the President of the Province of Friuli-Venezia Giulia to set up a campus in the area of the old hospital, in Gorizia. Preliminary talks were held, but the price set for the premises was too high.²⁶¹ Instead of UNG’s presence in Gorizia being strengthened, it decreased in November 2015 when UNG vacated the premises in the Via Croce building.²⁶² In the autumn of 2019, the Art Academy moved from Italy to Rožna Dolina with the aim of strengthening and creating a more compact and dynamic university centre. It had been an interesting, to some extent, even historical, attempt to create a cross-border university centre based on the historic intertwining of two cultures in one space and on the idea of overcoming differences in 20th century conceptions of political and administrative identity.

The international component, which is the cornerstone and *modus operandi* of UNG, proved itself starting in 2015 with approaches to international

²⁵⁹ European Commission: Scientific Output and Collaboration of European Universities, <https://mail.ung.si/service/home/~/?auth=co&loc=sl&id=30304&part=2.4>, 5 May 2020.

²⁶⁰ Vision, University of Nova Gorica, <http://www.ung.si/sl/o-univerzi/>, 10 June 2020.

²⁶¹ UNG Archives, Senate Sessions, Minutes of the 65th PNG Senate Session (8 July 2015).

²⁶² UNG Archives, Senate Sessions, Minutes of the 68th PNG Senate Session (25 November 2015).

consortia such as Cherenkov's Telescope Array. At the same time, UNG joined the consortia of Slovenian universities, such as with the establishment of the Slovenian Innovation Centre led by the University of Ljubljana, the Innovative Open Technologies project led by the University of Maribor and the all-Slovenia Noč raziskovalcev (Researchers' Night) project.²⁶³

This cooperation was an indicator of the success and commitment of employees, so in August 2015, Rector Zavrtnik called on the members of the Board of Directors to help achieve more important goals. Among these was certainly the campus, the spatial placement of which proved to be an almost insurmountable obstacle. The project simply went beyond the reach of local communities and efforts to strengthen regionalisation, which could have contributed to the establishment of regional higher education centres, came to a complete halt after 2008.²⁶⁴

Gradually, a less favourable funding model was introduced for UNG; due to austerity measures, fewer funds became available, with the ministry granting additional concessions to non-state programmes that more openly supported state higher education institutions. UNG leadership considered the funding model for higher education to be inadequate. Rector Zavrtnik sought to have the state finance the institute instead of programmes, which would then autonomously distribute funds among organisational units. UNG leadership supported its arguments with evaluations by international experts. UNG was rated on the U-Multirank scale as one of the best universities in Central Europe in terms of the most evaluation indicators and research excellence. The relationship between professors and students was particularly successful in the evaluation set. It was ranked similarly high on the RUR scale.²⁶⁵

²⁶³ UNG Archives, Board of Directors.

²⁶⁴ UNG Archives, Management Board, Conclusions and views of the 42nd meeting of the UNG Management Board (26 August 2015).

²⁶⁵ UNG Archives, Management Board, Conclusions and positions of the 45th meeting of the UNG Board of Directors (7 September 2016); Scientific Output and Collaboration of European Universities, 2013, <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/ea818496-b5f1-4ca7-9354-79ba99acd244>, 27 May 2020.

Management at UNG was surprised by the decision of the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology in September 2016 to reduce funding for pedagogical activities by 5%. The financial shortfall was partly covered by MONG with the approval of additional funds, and partly by reaching to surpluses generated in the most financially successful period of 2001-2007.²⁶⁶ UNG was more satisfied with the next intervention of the line ministry in August 2017, when the ministry rewarded UNG's research performance. UNG received a 9.6% increase in the grant. There were also talks about greater autonomy in the use of concessional funds.²⁶⁷

The increased financial contribution of MONG in 2016 temporarily renewed expectations of a resurgence of the UNG campus project in Nova Gorica, especially since the preparation of a long-term MONG development strategy began in autumn 2016 and the economic situation was encouraging for planning significant strategic projects. The campus project did not enjoy wider support, and the founder - compared to the state - did not want to give the absolute advantage of their (own) university over other higher education institutions in the city.²⁶⁸

In April 2017, the third strategic meeting of the extended management of UNG was held, at which the possibilities for further development were examined, especially regarding to the question of filling the gaps after the resignation of the ZRC SAZU as a co-founder even though ZRC SAZU employees continued to participate in the pedagogical process of UNG. Options included status transformation in cooperation with a foreign university, transformation into a state university, acquisition of a co-founder from business circles, and entry of the UNG Foundation or another foundation among the UNG co-founders. The aim of the changes was to

²⁶⁶ UNG Archives, Management Board, Conclusions and views of the 45th meeting of the UNG Management Board (7 September 2016).

²⁶⁷ UNG Archives, Management Board, Conclusions and views of the 49th meeting of the UNG Management Board (30 August 2017).

²⁶⁸ UNG Archives, Management Board, Conclusions and views of the UNG Management Board (7 September 2016).



University of Nova Gorica (UNG) has been involved in the global international evaluation of “U-Multirank” universities since the very beginning of this European project. Results of this comparative evaluation of universities from around the world “U-Multirank 2020”, published on the website www.umultirank.org, showed that UNG is again achieving high, above-average results on a global scale this year. The excellence of UNG in the field of research, international orientation and regional involvement is especially recognised. It also shows good results in the field of learning and teaching.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁹ Andreja Leban: U-Multirank - international comparative assessments of the University of Nova Gorica, <http://www.ung.si/sl/novice/2146/u-multirank-mednarodna-primerjalna-ocena-univerze-v-novi-gorici/>, 20 August 2020.



*The Laboratory for Materials Research is developing technologies for the application of autogenous hydrogen obtained with the help of algae *Chlamydomonas reinhardtii*, with the financial support of the European Regional Development Fund in the period 2017-2020. Photographer: CasarsaGURU.*

enhance the flexibility and resilience of the institution to external shocks or the economic and social challenges of the 21st century.²⁷⁰

The strategic consultation took place at a time when the prevailing assessment was that the liquidity problems that had plagued UNG since 2010 had been completely overcome and that funds from European projects had been disbursed.²⁷¹ Since then, more attention has been paid to financial sustainability when evaluating study programmes, which represents a conceptual departure from the initial period when savings were used to finance the introduction of new programmes, and funds were more available on

²⁷⁰ University of Nova Gorica: Annual report for 2018, http://www.ung.si/media/storage/cms/attachments/2019/04/04/15/47/41/Koncno_Letno_porocilo_2018_copy.pdf, 15 May 2020.

²⁷¹ Ibid.

the “market”. Structural changes in the student population (a small proportion of part-time students with full-time employment) and a reduction in size, as well as the introduction of new approaches to education through the involvements of companies, have reduced the range of options. The expected generosity of the Slovenian elite towards top scientific and cultural institutions is less pronounced and more spontaneous. Frequent upheavals in the form of economic crises and the partial consolidation of the class of (new) Slovenian capitalists and, of course, the nonattitude towards top institutions contribute to this.²⁷²

The management, which in the past had spoken out against the adoption of a state structure - the search for a foreign investor did not yield the desired results - set the entry of the UNG Foundation among its founders as the most optimal path. To this end, in November 2017, the Board of Directors approved amendments to the act establishing the UNG Foundation. The foundation became formally independent of its founders.²⁷³ The entry of the Foundation among the founders included Zavrtnik among its key task holders, whom the Board of Directors, in accordance with the positive opinion of the International Council and the UNG Senate, reappointed in March 2018 as Rector with a four-year term. Among other important challenges, he cited attracting foreign and highly motivated students, obtaining concessions for programmes at the Art Academy, and maintaining UNG’s long-term financial sustainability.²⁷⁴

Simultaneously with the appointment of Zavrtnik as Rector, Slovenia became a full member of the Board of Directors of the Cherenkov Telescope Array Observatory, which was an important success for him personally and

²⁷² Interview with Boštjan Žekš (15 January 2020); see also Lorenčič (2012).

²⁷³ UNG Archives, Management Board, Conclusions and views of the 50th meeting of the UNG Management Board (29 November 2017).

²⁷⁴ UNG Archives, Management Board, Conclusions and views of the 51st meeting of the UNG Management Board (21 March 2018).

for the entire UNG, which participated on this international project.²⁷⁵ The project group included UNG collaborators Tanja Petrushevska and Gabrijele Zaharijaš, who were awarded the Apple of Inspiration by President Borut Pahor in February 2019; the former for the discovery of the first supernova to form a close binary neutron star, and the latter for the study of extragalactic background light with the Fermi satellite.²⁷⁶

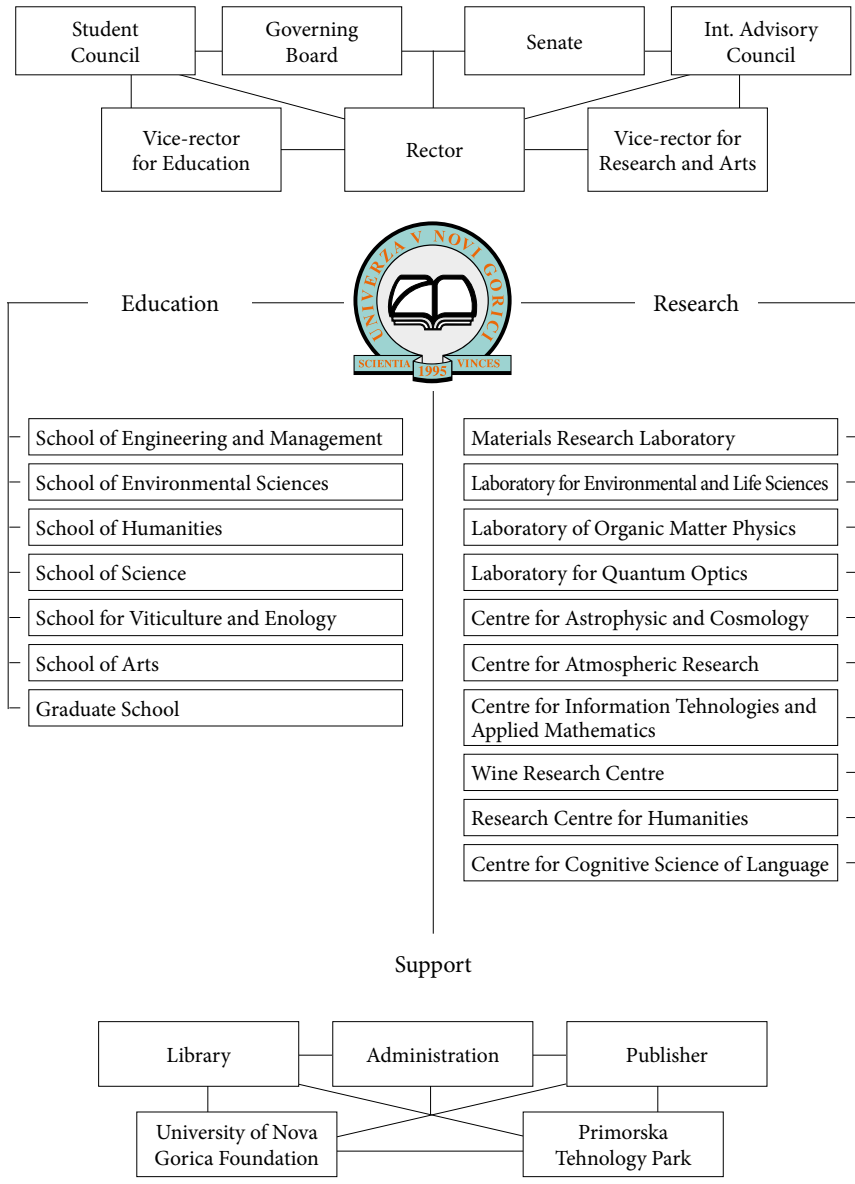
Less encouraging was the response of the founders to the proposal on the entry of the UNG Foundation among the founders of the university, despite legal arguments and the presentation of good practices. Lawyers Rajko Pirnat and Verica Trstenjak did not recognise any legal obstacles, while the local communities persisted in their opposition. The municipal council of Ajdovščina adopted the decision to resign from UNG in June 2019, and MONG asked the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Sport for a legal opinion. The Ministry was not in favour of such a solution, but did not comment on its substantive arguments, such as ensuring financial stability in the event of overdue funds within (European) projects or the absence of financial contribution from its co-founder.²⁷⁷

During this period, there were lively events at UNG in three pedagogical units: at the School of Humanities, the College of Viticulture and Enology (from 2019 the School of Viticulture and Enology) and the Art Academy. The latter unit moved from Gorizia to Rožna Dolina, and an attempt to obtain concessions for pedagogical programmes and financial support from MONG were unsuccessful. In this transitional form, the Art Academy

²⁷⁵ UNG Archives; Board of Directors, Decisions and views of the 51st meeting of the Board of Directors of UNG (21 March 2018); UNG Archives, Board of Directors, Decisions and views of the 52nd meeting of the UNG Board of Directors (27 June 2018); see also Senica (2019b).

²⁷⁶ Senica (2019a).

²⁷⁷ UNG Archives, Board of Directors, Decisions and views of the UNG Board of Directors (27 June 2018); UNG Archives, Board of Directors, Decisions and views of the 54th meeting of the UNG Board of Directors (19 December 2018); UNG Archives, Board of Directors, Decisions and views of the 56th Correspondence Meeting of the UNG Board of Directors (8 July 2019).



Organizational structure of UNG.



The university vineyard produces grapes for the wines University pinela, University red, University green (Zelen) and Rector's selection.²⁷⁸ Photographer: Marko Lesica.

successfully passed the long procedures before the Council for Higher Education of the Republic of Slovenia and Nakvis, and still was able to meet its enrollment quota.²⁷⁹ Nevertheless, the Board of Directors, which had been pursuing the principle of financial sustainability of the programme since the summer of 2017, pointed out the need to provide additional sources of funding and to align with the university funding model of 50% - 50%, which meant strengthening resources for teaching in the case of the Art Academy. The situation at the School of Humanities was financially stable, but UNG's management wanted the School to renew its vision, taking into account the philosophy of its founding moment, that the higher education institution should offer internationally comparable and innovative study programmes and create homogeneous (research-pedagogical) organisational units.²⁸⁰ A second-cycle study programme was added to the College

²⁷⁸ UNG Archives, photo library.

²⁷⁹ UNG Archives, Management Board, Conclusions and views of the UNG Management Board (18 December 2013).

²⁸⁰ UNG Archives, Management Board, Conclusions and views of the 55th meeting of the UNG Management Board (3 April 2019).

of Viticulture and Enology, and the school was transformed into the School of Viticulture and Enology.²⁸¹

Other faculties and research units, developed by full-time associates from the initial, founding period had established an academic culture in the initial period that was then organically transferred to new associates. Thus, the greatest systemic risk for them was the delay of disbursements of research funds (from European projects) and, at some schools, the acquisition of an adequate number of motivated students.

In December 2019, the Board of Directors supported the proposal to register suitable candidates for the position of Rector after the conclusion of Rector Danilo Zavrtanik's term, thereby beginning an orderly transition to a new era, taking into account the achieved development and the importance of UNG for the development of Slovenian higher education.²⁸²

²⁸¹ UNG Archives, Management Board, Conclusions and views of the 56th correspondence meeting of the UNG Management Board (8 July 2019).

²⁸² UNG Archives, Management Board, Conclusions and views of the 58th meeting of the UNG Management Board (5 December 2019).

UNIVERZI IN VAM SE ZAHVALJUJEM
ZA VISOKO PRIZNANJE.
KO SEM PRED 65. LETI, V TEŽKIH POVOJNIH
ČASIH SKLENIL, DA BOM S SVOJIM DELOM DAL
SLOVENSKEMU NARODU RAZVEDRILLO. OČITNO JE
USPELO, KAJTI DO DANES SO VSE GENERACIJE
OD YNUKOV DO DEDKOV IN BABIC ŽIVELE Z
MOJIMI JUNAKI, KI SO JIH ZABAVALI S SVOJIMI
SMEŠNIMI DOGODIVŠČINAMI.

ŠE ENKAT
HVFLA!



Entry of Miki Muster, the recipient of the title of Honorary Doctor, in the Book of Honorary Guests.²⁸³

²⁸³ UNG Archives, Book of honorary guests.

IMPORTANT SPREADSHEETS AND AWARDS

MANAGEMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NOVA GORICA

Head of the School of Environmental Sciences

1995-1998

Prof. Dr. Boštjan Žekš

Head of the Nova Gorica Polytechnic

1998-2006

Prof. Dr. Boštjan Žekš

Head of the University of Nova Gorica

2006-2010

Prof. Dr. Boštjan Žekš

President of the School of Environmental Sciences

1995-1998

Prof. Dr. Danilo Zavrtanik

President of the Nova Gorica Polytechnic

1998-2006

Prof. Dr. Danilo Zavrtanik

President of the University of Nova Gorica

2006-2010

Prof. Dr. Danilo Zavrtanik

Rector of the University of Nova Gorica

2010-

Prof. Dr. Danilo Zavrtanik

Vice Rector for Education

2010-

Prof. Dr. Mladen Franko

Vice-Rector for Research and Arts

2010-

Prof. Dr. Gvido Bratina

HONORARY TITLES AND AWARDS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NOVA GORICA

HONORARY DOCTORS

2000 - Prof. Dr. James W. Cronin, Nobel Laureate in Physics

At its session on May 25, 2000, the Senate of the Nova Gorica Polytechnic decided that Prof. Dr. James W. Cronin would receive an honorary doctorate - doctor honoris causa - in recognition of his key contribution to justifying symmetry violations to the inversion of space and the transformation of particles into antiparticles, and for outstanding achievements in high-energy cosmic ray physics.

2002 - Prof. Dr. Paul J. Crutzen, Nobel Laureate in Chemistry

At its session on April 9, 2002, the Senate of the Nova Gorica Polytechnic decided that Prof. Dr. Paul J. Crutzen would receive an honorary doctorate - doctor honoris causa - in recognition of his pioneering work in research into the formation and degradation of ozone in the atmosphere and the development of the theory of heterogeneous reactions on the surface of particulate matter in polar stratospheric clouds, which significantly contributed to the understanding of the phenomenon of ozone layer thinning and solving global ecological problems.

2004 - Joseph F. Sutter, chief designer of the Boeing 747

Senate of the Nova Gorica Polytechnic At its meeting of 13 April 2004, it decided that Joseph F. Sutter would receive an honorary doctorate - doctor honoris causa - in recognition of his outstanding achievements in the global development of aviation, aeronautics and spaceflight.

2004 - Prof. Romano Prodi, President of the European Commission

At its session on 17 June 2004, the Senate of the Nova Gorica Polytechnic decided that Prof. Romano Prodi would receive an honorary doctorate - doctor honoris causa - in recognition of his contribution to the development and enlargement of the European Union and to the advancement of science and higher education in Europe.

2006 - Dr. Christer Fuglesang, astronaut - Discovery rocket crew (STS-116 mission)

At its session on 22 November 2006, the Senate of the University of Nova Gorica decided that Dr. Christer Fuglesang would receive an honorary doctorate - doctor honoris causa - in recognition of his outstanding achievements in the field of science and the development of space flight and living in space.

2008 - Acad. Prof. Dr. Vinko V. Dolenc, world-famous Slovenian neurosurgeon

At its session on 16 July 2008, the Senate of the University of Nova Gorica decided that acad. Prof. Dr. Vinko V. Dolenc would receive an honorary doctorate - doctor honoris causa - in recognition of his outstanding scientific and professional achievements in the field of the development of neurosurgery in Slovenia and the world.

2009 - Prof. Dr. Satya N. Atluri, a top computer modelling scientist in engineering and science

At its session on 16 September 2009, the Senate of the University of Nova Gorica decided that Prof. Dr. Satya N. Atluri would receive an honorary doctorate - doctor honoris causa - in recognition of his outstanding achievements in the development of computer mechanics.

2010 - Prof. Dr. Michael Grätzel, one of the ten most cited chemists in the world, winner of the Millennium Technology Prize for 2010

At its session on 18 May 2010, the Senate of the University of Nova Gorica decided that Prof. Dr. Michael Grätzel would receive an honorary doctorate - doctor honoris causa - in recognition of his outstanding achievements in the field of modern materials and systems for capturing solar energy.

2011 - Evgen Bavčar, photographer, essayist, philosopher and publicist

At its session on 6 July 2011, the Senate of the University of Nova Gorica decided that Dr. Evgen Bavčar would receive an honorary doctorate - doctor honoris causa - in recognition of his outstanding artistic achievements in the field of photography.

2013 - Prof. Dr. Dirk Hoerder, world-renowned migration historian and recipient of the 2003 Sharlin Prize of the Social Science History Association

At its session on 11 July 2013, the Senate of the University of Nova Gorica decided that Prof. Dr. Dirk Hoerder would receive an honorary doctorate - doctor honoris causa - in recognition of his outstanding scientific achievements in the field of migration history.

2014 - Prof. Dr. Peter Jenni, one of the most famous planners of the Higgs boson hunt

At its session on 9 July 2014, the Senate of the University of Nova Gorica decided that Dr. Peter Jenni would receive an honorary doctorate - doctor honoris causa - in recognition of his outstanding scientific achievements in experimental particle physics.

2015 - Mr Miki Muster, one of the best creators of picture books and comics and film cartoons. We consider him the originator of Slovenian comics.

At its session on 13 May 2015, the Senate of the University of Nova Gorica decided that Miki Muster would receive an honorary doctorate - doctor honoris causa - for artistic creation with which he enriched world art with outstanding achievements.

2015 - Prof. Dr. Gerald P. Schatten, world-renowned scientist in artificial reproduction, regenerative medicine and stem cells

At its session on 13 May 2015, the Senate of the University of Nova Gorica decided that Prof. Dr. Gerald P. Schatten would receive an honorary doctorate - doctor honoris causa - in recognition of his outstanding scientific and professional achievements in development and regenerative medicine.

2017 - Prof. Dr. Igor Gregorič, world-famous heart surgeon of Slovenian descent

At its session on 15 March 2017, the Senate of the University of Nova Gorica decided that Prof. Dr. Igor Gregorič would receive an honorary doctorate - doctor honoris causa - for his outstanding scientific and professional achievements in cardiology.

2018 - Prof. Rajko Grlić, one of the world's most famous directors from the former Yugoslavian area. At its session on 17 May 2018, the Senate of the University of Nova Gorica decided that Prof. Rajko Grlić would receive an honorary doctorate - doctor honoris causa - in recognition of his outstanding achievements in cinema and for the enrichment of the world art treasury.

2019 - Prof. Giacinto Scoles, a world-renowned expert in the field of molecular spectroscopic methods and biomedicine. The Senate of the University of Nova Gorica decided that Prof. Giacinto Scoles would receive an honorary doctorate of the University of Nova Gorica - doctor honoris causa - for his outstanding scientific and professional achievements in the field of time-dependent spectroscopy and nanoscience.

2020 - Prof. Dr. Heino Falcke, a world-leading astrophysicist who took the first ever picture of a black hole. The Senate of the University of Nova Gorica adopted a decision that the title of honorary doctor of the University of Nova Gorica - doctor honoris causa - is to be awarded to Prof. Dr. Heino Falcke for his outstanding scientific achievements in the field of astrophysics.

HONORARY MEMBER

- 2008** - Dr. Murat Boratav
- 2010** - Prof. Dr. Neil McN. Alford
- 2011** - Prof. Alfonso Franciosi
- 2012** - Prof. Dr. Dane Bićanić
- 2013** - Dr. Suzan van Dijk
- 2014** - Dr. Vincenzo Palermo
- 2015** - Prof. Dr. Urška Vrhovšek, Prof. Dr. Chieu D. Tran
- 2016** - Prof. Dr. William E. Eichinger
- 2017** - Prof. Dr. Paolo Samorí
- 2018** - Doc. Dr. Julij Nemanič
- 2019** - Prof. Dr. Lawrence Banks
- 2020** - Dr. Salvatore La Rosa

PROFESSOR EMERITUS

- 2005** - Prof. Dr. Stojan Plesničar, Prof. Dr. Sidney A. Katz
- 2007** - Prof. Dr. Janez Štupar
- 2008** - Prof. Dr. Franc Bizjak
- 2009** - Acad. Prof. Dr. Andrej Kranjc
- 2010** - Prof. Antonino Abrami
- 2012** - Prof. Dr. Corrado Sarzanini
- 2015** - Prof. Dr. Stane Granda
- 2016** - Prof. Dr. Stanko Strmčnik
- 2017** - Prof. Dr. Boštjan Žekš
- 2018** - Prof. Dr. Jukka Jokilehto
- 2019** - Prof. Dr. Xavier Greffe
- 2020** - Prof. Dr. Miran Veselič

GOLDEN PLATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NOVA GORICA

2005 - Črtomir Špacapan

2007 - Boris Peric

2008 - Prof. Dr. Giorgio Margaritondo

2009 - Prof. Dr. Bogdan Glumac

2010 - Prof. Dr. Francisco Ernesto Baralle

2011 - Members of the First Senate of the School of Environmental Sciences – the predecessor of the University of Nova Gorica. The members of the First Senate were: Prof. Dr. Franc Bizjak, Prof. Dr. Andrej Čokl, Prof. Dr. Ana Gregorčič, Prof. Dr. Franc Gubenšek, Prof. Dr. Nikola Kallay, Prof. Dr. Burton C. Kross, Prof. Dr. Ivan Marušič, Prof. Dr. Peter Stegnar, Prof. Dr. Janez Štupar and Prof. Dr. Boštjan Žekš

2013 - Mag. Ivan Princes, Prof. dr. Tanja Dominko

2015 - Prof. Dr. Boštjan Žekš

2016 - Prof. Dr. Matjaž Klemenc

2017 - Mag. Mitja Jermol

2020 - Ivo Boscarol

ALUMNUS PRIMUS

School of Environmental Sciences

2007 - Katjuša Reja Mozetič

2008 - Marko Kete

2009 - Lilijana Piščanec

2010 - Kristina Obu

2011 - Anja Soklič, Simona Jerenec

2012 - Maja Cerar

2013 - Rok Vidic

2014 - Nina Nemec, Neža Orel

2015 - Tjaša Kolar

2016 - Sandra Dukić

2018 - Tanja Batkovič



Urša Papler (married Prša), recipient of the alumnus primus and alumnus optimus awards, became a young researcher at the Research Centre for Humanities after successfully completing her studies in Slovenian Studies.²⁸⁴ Foto atelje Pavšič Zavadlav.

School of Engineering and Management

2007 - Dejan Trojer Smrečnik

2008 - Petra Madon, Bojan Korečič, Drago Papler

2009 - Matej Štokelj

2010 - Lucija Vidrih, Jelena Andrič, Marko Ostojčić

2011 - Jana Gregorič, Robert Čebtron, Tadej Kodelja

2012 - Lea Manfreda

2013 - Joško Zamar

2014 - Tanja Abram, Sara Vodopivec, Tomaž Colja, Lea Manfreda

2015 - Gašper Puš

2016 - Mariam Parekhelashvili

2017 - Gašper Čefarin

2018 - Eva Battistel, Peter Ferfoggia

2020 - Lucija Rutar, Peter Ferfoggia

²⁸⁴ UNG archives, photo library.

School of Humanities

2008 - Mojca Vah

2009 - Kristina Ivšič, Urša Papler

2010 - Mateja Košir, Manca Erzetič, Ines Vidmar

2011 - Nikola Babić, Hedeja Mikuž

2012 - Megi Rožič, Urša Erjavec, Laura Brataševc

2013 - Tina Šuligoj, Jure Gregorčič

2014 - Daniela Stekar

2015 - Manca Mušič

2016 - Lara Brankovič

2017 - Manca Koren

School for Viticulture and Enology

2009 - Nika Gregorič

2010 - Borut Trbižan

2012 - Valter Bembič, Manca Gabrijelčič

2013 - Sašo Gabršček

2014 - Tereza Jakin

School of Science

2010 - Jurij Urbančič

2011 - Gašper Kukec Mezek

2012 - Jurij Urbančič, Blaž Winkler

2013 - Aleš Bogovič

2014 - Miha Gunde, Gašper Kukec Mezek, Blaž Winkler

2015 - Matija Stupar

2016 - Gregor Mrak, Hovhannes Demirtshyan

2020 - Matej Stanič

School of Arts

2010 - Polona Zupan, Urška Djukić

2012 - Alenka Černe

2013 - Anja Perše

2014 - Urška Djukić

2015 - Roberta Battiston

2016 - Ester Ivakič

2018 - Taja Košir Popovič

2019 - Josipa Škrapič

ALUMNUS OPTIMUS

School of Environmental Sciences

- 2007 - Katjuša Reja Mozetič
- 2008 - Robert Mozetič, Nastja Tomšič
- 2009 - Lilijana Piščanec
- 2010 - Ivana Kacafura
- 2011 - Erika Jež, Anja Soklič
- 2012 - Anja Kucler
- 2013 - Alja Markelj, Jelena Topić, Rok Vidic
- 2014 - Neža Orel, Tina Ravnikar
- 2015 - Lara Valentić, Rok Oblak
- 2016 - Tine Bizjak
- 2017 - Jacopo Segato
- 2018 - Teja Cankar, Neža Orel
- 2019 - Gaja Tomsič
- 2020 - Anja Petra Bencek

School of Engineering and Management

- 2007 - Kristina Kosič
- 2008 - Bojan Korečič, Petra Madon
- 2009 - Aleksander Boškin, Marijan Kerševan, Matej Štokelj
- 2010 - Martin Krečič, Nina Duša, Lucija Vidrih
- 2011 - Darijo Faganelj, Iztok Kodrič, Uroš Kobal, Silvester Jeršič
- 2012 - Marko Lazar, Blaž Ukmar
- 2013 - Lucija Vidrih
- 2014 - Tanja Abram, Lea Manfreda
- 2015 - Martin Bizjak
- 2016 - Johannes Vuga Gregorič
- 2017 - Maja Tišma, Ikram Muhammad
- 2018 - Peter Ferfoglija, Jure Krečič
- 2019 - Andrea Torroni
- 2020 - Lucija Rutar, Jožef Petelinek

School of Humanities

- 2008 - Mojca Vah
- 2009 - Kristina Ivšič, Urša Papler
- 2010 - Mateja Košir, Helena Plahuta, Megi Rožič, Irena Troha Jejčič
- 2011 - Petra Mišmaš, Daniela Stekar, Hedeja Mikuz
- 2012 - Megi Rožič, Petra Kavčič, Jana Murovec, Igor Ivaškovič
- 2013 - Daša Medvešček, Tina Šuligoj, Božica Špolad Žuber, Mateja Kregar Gliha
- 2014 - Calum James Riach, Jani Toplak
- 2015 - Manca Mušič, Laura Brataševc, Eva Poplašen
- 2016 - Vesna Plesničar
- 2017 - Ana Cukjati, Jani Rijavec, Tina Šuligoj
- 2018 - Tjaša Petrič
- 2019 - Zala Zbičajnik, Nik Obid, Nika Kravos, Ana Cukjati
- 2020 - Anika Velišček, Martin Batagelj, Anej Žagar

School for Viticulture and Enology

- 2009 - Nika Gregorič
- 2010 - Borut Trbižan
- 2012 - Manca Gabrijelčič
- 2014 - Jan Tronkar
- 2017 - Natalia Mikhaylina
- 2018 - Vanesa Klinec
- 2020 - Matic Ferjančič

School of Science

- 2010 - Jurij Urbančič
- 2011 - Gašper Kukec Mezek
- 2012 - Blaž Winkler, Jurij Urbančič
- 2013 - Aleš Bogovič
- 2014 - Miha Gunde, Gašper Kukec Mezek
- 2015 - Anže Peternel, Matija Stupar
- 2016 - Hovhannes Demirtshyan
- 2017 - Aleš Bogovič
- 2018 - Luka Novinec
- 2019 - Nada Ihanec
- 2020 - Matej Stanič

School of Arts

2010 - Polona Zupan

2011 - Mateja Lukežič

2013 - Valerija Zabret

2014 - Gaja Kutnjak, Urška Djukić

2015 - Roberta Battiston, Lavoslava Benčič

2016 - Nika Lemut, Valerija Zabret

2018 - Neva Kumelj, Helene Thümmel

2019 - Josipa Škrapić, Mery Gobec

ASSOCIATE AWARDS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NOVA GORICA

1996:

Prof. Dr. Iztok Arčon, the Golden Emblem of Jožef Stefan

Prof. Dr. Danilo Zavrtanik, Ambassador of Science of Slovenia award

1998:

Prof. Dr. Matjaž Valant, the Golden Emblem of IJS

2004:

Prof. Dr. Danilo Zavrtanik and Prof. Dr. Marko Mikuž, Ljubljana, Zois Award for Scientific Research

Prof. Dr. Mladen Franko, Zois Award for Scientific Research

2005:

Prof. Dr. Danilo Zavrtanik, Order for Merits (Slovenia)

2006:

Prof. Dr. Božidar Šarler, Puh Award for Achievements in Development

Prof. Dr. Iztok Arčon, Zois Award for Scientific Research

Prof. Dr. Urška Lavrenčič Štangar, Zois Award for Scientific Research

2008:

Prof. Dr. Polonca Trebše, Zois Award for Scientific Research

Dr. Urh Černigoj, the Golden Emblem of IJS

2009:

Prof. Dr. Irena Avsenik Nabergoj, Zois Award for Scientific Research

Prof. Dr. Gregor Veble, Puh Award for Achievements in Development

Miha Založnik, the Golden Emblem of IJS

Prof. Dr. Oto Luthar, Austrian Cross of Honour for Science and Art

Prof. Dr. Jure Piškur, Miroslav Zei Award for Outstanding Achievements in Research

2012:

Prof. Dr. Jure Piškur, Ambassador of Science of Slovenia award

Prof. Dr. Matjaž Valant, Zois Award for Outstanding Scientific Achievements

2013:

Prof. Dr. Nada Lavrač, Zois Award for Scientific Research

Prof. Dr. Tanja Dominko, Ambassador of Science of Slovenia award

2014:

Prof. Dr. Giovanni de Ninno, Zois Award for Important Scientific Achievements

Prof. Dr. Klemen Lisjak, Award for Achievements in Development

Prof. Dr. Urška Vrhovšek, Ambassador of Science of Slovenia award

Dr. Rok Prebil, Pregl Award for Outstanding Doctoral Thesis

2015:

Prof. Dr. Andreja Gomboc, Zois Award for Important Achievements in Scientific Research and Development

Prof. Dr. Katja Mihurko Poniž, Zois Award for Important Achievements in Scientific Research and Development

Prof. Rajko Grlić, American Grand Prix for Best Film

Prof. Rajko Grlić, Vesna Award for Best Co-Production Film

2016:

Prof. Dr. Gregor Cevc, Ambassador of Science of Slovenia award

Prof. Dr. Franc Marušič, Zois Award for Important Achievements in Linguistics

Prof. Dr. Božidar Šarler, Zois Award for Outstanding Achievements

2017:

Prof. Dr. Gregor Mali, Pregl Award

Dušan Kastelic, Vesna Award for Best Short Film

doc. mag. Janez Burger, eight Vesna awards in various categories, including Vesna Award for Best Feature Film

Prof. Dr. Gregor Mali, Zois Award for Important Scientific Achievements

Prof. Dr. Kozma Ahačič, Apple of Inspiration, Recognition of the President of the Republic of Slovenia, Borut Pahor

Prof. Dr. Kozma Ahačič, Golden Emblem of ZRC SAZU

2018:

Acad. Prof. Dr. Boštjan Žekš, Zois Award for Lifetime Achievements
Prof. Dr. Gvido Bratina, Pregl Award
Kolja Saksida, Vesna Award for Best Animated Film
Prof. Dr. Petra Svoljšak, Decoration of the Knight's Cross of the Hungarian Order of Merit

2019:

Dušan Kastelic, Prešeren Fund Award
Doc. Dr. Gabrijela Zaharijaš, Apple of Inspiration, Recognition of the President of the Republic of Slovenia, Borut Pahor
Dr. Tanja Petrushevska, Apple of Inspiration, Recognition of the President of the Republic of Slovenia, Borut Pahor
Igor Prassel, Decoration of the Knight of the National Order of Arts and Letters of the French Republic
Prof. Dr. Barbara Pregelj, Lirikonov zlát - International Festival Literary Award
Martin Turk, Vesna Award for Special Achievements for a Feature Film
Milanka Fabjančič, Vesna Award for Best Animated Film
Neda Rusjan Bric, Mira Award for Outstanding Achievements in Literary Creativity and Holistic Personality Attitude
Prof. Dr. Mladen Franko, Honorary Doctor of the Azerbaijan State Agricultural University

2020:

Dr. Tina Škorjanc, Pregl Award for exceptional academic achievements
Prof. Dr. Prof. dr. Samo Stanič, Zois Award for exceptional research achievements
Prof. Dr. Marko Zavrtanik, Zois Award for exceptional research achievements
Prof. Dr. Andrej Filipčič, Zois Award for exceptional research achievements
Prof. Oskar Kogoj, Lifetime Achievement Award of the Designers Society of Slovenia
Prof. Dr. Tanja Urbančič, Open Collaboration Award for Excellence of the International Organisation Open Education Global
Prof. Dr. Danilo Zavrtanik, Blinc Lifetime Achievement Award in the field of physics



In 2006, Prof. Dr. Iztok Arčon received the Zois Award for Outstanding Research Achievements in the field of X-ray absorption spectroscopy with synchrotron light. Photo: Prof. Dr. Iztok Arčon.

Prof. Dr. Giovanni De Ninno, Blinc Award for extraordinary single achievement in the field of physics

Prof. Dr. Iztok Arčon, Pregl Award

Acad. Prof. Dr. Boštjan Žekš, The Golden Order of Merit

2021:

Dr. Fabio Lapenta, Lapanje distinction of the Slovenian Biochemical Society

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STUDENT AWARDS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NOVA GORICA

1997:

Lea Pogačnik, first prize for conference contribution 5th International Young Investigators Seminar on Analytical Chemistry, Slovenia

Barbara Vokal, SIMSUG accolade prize International Conference on Stable Isotope and Isotope Effects at Carry-le-Rouet, France

2003:

Miha Založnik, award for the Best Contribution of a Young Researcher in Metallic Materials, 11th Conference on Materials and Technologies, Slovenia

2007:

Nika Gregorič and Borut Trbižan, silver plaque in the category “Best European Team” and silver plaque for the Special Prize of Spain “Special Award Spain” for knowledge of Spanish enography, Second Europea Wine Championship, Spain

2008:

Peter Bakaršič and Marko Benčina, 2nd place in team competition, Third Europea Wine Championship, Portugal

Marko Benčina, 5th place in the category of grape growing, 5th place in the category of winemaking, Third Europea Wine Championship, Portugal

Peter Bakaršič, 1st place in the category of grape growing, 3rd place in the category of winemaking, 1st place in the category of wine tasting and EUROPEA CHAMPION, Third Europea Wine Championship, Portugal

Andraž Petrovič, award for the Best Scientific Contribution of a Young Researcher European Materials Research Society 2008 Spring Meeting, France

Mag. Malgorzata Piecha, award for the best oral presentation at the conference, 9th European Meeting on Environmental Chemistry - EMEC 9, Spain

2009:

Drago Papler, Trimo Research Award

Andrej Ovca, Award for the Best Scientific Contribution at the conference 5th Young Investigators' Seminar on Analytical Chemistry - YISAC 2009, Austria

2011:

Valentin Koblar, Trim Research Award

Edina Talič, SID bank award for the thesis

Tina Jerman Klen, Award for young researchers, 1st Euro-Mediterranean Symposium Fruit & Vegetable Processing

2012:

Petra Kavčič, Award of the Slavic Society of Slovenia for the diploma work
Tina Jerman Klen, National award of the World Federation of Scientists of the Slovenian Science Foundation

2013:

Tina Jerman Klen, Award L'Oréal-UNESCO for Women in Science

Matej Boltar, Award of the Slovenian Maintenance Association for the best diploma thesis in maintenance

2014:

Jan Krivec, 3rd prize for diploma thesis in the field of computer science and informatics, Days of Slovenian Informatics 2014

Mag. Manisha Chhikara, Award for the best poster at the workshop, International Workshop on Solar Energy Materials - SOLMAT 2014, Slovenia

Tina Kocjan, Bronze Nahtigal Award of the Dolenjska Academic Initiative Society

Dr. Mojca Stubelj Ars, Alpine Convention Award for Young Scientists

2015:

Dr. Iva Mrak, Award for the Best Doctoral Dissertation in Innovative Methods and Instruments for the Promotion of Flexible, Creative and Sustainable Cities, Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II, Italy

Lea Manfreda, Technology Networks Award Process Control Technology (TM) TVP)

Ivana Kacafura, European Energy Manager Award for Best Energy Concept

Valerija Zabret, Vesna Awards and restart for the best study film, Slovenian Film Festival

2016:

Urška Djukić, Vesna Award for Best Short Film, Slovenian Film Festival

Dunja Danial, Award for Best Music Documentary, Grossmann Festival

Ester Ivakić, Special mention for a student film, Slovenian Film Festival

Sandra Jovanovska, First prize for a student film, Festival of European Film Cinedays, North Macedonia

2017:

Vanesa Klinec, 2nd place and silver medal, European Championship of Young Wine Specialists, France

Alexey Yurts, 1st place at the 11th International Olympiad on Astronomy and Astrophysics, Thailand

Aleksej Jurca, Apple of Inspiration, Recognition of the President of the Republic of Slovenia, Borut Pahor

2018:

Aleksej Jurca, Award of the capital city of Ljubljana

Maruša Mugerli Lavrenčič, International Festival Literary Award Lirikonov zlat

Sandra Jovanovska, Best Experimental Film Award, Progeny Film Festival, United States

Samo Bihar, Award for a student animated project in development, award of the Slovenian Animated Film Association

Katarina Blažič, Recognition for a student animated project in development

Irena Gatej, Best Student Film Award, Cinedays Festival of European Film, North Macedonia

2019:

Hanna Budasheva, First place for the best poster presentation, Winter College on Applications of Optics and Photonics in Food Science, Italy

Sandra Jovanovska, Award of the educational programme Sharpening the View for a master's thesis, Slovenian Film Festival

Maruša Mugerli Lavrenčič, Poetry Award of the Institute for Culture, Sport and Tourism Žalec Fanny Haussmann

Anja Resman, Award for a student animated project in development, award of the Slovenian Animated Film Association

Sandra Jovanovska, Award for a student animated film, award of the Slovenian Animated Film Association

2020:

Anja Polajnar, Open Collaboration Award for Excellence

Miha Reja, Award for a completed student animation project

Jošt Šeško, Special recognition for a completed student animation project

Larisa Nagode, Special recognition for a completed student animation project

Katarina Blažič, Special recognition for a completed student animation project

Amadeja Kribiš, Award for a student animation project in progress

MEMBERS OF SENATES

Senate of the SES

1995-1999

Boštjan Žekš

Alan Appleby

Alenka Malej

Ana Gregorič

Andrej Čokl

Burton C. Kross

Corrado Sarzanini

Elan J. Gandsman

Franc Bizjak

Franc Gubenšek

Ivan Marušič

Janez Štupar

Mauro Causa

Nikola Kallay

Peter Stegnar

Samuel D. Faust

Sidney A. Katz

Stanko Strmčnik

Stojan Plesničar

Veljko Rus

Werner Hofmann

Senate of the PNG

1999-2003

Boštjan Žekš

Gabrijel Kernel

Mladen Franko

Stanko Strmčnik

Stojan Plesničar

Venčeslav Kaučič

Franc Bizjak
Gvido Bratina

2003-2007

Boštjan Žekš
Franc Bizjak
Gvido Bratina
Mladen Franko
Venčeslav Kaučič
Gabrijel Kernel
Andrej Kranjc
Oto Luthar
Stojan Plesničar
Stanko Strmčnik
Iztok Arčon
Tanja Urbančič
Robert Hudej/Peter Krkoč/Aleš Boškin/Andreja Palatinus

Senate of the UNG

2007-2011

Danilo Zavrtanik
Boštjan Žekš
Andrej Kranjc
Franc Bizjak
Franc Marušič
Gvido Bratina
Iztok Arčon
Maja Ravnikar
Mladen Franko
Oto Luthar
Polonca Trebše/Matjaž Valant
Stanko Strmčnik
Tanja Urbančič
Andreja Palatinus/Jernej Premrl/Špela Brajer

2011-2015

Danilo Zavrtanik
Andrej Kranjc
Boštjan Potokar
Branka Mozetič Vodopivec
Gvido Bratina/Samo Stanič
Iztok Arčon
Katja Mihurko Poniž
Maja Ravnikar
Matjaž Valant/Urška Lavrenčič Štangar
Oto Luthar
Franc Marušič
Tadej Bajd
Tanja Urbančič
Špela Brajer/Aleš Bogovič
Žiga Bis/Peter Mišič/Mateja Nikolič

2015-2019

Danilo Zavrtanik
Andrej Kranjc
Boštjan Potokar
Branka Mozetič Vodopivec
Iztok Arčon
Katja Mihurko Poniž/Aleš Vaupotič
Maja Ravnikar
Samo Stanič
Tadej Bajd
Tanja Urbančič
Urška Lavrenčič Štangar/Matjaž Valant
Aleš Bogovič/Ester Slokar/Klemen Cotič/Anika Velišček
Mateja Nikolič/Polona Petejan/Anja Polajnar

2019-2023

Danilo Zavrtanik

Aleš Vaupotič/Željko Oset (till July 2021)

Andrej Kranjc

Boštjan Potokar

Branka Mozetič Vodopivec

Iztok Arčon

Maja Ravnikar (till October 2019)

Matjaž Valant

Nataša Zabukovec Logar

Samo Stanič/Sandra Gardonio

Tanja Urbančič

Anika Velišček/Katja Belec

Anja Polajnar/Ana Prebil

MEMBERS OF MANAGEMENT BOARD

Management board of the SES

1995-1999

Črtomir Špacapan, president

Danilo Zavrtanik

Borut Lavrič

Danilo Kovačič

Mladen Franko

Štefan Krapše

Management board of the PNG

1999-2003

Črtomir Špacapan, president

Danilo Zavrtanik

Borut Lavrič

Aleš Nemeč

Iztok Arčon

Rafael Martinčič

Stojan Ščuka

Viljem De Brea

2004-2006

Borut Lavrič, president

Ivo Boscarol

Iztok Arčon

Polonca Trebše

Rado Riha

Robert Golob

Egon Pavlica/Aleš Boškin

Management board of the UNG

2006-2011

Borut Lavrič, president

Ivo Boscarol

Urška Lavrenčič Štangar/Melita Sternad Lemut

Rado Riha

Robert Žerjal

Samo Stanič/Sabina Zelinšček

Kristina Kosič/Jan Ferjančič/Mateja Založnik

Jana Gregorič

2011-2015

Boris Peric, president

Borut Lavrič

Gregor Cevc

Matjaž Kuntner

Miran Veselič

Robert Golob

Robert Žerjal

Urh Černigoj

Jana Gregorič

2015-2019

Boris Peric, president

Borut Lavrič

Boris Kovač

Dejan Paravan

Gregor Cevc

Jadran Lenarčič

Miran Veselič

Verica Trstenjak

Ester Slokar/Klemen Cotič/Anika Velišček

2019-2023

Borut Lavrič, predsednik

Jadran Lenarčič

Maja Ravnikar

Miran Veselič

Urška Vrhovšek

Zoran Božič

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NUMBER OF BACHELOR'S GRADUATES, MASTER'S GRADUATES, AND DOCTORAL GRADUATES BY SCHOOLS AND STUDY PROGRAMMES

(on the 31 October 2021)

	VI/2.	VII.	VIII/1.	VIII/2.	
School of Arts	55	14			69
School of Humanities	98	276			374
School of Science	23	12			35
Graduate School			101	253	354
School of Environmental Sciences	89	161			250
School for Viticulture and Enology	45				45
School of Engineering and Management	490	102			592
PNG/UNG	800	565	101	253	1719

Level of the qualification	Study programme ²⁸⁵	School	Number of graduates
VI/2.	Digital Arts and Practices (b. p.)	AU	55
	Industrial Engineering Economics and Management (prof. p.)	PTF	347
	Engineering and Management (b. p.)	PTF	143
	Physics (b. p.)	FN	14
	Physics and astrophysics (b. p.)	FN	9
	Cultural history (b. p.)	FH	35
	Environment (b. p.)	FZO	89
	Slovene Studies (b. p.)	FH	63
	Viticulture and Enology (b. p.)	FVV	45
VII.	Physics (b. p.)	FN	10
	Physics and astrophysics (b. p.)	FN	2
	Engineering and Management (b. p.)	PTF	102
	Media Arts and Practices (b. p.)	AU	14
	European Master in Migration and Intercultural Relations (b. p.)	FH	210
	Environment (b. p.)	FZO	39
	Environment (acad.)	FZO	122
	Slovene Studies (acad.)	FH	39
	Slovene Studies (b. p.)	FH	23
Slovene Studies, ped. p. (b. p.)	FH	4	

Level of the qualification	Study programme ²⁸⁵	School	Number of graduates
VIII/1.	Economics and Techniques for the Conservation of the Architectural and Environmental Heritage (spec.)	FPŠ	26
	Intercultural Studies - Comparative Studies of Ideas and Cultures (Msc)	FPŠ	12
	Materials Characterization (Msc)	FN	13
	Karstology (Msc)	FPŠ	1
	Environmental Sciences (Msc)	FZO	49
VIII/2.	Economics and Techniques for the Conservation of the Architectural and Environmental Heritage (b. p.)	FPŠ	18
	Physics (b. p.)	FPŠ	39
	Humanities (b. p.)	FPŠ	5
	Intercultural Studies - Comparative Studies of Ideas and Cultures (b. p.)	FPŠ	34
	Materials Characterization (previous program)	FN	11
	Karstology (previous program)	FPŠ	10
	Karstology (b. p.)	FPŠ	16
	Cognitive Science of Language (b. p.)	FPŠ	2
	Molecular Genetics and Biotechnology graduate study programme (b. p.)	FPŠ	34
	Comparative Studies of Ideas and Cultures (b. p.)	FPŠ	6
	Environmental Sciences (b. p.)	FPŠ	27
	Environmental Sciences (previous program)	FZO	51
Together			1719

²⁸⁵ B. p. – Bologna programme; spec. – specialisation study programme; acad. - academic study programme; prof. p. – professional study programme; Msc – master of science.

THE DEVELOPMENT PATH FROM 1995 TILL TODAY

1995	On 24 september, the Agreement establishing the School of Environmental Science (the predecessor of Polytechnic and the University of Nova Gorica) was concluded at Kromberk castle near Nova Gorica.
	The establishment of the Laboratory for Environmental Research .
1996	The establishment of the Laboratory for Astroparticle Physics .
1998	The School of Environmental Sciences is transformed into the Nova Gorica Polytechnic .
	The establishment of the School of Environmental Sciences .
	The establishment of the School of Engineering and Managment .
	The establishment of the Nova Gorica Polytechnic Library .
1999	The promotion of the first Doctor of Science and awarding the first Master's degree at Nova Gorica Polytechnic.
	Nova Gorica Polytechnic became a co-founder of the Primorska Technology Park .
	The establishment of the Laboratory of Organic Matter Physics .
	The establishment of the School of Applied Sciences .
2000	The awarding of first title of doctor honoris causa to the Nobel laureate Prof. Dr. James W. Cronin .
2001	The establishment of the Edvard Rusjan Foundation .
	The establishment of the Laboratory for Multiphase Processes .
	The establishment of the UNG Press .

2003	<p>The establishment of the School of Humanities.</p> <p>On 22 december, the Research Center of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts and the Municipality of Ajdovščina join the founders, the Jožef Stefan Institute and the Municipality of Nova Gorica, with the conclusion of an agreement.</p>
2004	The establishment of the Centre for Atmospheric Research .
2005	<p>The Senate of the Nova Gorica Polytechnic adopts a Decision on the transformation of the Nova Gorica Polytechnic into the University of Nova Gorica.</p> <p>The inauguration of the Otlica Observatory.</p> <p>The establishment of the Research Center for Humanities.</p>
2006	<p>On 17 March, the Council for Higher Education of the Republic of Slovenia confirmed the application of the Nova Gorica Polytechnic for the change of status into a university, thus enabling the creation of the fourth Slovenian university – the University of Nova Gorica.</p> <p>The establishment of the School for Viticulture and Enology.</p> <p>The establishment of the Graduate School.</p>
2007	The establishment of the Centre for System and Information Technologies .
2008	<p>The establishment of the Wine Research Centre.</p> <p>The Nova Gorica Polytechnic Library is transformed into the University Library of the University of Nova Gorica.</p>
2009	<p>The establishment of the School of Arts.</p> <p>The establishment of the Materials Research Laboratory.</p>
2012	<p>The establishment of the Laboratory of Qunantum Optics.</p> <p>The establishment of the Center for Biomedical Sciences and Engineering.</p>
2013	Promotion of the 100th Doctor of Science .

2014	<p>The establishment of the UNESCO headquarters called the Karsology Study Center (Unesco Chair on Karst Education).</p> <hr/> <p>The establishment of the Centre for Cognitive Science of Language.</p> <hr/> <p>The Award of 1000th diploma at the end of studies.</p> <hr/> <p>The Edvard Rusjan Foundation is renamed as the University of Nova Gorica Foundation.</p>
2015	<p>The University of Nova Gorica is awarded the Order of Merit of the Republic of Slovenia.</p> <hr/> <p>The Reserach Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Science and Arts withdraws as a co-founder of the University of Nova Gorica.</p> <hr/> <p>The School of Applied Sciences is renamed as the School of Science.</p>
2017	<p>The Laboratory for Astroparticle Physics is renamed as the Center for Astrophysics and Cosmology.</p> <hr/> <p>The Centre for Systems and Information Technologies is renamed as the Centre for Information Technologies and Applied Mathematics.</p> <hr/> <p>The Laboratory for Environmental Research is renamed as the Laboratory for Environmental and Life Sciences.</p>
2019	<p>The Municipality of Ajdovščina withdraws as a co-founder of the University of Nova Gorica.</p> <hr/> <p>The opening of the University of Nova Gorica Gallery.</p>

LIST OF DOCTOR OF SCIENCE PROMOTED BY UNIVERSITY OF NOVA GORICA

1. Branko KONTIČ: Environmental impact assessment - validity of long-term predictions: A case study: Radioactive waste disposal in Slovenia, doctoral supervisors: prof. Burt C. Kross in prof. Peter Stegnar, December 1998.
2. Barbara VOKAL: The carbon transfer in karst areas - an application to the study of environmental changes and paleoclimatic reconstruction, doctoral supervisorji: dr. Ivan Kobal, dr. Bogomil Obelić, dr. Dominique Genty, November 1999.
3. Jože KOTNIK: Modeling of mercury and its compounds in Lake Velenje, doctoral supervisor: dr. Milena Horvat, April 2000.
4. Lea POGAČNIK: Development and application of photothermal biosensor for detection of organophosphate and carbamate pesticides, doctoral supervisor: doc. dr. Mladen Franko, March 2001.
5. Gregor Drago ZUPANČIČ: Two stage thermophilic anaerobic-aerobic mineralization-stabilization of excess activated sludge, doctoral supervisor: prof. dr. Milenko Roš, July 2002
6. Urška KOREN: Line-source model and evaluation of diffusion and emission parameters using lidar data, doctoral supervisors: dr. Andrej Filipčič in prof. dr. Mladen Franko, June 2003.
7. Jasmina KOŽAR LOGAR: Development of laser spectroscopic techniques for characterisation and studies of phytoplankton pigments, doctoral supervisorji: prof. dr. Mladen Franko, doc. dr. Vlado Malačič, prof. dr. Alenka Malej, June 2003.
8. Tjaša JUG: Laser spectroscopic investigation and photochemistry of humic substances, doctoral supervisors: prof. dr. Mladen Franko, prof. dr. Boris Šket, June 2004.

9. Marjeta JERAJ: Archaeobotanical and palaeoecological reconstruction of the Southwestern Ljubljana Moor (Ljubljansko Barje), Slovenija, doctoral supervisor: prof. dr. Lučka Kajfež Bogataj, June 2004.
10. Robert HUDEJ: Electric charge transport in thin layers of PTCDA, doctoral supervisor: prof. dr. Gvido Bratina, October 2004.
11. Jan MAVRI: Development of bioanalytical techniques for environmental analysis based on surface plasmon resonance (SPR), doctoral supervisors: prof. dr. Mladen Franko, prof. dr. Peter Raspor, November 2004.
12. Borut POLJŠAK: Pro-oxidative vs. antioxidative properties of ascorbic acid and trolox in chromium(VI) induced damage, doctoral supervisor: prof. dr. Stojan Plesničar, prof. dr. Peter Raspor, November 2004.
13. Janez PERKO: Modelling of transport phenomena by the diffuse approximate method, doctoral supervisor: prof. dr. Božidar Šarler, June 2005.
14. Agnes ŠÖMEN JOKSIĆ: Availability of copper, nickel, lead and zinc in dredged sediments: approach to improved risk assessment, doctoral supervisors: prof. dr. Sidney A. Katz, dr. Milena Horvat, July 2005.
15. Monika PETERLIN: Perception of environmental data by different social groups in the EIA process: Case study: Environmental data perception and beliefs of Port of Koper employees and the general population in the Koper area, doctoral supervisor: prof. Burton C. Kross, prof. Branko Kontić, November 2005.
16. Egon PAVLICA: Transient response in thin organic semiconductor layers, doctoral supervisor: prof. dr. Gvido Bratina, June 2006.
17. Martina ČARMAN: Amplification of ground motion at the area of Krško NPP due to local site effects, doctoral supervisor: prof. dr. Peter Suhadolc, November 2006.
18. Nina MALI: Characterization of transport processes in the unsaturated zone of a gravel aquifer by natural and artificial tracers, doctoral supervisor: dr. Janko Urbanc, doc. dr. Mihael Brenčič, November 2006.

19. Miha ZALOŽNIK: Modeling of macrosegregation in direct chill casting, doctoral supervisor: prof. dr. Božidar Šarler, December 2006.
20. Marko VUDRAG: Investigation of possible health effects resulting from the reconfiguration of the Mrzlek water supply, doctoral supervisors: prof. Sidney A. Katz, prof. Maja Primic Žakelj, January 2007.
21. Mojca BAVCON KRALJ: Oxidation and degradation of organophosphorus compounds, doctoral supervisorica: doc. dr. Polonca Trebše, April 2007.
22. Jana LAGANIS: Emergy analysis of black alder (*Alnus glutinosa* (L.) Gaertn.) floodplain forest growth, doctoral supervisor: doc. dr. Marko Debeljak, May 2007.
23. Nataša RAVBAR: Vulnerability and risk mapping for the protection of Karst waters in Slovenia, doctoral supervisorji: prof. dr. Andrej Kranjc, dr. Nico Goldscheider, June 2007.
24. Ana HOFMAN: Identity politics and the performances of female singers in Niško Polje in the last third of the twentieth century, doctoral supervisors: prof. dr. Mirjam Milharčič Hladnik, doc. dr. Svanibor Pettan, July 2007.
25. Urh ČERNIGOJ: Photodegradation of organic pollutants in aqueous solutions catalyzed by immobilized titanium dioxide: novel routes towards higher efficiency, doctoral supervisors: doc. dr. Polonca Trebše, doc. dr. Urška Lavrenčič Štangar, August 2007.
26. Rebeka KUNEJ: Štajeriš na Slovenskem: Etnokoreološki in plesno-antropološki vidiki, doctoral supervisors: doc. dr. Marjetka Golež Kaučič, dr. Tvrtno Zebec, December 2007
27. Nataša GREGORIČ BON: Contested spaces and negotiated identities in Dhërmi/Drimades of Himarë/Himara area, southern Albania, doctoral supervisorji: prof. Borut Telban, prof. Duška Knežević Hočevar, prof. Sarah Green, January 2008.
28. Nataša MORI: The impact of gravel extraction on hyporheic ecology: A case study of the Bača river (W Slovenia), doctoral supervisorji: izr. prof. dr. Anton Brancelj, februar 2008.

29. Jernej MLEKUŽ: Predmet kot akter? Primer bureka v Sloveniji, doctoral supervisorji: doc. dr. Marina Lukšič Hacin, doc. dr. Jože Vogrinc, April 2008.
30. Igor KOVAČEVIČ: Modelling of solid-solid phase transformations in aluminium alloys, doctoral supervisor: prof. dr. Božidar Šarler, April 2008.
31. Aleš BOŠKIN: The application of high sensitivity laser methods for detection of organophosphorus pesticides and cholinesterase activity, doctoral supervisors: prof. dr. Mladen Franko, dr. Turk Valentina, June 2008.
32. Boštjan GRAŠIČ: Improvement of the performance of an air-pollution dispersion model for use over complex terrain, doctoral supervisors: prof. dr. Juš Kocijan, dr. Marija Zlata Božnar, September 2008.
33. Davor KONTIČ: Introduction of threat analysis for hazardous industrial installations into the land-use planning process, doctoral supervisor: doc. dr. Nives Ogrinc, December 2008.
34. Simon LUKANČIČ: Effects of allochthonous substances on two freshwater invertebrates, doctoral supervisor: izr. prof. dr. Anton Brancelj, December 2008.
35. Primož REBERNIK RIBIČ: Initial stages of organic semiconductor thin film growth, doctoral supervisor: prof. dr. Gvido Bratina, March 2009.
36. Andraž PETROVIČ: Nanoscale electric charge transport in organic thin film transistors, doctoral supervisor: prof. dr. Gvido Bratina, April 2009.
37. Giosuè BOSCATO: Numerical analysis and experimental tests on dynamic behaviour of GFRP pultruded elements for conservation of the architectural and environmental heritage, doctoral supervisor: prof. Salvatore Russo, May 2009.
38. Mojca KOVAČIČ: Pritrkavanje - etnomuzikološka fenomenologija pojava in njegova vključenost v slovenski in evropski prostor, doctoral supervisors: doc. dr. Marjetka Golež Kaučič, prof. dr. Svanibor Pettan, June 2009.
39. Janja KOGOVŠEK: Značilnosti pretakanja skozi vadozno cono krasa, doctoral supervisor: dr. Metka Petrič, dr. Sanja Kapelj, June 2009.

40. Małgorzata PIECHA: Stability and degradation studies of cholesterol-lowering statin drugs, doctoral supervisor: prof. dr. Polonca Trebše, July 2009.
41. Luka VIDMAR: Struktura in funkcija pisem iz literarnopreradne korespondence Žige Zoisa, doctoral supervisor: acad. prof. dr. Janko Kos, prof. dr. Marko Juvan, August 2009.
42. Ksenija BERK: Načini izginjanja objekta v sodobni grafiki: Ali grafika misli?, doctoral supervisor: izr. prof. dr. Rado Riha, doc. dr. Bojana Kunst, September 2009.
43. Kaja ŠIROK: Kolektivno spominjanje in kolektivna pozaba v obmejnem prostoru : spomini na Gorico 1943-1947, doctoral supervisor: prof. dr. Oto Luthar, doc. dr. Tanja Petrović, September 2009.
44. Mitja PRELOVŠEK: Present-day speleogenetic processes, factors and features in the epiphreatic zone, doctoral supervisor: dr. Andrej Mihevc, dr. Philipp Häuselmann, October 2009.
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46. Tadej MEZEK: Lipids in freshwater ecosystems: Case studies from Lake Bohinj (Slovenia) and Laurentian Great Lakes (North America), doctoral supervisor: izr. dr. Anton Brancelj, December 2009.
47. Jasminko MULAOMEROVIĆ: Determinante i efekti speleoturizma na razvoj nerazvijenih področja, doctoral supervisor: doc. dr. Andrej Mihevc, izr. prof. Jasmina Osmanković, December 2009.
48. Jelena ČALIĆ: Uvala: Contribution to the study of karst depressions (with selected examples from Dinarides and Carpatho-Balkanides), doctoral supervisors: dr. Andrej Kranjc, dr. Andrzej Tyc, December 2009.
49. Ivo LUČIĆ: Povijest poznavanja Dinarskog krša na primjeru Popova polja, doctoral supervisor: prof. dr. Andrej Kranjc, prof. dr. Petar T. Milanović, December 2009.

50. Alenka ŽUNIČ: Effects of selected neurotoxic insecticides on vibrational communication of the southern green stink bug (*Nezara viridula*, Heteroptera: Pentatomidae), doctoral supervisor: prof. dr. Andrej Čokl, January 2010.
51. Mustafa HUSSAIN: Ultra-high energy cosmic rays and galactic magnetic field, doctoral supervisors: prof. dr. Danilo Zavrtanik, doc. dr. Darko Veberič, January 2010.
52. Janez TURK: Hydrogeological role of large conduits in karst drainage system: Examples from the Ljubljana River catchment area, doctoral supervisorji: doc. dr. Franci Gabrovšek, dr. Metka Petrič, prof. dr. Ognjen Bonacci, May 2010.
53. Robert VERTNIK: Heat and fluid flow simulation of the continuous casting of steel by a meshless method, doctoral supervisor: prof. dr. Božidar Šarler, June 2010.
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56. Zulma Rocio SUAREZ MORENO: Inter-cellular communication (quorum sensing) in plant endophytic *Burkholderia* sp., doctoral supervisor: dr. Vittorio Venturi, October 2010.
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58. Mino TASBIHI: Low-temperature synthesis, characterization and application of TiO_2 and $\text{TiO}_2/\text{SiO}_2$ powders in photodegradation of VOCs, doctoral supervisorici: prof. dr. Urška Lavrenčič Štangar, December 2010.
59. Maja Gombač: Reprezentacija mode v slovenskem periodičnem tisku med svetovnjima vojnama, doctoral supervisorica: prof. dr. Breda Luthar, January 2011.

60. Vesna Mia IPAVEC: Etnologija in kultura etnološke vede na Goriškem, doctoral supervisors:izr. prof. dr. Naška Križnar, prof. dr. Oto Luthar, January 2011.
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62. Gregor KOSEC: Local meshless method for multi-phase termo-fluid problems, doctoral supervisor: prof. dr. Božidar Šarler, April 2011.
63. Branko BOGUNOVIĆ: Water fluxes at the entrance to the Gulf of Trieste, doctoral supervisor:izr. prof. Vlado Malačič, April 2011.
64. Neža ZAJC: Miselno-duhovni krogozor Primoža Trubarja in Maksima Greka (preizkus renesančnega humanizma), doctoral supervisors: prof. ddr. Igor Grdina, prof. dr. Gelian Mihajlovič Prohorov, May 2011.
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68. Fabrizia ZORZENON: Footbridges as new urban spaces, doctoral supervisor: prof. Enzo Siviero, October 2011.
69. Iva MRAK: Multicriteria evaluation for cultural heritage management from a sustainable spatial development perspective, doctoral supervisor: prof. Giovanni Campeol, October 2011.
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71. Lisa MIORIN: Visualization and dynamics of flaviviral RNA in living cells, doctoral supervisor: dr. Alessandro Marcello, October 2011.
72. Eugenio Fernando FERNANDEZ ALANIS: Defective exon recognition in disease-associated genes and splicing correction strategies using modified U1 snRNAs, doctoral supervisor: dr. Franco Pagani, December 2011.
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74. Lorena MIHELAC̃: Nacionalna identiteta in glasba pri šoloobveznih mladostnikih, doctoral supervisors: izr. prof. dr. Marina Lukšič Hacin, izr. prof. dr. Leon Stefanija, January 2012.
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77. Damjan BALABANIČ: Determination of endocrine disrupting compounds in paper mill wastewaters, comparison of different wastewater treatments for their removal and potential genotoxic activity of paper mill wastewaters, doctoral supervisorici: prof. dr. Metka Filipčič, dr. Katja Benčina, februar 2012.
78. Dunja MAHNE: Combination of constructed wetland and TiO₂ photocatalysis for textile wastewater treatment, doctoral supervisorici: prof. dr. Polonca Trebše, prof. dr. Urška Lavrenčič Štangar, March 2012.
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80. Fei GAO: Study of processes in atmospheric boundary layer over land-sea transition interface using scanning lidar, doctoral supervisors: prof. dr. Samo Stanič, doc. dr. Klemen Bergant, March 2012.
81. Andrea PREDONZANI: Cross-presentation and cancer immunotherapy, doctoral supervisor: dr. Oscar R. Burrone, April 2012.
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83. Marjeta PISK: Kontekst v raziskavah ljudske pesemske tradicije: Območje Goriških brd, doctoral supervisorici: izr. prof. dr. Marjetka Golež Kaučič, dr. Marija Avbelj Klobučar, May 2012.
84. Chandramathy SURENDRAN PRAVEEN: Ab-initio calculations on the modulation of electronic band gap of photocatalytic semiconductors, doctoral supervisor: prof. dr. Matjaž Valant, June 2012.
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90. Mateja BREG VALJAVEC: Geoinformatic methods for the detection of former waste disposal sites in karstic and nonkarstic regions (case study of dolines and gravel pits), doctoral supervisors: acad. dr. Andrej Kranjc, dr. Irena Rejec Brancelj, October 2012.
91. Rosana CERKVENIK: Impacts of visitors on cave's physical environment and its protection, doctoral supervisors: doc. dr. Andrej Mihevc, prof. dr. Ugo Sauro, October 2012.
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93. Uroš ŽIBRAT: Development of a new biotic index based on hyporheic fauna for water quality determination in lotic ecosystems, doctoral supervisor: prof. dr. Anton Brancelj, November 2012.
94. Julya MAGAJNA: Anarhističnost skozi perspektivo shizoanalize: Politična ekonomija želečih strojev, doctoral supervisor: dr. Peter Klepec, November 2012.
95. Alenka STANIČ: Relocation, flow or escape of research potential: The case of Slovenia after the act of independence, doctoral supervisor: prof. dr. Oto Luthar, November 2012.
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105. Mingqiang LIU: Combined TLS and microfluidic-FIA devices for highly sensitive and rapid environmental analysis, doctoral supervisor: prof. dr. Mladen Franko, May 2013.
106. Benoît MAHIEU: Coherence, tunability, spectral and spatial properties of femtosecond extreme-ultraviolet light sources, doctoral supervisors: prof. dr. Giovanni de Ninno, dr. David Garzella, June 2013.
107. Andreea OARGA: Blackwater treatment at tourist facilities, doctoral supervisor: doc. dr. Tjaša Griessler Bulc, prof. dr. Petter D. Jenssen, June 2013.
108. Jasminka ALIJAGIĆ: Application of multivariate statistical methods and artificial neural network for separation natural background and influence of mining and metallurgy activities on distribution of chemical elements in the Stavnja valley (Bosnia and Herzegovina), doctoral supervisor: dr. Robert Šajn, November 2013.

109. Polona LAVTAR: Genetics biomarkers at multiple sclerosis, doctoral supervisor: prof. dr. Borut Peterlin, September 2013.

110. Svetlana ZDRAVKOVIČ: Politika emancipacije: Misel-praksa militantnega subjekta, doctoral supervisor: prof. dr. Rado Riha, September 2013.

111. Dejan AUBRECHT: Od evdajmonizma k dionizičnemu pesimizmu: Tesnoba, dolgčas in obup, doctoral supervisor: prof. dr. Alenka Zupančič Žerdin, September 2013.

112. Chiara APPOCHER: Molecular characterization of REEP1 function in *Drosophila melanogaster*, doctoral supervisor: dr. Fabian M. Feiguin, October 2013.

113. Natalija MIHELČIČ: Kultura Kočevske v času socializma, doctoral supervisor: prof. dr. Oto Luthar, October 2013.

114. Kristina BRATAŠEVEC: Determination of the actual uptake of essential nutrients by different parts of *Vitis vinifera* L. cv. 'Rebula', doctoral supervisor: doc. dr. Branka Mozetič Vodopivec, November 2013.

115. Andreja SUŠNIK: GPS for weather and space weather studies, doctoral supervisor: doc. dr. Klemen Bergant, November 2013.

116. Pierantonio BARIZZA: Conservation of architectural heritage and forensic engineering, doctoral supervisors: prof. ing. Paolo Faccio, prof. ing. Enzo Siviero, November 2013.

117. Sara BUDAL: Development of new methods for determination of biogenic amines and investigation of related enzymatic processes, doctoral supervisor: prof. dr. Mladen Franko, November 2013.

118. Juan Pedro MENVIELLE: Study of expression systems for large-scale protein production, doctoral supervisor: dr. Sergio G. Tisminetzky, November 2013.

119. Mirela DRAGOMIR: Synthesis and electronic properties of compounds from a $\text{Bi}_2\text{O}_3\text{-Nd}_2\text{O}_3\text{-VO}_x$ system, doctoral supervisor: prof. dr. Matjaž Valant, November 2013.

120. Andreja KUKEC: An environmental model for the relationship between air pollution and respiratory diseases in children: The Zasavje case, doctoral supervisors: prof. dr. Lijana Zaletel Kragelj, prof. dr. Ivan Eržen, December 2013.

121. Shivasankari GOMATHINAYAGAM: Biochemical characterisation of the role of the human RecQ1 helicase at the replication fork, doctoral supervisor: dr. Alessandro Vindigni, December 2013.

122. Klaudija SEDAR: Kulturna podoba JV Prekmurja v 17. in 18. stoletju, doctoral supervisor: prof. dr. Stane Granda, December 2013.

123. Rosario LUCIO RUGGIERI: Speleological and speleogenetic aspects of the Monti di Capo San Vito karst area (north-western Sicily): Influence of morpho-tectonic evolution, doctoral supervisors: prof. dr. Stanka Šebela, prof. dr. Ugo Sauro, January 2014.

124. Elisabetta CALLEGARO: The measure of landscape: From auto-referential reading to evaluation, doctoral supervisor: prof. Giovanni Campeol, January 2014.

125. Mojca STUBELJ ARS: Decision support in the implementation of sustainable development in protected areas regarding environmental education and ecotourism, doctoral supervisor: prof. dr. Marko Bohanec, februar 2014.

126. Tea ROZMAN CLARK: The United Nations peacekeepers and local population of the United Nations Safe Area Srebrenica: (De)reconstruction of human relationship, doctoral supervisorica: prof. dr. Mirjam Milharčič Hladnik, februar 2014.

127. Melita STERNAD LEMUT: Canopy microclimate manipulation in the sustainable management of 'Pinot Noir' vineyard from Vipava valley, doctoral supervisors: prof. dr. Urška Vrhovšek, dr. Klemen Lisjak, februar 2014.

128. Matej ANDREJAŠIČ: Optimization od aerodynamic surfaces using pressure based functionals, doctoral supervisor: izr. prof. Gregor Veble, March 2014.

129. Kim MEZGA: Natural hydrochemical background and dynamics of groundwater in Slovenia, doctoral supervisors: prof. dr. Barbara Čenčur Curk, Janko Urbanc, April 2014.
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132. Tina JERMAN KLEN: Olive fruit phenols in olive oil processing: The fate and antioxidant potential, doctoral supervisor: doc. dr. Branka Mozetič Vodopivec, June 2014.
133. Anja FABIANI: Diplomacija mehke moči v elementih analize svetovnih voditeljev, doctoral supervisor: izr. prof. dr. Milan Jazbec, June 2014.
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136. Manisha CHHIKARA: Study of initial growth of pentacene on graphene, doctoral supervisor: prof. dr. Gvido Bratina, June 2014.
137. Urška ŽVAB: Development of methodology for the evaluation of antimicrobial activity of prepared TiO₂ photocatalytic films, doctoral supervisors: prof. dr. Urška Lavrenčič Štangar, doc. dr. Martina Bergant Marušič, June 2014.
138. Goran GUMZE: Capoeira: Influences on depression, aggression and violence in Salvador, doctoral supervisors: prof. dr. Ivan Šprajc, prof. dr. Borut Telban, July 2014.

139. Daniel PASSOS da SILVA: Microbial interactions inside the olive knot, doctoral supervisor: Vittorio Venturi, September 2014.
140. Jula RESHETNIKOVA: Perverting the concept of child, doctoral supervisor: prof. dr. Alenka Zupančič Žerdin, September 2014.
141. Tanja BADALIČ: Reception of European women writers in Slovenian multicultural territory of the 19th century until the end of the first World War, doctoral supervisor: izr. prof. Katja Mihurko Poniž, September 2014.
142. Sanjarbek HUDAIBERDIEV: Computational analysis of quorum sensing systems in bacterial genomes: Developing automated annotation tools, doctoral supervisor: prof. Sándor Pongor, September 2014.
143. Sonal KUMARI: Comparative genomics in bacterial communication and cooperation: Functional annotation of N-Acyl Homoserine lactone quorum sensing genes in gram-negative bacteria, doctoral supervisor: prof. Sándor Pongor, September 2014.
144. Andrea DAL MAS: An RNA-based therapeutic approach for inherited mis-splicing diseases, doctoral supervisor: dr. Franco Pagani, September 2014.
145. Qingguo LIU: Non-singular method of fundamental solutions for problems in micromechanics, doctoral supervisor: prof. dr. Božidar Šarler, October 2014.
146. Iuliia MIKULSKA: Structural and magnetic properties of Fe-doped BaTiO₃ ceramics, doctoral supervisors: prof. dr. Iztok Arčon, prof. dr. Matjaž Valant, October 2014.
147. Allen WEI LIU: Epikarst control of the discharge, water quality and biodiversity in the Velika Pasica cave (Central Slovenia), doctoral supervisor: prof. dr. Anton Brancelj, October 2014.
148. Giulia ROMANO: Characterization of TDP-43, an ALS related protein using Drosophila melanogaster model, doctoral supervisor dr. Fabian M. Feiguin, November 2014.

149. Simone MILANOLO: Sources and transport of inorganic carbon in the unsaturated, doctoral supervisors: Franci Gabrovšek, Frank Mc Dermott, November 2014.

150. Katarina MRAMOR: Modelling of continuous casting of steel under the influence of electromagnetic field with meshless method, doctoral supervisor: prof. dr. Božidar Šarler, November 2014.

151. Najete SAFINI: Role of autophagy and its enhancing in the clearance of TDP-43 aggregates, doctoral supervisor: dr. Sergio G. Tisminetzky, December 2014.

152. Ambra DELNERI: Novel methods for the detection and removal of cyanobacteria and cyanotoxins, doctoral supervisor: prof. dr. Mladen Franko, December 2014.

153. Sebastjan LEBAN: Politics of representation: Capital, biopower and art, doctoral supervisorica: prof. dr. Marina Gržinić, January 2015.

154. Maja CIGOJ: The impact of grapevine fanleaf virus (GFLV) on quantity and quality parameters of grapevine, doctoral supervisors: doc. dr. Maruša Pompe Novak, izr. prof. Paolo Sivilotti, January 2015.

155. Vesna LAVTIŽAR: Environmental stability and toxicity assessment of chlorantraniliprole and its derivatives, doctoral supervisors: prof. dr. Polonca Trebše, dr. Cornelis A. M. van Gestel, februar 2015.

156. Romana KRIŠTOF: Quantification of biocomponents in fuels by ^{14}C , doctoral supervisorici: dr. Jasmina Kožar Logar, dr. Cristina Otero Hernandez, februar 2015.

157. Carolyn LEE RAMSEY: Morphometry and basic ecological characteristics of dolines in unlogged temperate rainforest karst landscapes of Northern Vancouver Island, British Columbia, Canada: doctoral supervisors: doc. dr. Nadja Zupan Hajna, dr. Timothy R. Stokes, March 2015.

158. Nina MENCIN: In vitro selection of DNA aptamers for proteins immobilized on magnetic beads and monitoring of ssDNA pool evolution, doctoral supervisors: prof. dr. Kristina Gruden, dr. Jan Mavri, March 2015.

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REVIEWS

UNIVERSITY OF NOVA GORICA AND THE SLOVENIAN ACADEMIC COMMUNITY

Author: Dr. Željko Oset

Review: Prof. Ddr. Igor Grdina

The manuscript of Dr. Oset with the title History of the University of Nova Gorica had been sent to me for review.

The manuscript significantly differs from accustomed anniversary publications despite being published on the occasion of 25th anniversary of the University of Nova Gorica. The difference is in the analytical depth of insight, narration and also in the synthetic conclusions. Dr. Oset has always been faithful to the critical methodology of scientific historiography; therefore, his approach is systematic. The manuscript differs from the classical historiographical work only in that it cannot fully derive conclusions from the consequences of the described actions, as too little time has passed to show all the consequences of a certain events, motions and processes. This sometimes requires a multigenerational distance; the classical historian Marc Bloch believed that it should lapse approximately 80 years, which means almost three generations (if we “attribute” 30 years to one generation; during this time a certain generation gives the basic tone or contour and rhythm of events as well).²⁸⁶ In this perspective, the contribution of Dr. Oset can also be understood as an experiment: it will

²⁸⁶ Bloch's considerations proved to be correct in the 20th century: the consequences of the Great War of 1914-1918 had impacted the world almost the world almost until the end of the millennium, when the division into the first and second worlds, which arose during the Bolshevik coup in the Russian Revolution of 1917, ended, at least formally.

be interesting for future generations to compare his findings with those that will be written when the same issue will be discussed in a few decades. In this sense, the University of Nova Gorica should be called upon to carry out the second part of the historiographical experiment at the right time, that is, during the 3rd generation of researchers after its establishment.

In my opinion, the submitted work is high above the qualitative level of similar texts - which otherwise mostly belong to "anniversary" science - especially due to the breadth of insight. The author manages to present the legal framework of higher education institutions in the Republic of Slovenia - as much as is necessary, and also that of past times - as well as the institutional and other mentalities and political realities without too extensive an inventory and explanation. It is these three factors that have generated the most barriers to the formation of the UNG. The protagonists of its founding had to overcome all, which explains why the path to the UNG was much more winding than the path to other universities. Political will can suddenly remove all obstacles and establish a new state by their own accord. Of course, it can not create a mental climate within the new institution, as shown by the case of the University of Primorska, which has long been shaken by personal disputes and conflicts. The UNG was spared this - with the partial exception of the founding disputes - which had a positive effect on relations within the university. These are, of course, always complicated, as many different professions with different methodologies, goals, missions etc., meet at such settings. Finding optimal solutions for all under the same institutional roof requires a lot of patience and creative thinking - even just to ensure existence.

The presented work certainly fulfils its main purpose - to be a credible report and an understanding analysis of the circumstances and actions of the protagonists and their mentality. As there is no demonstration of the functioning of individual UNG bodies in the foreground, it can be said that the study does not swear by institutional theory. This is also understandable - and explained in one place in the text - as it is a history of the creation of an institution in which people are decisive. Therefore, it can be concluded that this is a well-thought-out and logically complete - that is, consistent and coherent - text.

The peculiarities of the UNG, which are related to the way it was created and its border position, as well as to the extravagances of the local political scene, are appropriately highlighted. While Italy has been systematically expanding its network of academic institutions along the border with the Republic of Slovenia for some time, the Republic of Slovenia has equally systematically and persistently developed only gambling in its western regions. The UNG was an alien in such a constellation. Nevertheless, at least for a while, they managed to overcome the border as a dividing line. The fact that the UNG has already withdrawn from Gorizia, however, shows that the border is not as much a thing of the past as is claimed and thought in some locations in the Republic of Slovenia - but certainly not in Italy. It is still a factor that has a significant impact on institutions and their functioning. This imposes certain tasks of wider significance on the UNG - especially in the humanities. The UNG has the best opportunities to study the culture and phenomena specific to the space in which it operates. Leaving their turmoil aside will do them cognitive damage, as it will condemn a certain space to silence or a weaker voice in the "consultation of nations." A vital academic institution can in no way afford this. Its duties to the space in which it operates and to the people.

The author based his work on documents, personal interviews and newspaper sources. It is clear that, due to the short timeline, only a part of the relevant material could be accessible to him. However, it seems that he extracted the maximum information possible from the material.

There is a well-known maxim that history, which is not a past in itself, but a past that can be reconstructed, includes only events whose historiographer's witnesses can no longer call by telephone. Dr. Oset did not follow this guideline concerning "safety at work" - and it is my opinion that history should only praise him for this. It is all the more valuable because, in presenting the views of the protagonists of the described events, the author did not resort to general labels (numerous, many, some), but left people with full personalities, including names and surnames. This is not leniency, but honesty and a historically credible position. It is true that the author is reluctant to name negative characters - which is logical (not just for safety at work) - but they are recognisable nonetheless.

Having said that, I can only write that I warmly recommend the work herein. The work of Dr. Oset will certainly be an important item in Slovenian historiography. Both because of the theme and because of the paradigm.

Igor Grdina

Ljubljana, 17 August 2020

UNIVERSITY OF NOVA GORICA AND THE SLOVENIAN ACADEMIC COMMUNITY

Author: Dr. Željko Oset

Review: Prof. Dr. Iztok Arčon

The content of the book by Željko Oset contains the history of the University of Nova Gorica (UNG) on the occasion of its 25th anniversary. The history covers the entire period from the establishment of the postgraduate school - the School of Environmental Sciences - as an independent higher education institution in 1995 to the present day. The presentation chronologically follows the development, growth and transformation of the institution, first into the Nova Gorica Polytechnic in 1998, and then the status change to the University of Nova Gorica in 2006, and its growth and development to this day. The key organisational forms and decisions that marked the development of the institution and the establishment of individual pedagogical and research units are presented. The vision and strategies of UNG development by individual periods and the realisation of the set goals are outlined. An international comparison of the UNG with other European and American universities is given. The reasons why set goals were not always achieved are also described. The text draws on various official written sources from the UNG archives and

other archival material, as well as on the testimonies of the main participants in the development of the UNG, the founders and management of the UNG.

The history of the UNG is placed in a broader social context both in Slovenia and in the world. The development of the Slovenian higher education area is presented, as well as the changes in Slovenian legislation concerning higher education in this period, which represent a formal framework that enabled and sometimes also hindered the development of the UNG. The introductory part entitled "Prehistory: Slovenian Academic Community and Transition" is dedicated to this. The attitude of the state towards the development of the UNG is highlighted, which, despite repeated pressures to merge with the then emerging University of Primorska, has always managed to maintain its independent status and follow its vision of development. Throughout the history of the institution, the UNG's cooperation with local communities and the founders of the UNG, which has been a key factor in the development of the institution, has been analysed in particular. Spatial issues are highlighted, which in various periods had a key impact on the growth and development of the institution. The support or sometimes unresponsiveness of the local community (municipalities in the Severna Primorska region) in different periods enabled the establishment of three university campuses (in Nova Gorica, Ajdovščina and Vipava), but on the other hand the issue of a single UNG campus, for which the institution has been striving since the beginning, remains unresolved.

The publication is an important document that professionally and with references supports the development of the UNG and places the UNG in the Slovenian and wider international higher education and university space.

Iztok Arčon

Nova Gorica, on 14 August 2020

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