

To:  
AESOP Executive Committee

Thessaloniki 12-11-2016

## **RECOMMENDATION REPORT FOR ASSOCIATE MEMBER**

**APPLICANT: Department of Spatial Planning (*Studijski Program za Prostorno Planiranje*),  
University of Banja Luka, Bosnia Herzegovina**

This Recommendation Report is based on the information provided by the Applicant Department in the corresponding application for Associate Member as well as on a small search of the University's and the Department's websites (<http://www.unibl.org/en/university> & <http://pmf.unibl.org/>). I must note that the Department's website is only in Serbian.

### **a. Brief description of the institution**

The Applicant Department is one of the Departments of the University of Banja Luka (UBL). UBL was founded in 1975 and is the leading higher education institution in the Republic of Srpska and the second largest in Bosnia Herzegovina. It has 16 faculties with more than 50 licensed study programmes and around 17.000 students, while it employs 600 professors, 400 assistants and 450 administrative staff members. The Department of Spatial Planning belongs in the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, which was established in 1996 and has the following departments/study programmes: Biology, Chemistry, Ecology and Environmental Protection, Geography, Mathematics and Informatics, Physics, Spatial planning, Technical Education and Mathematics.

The Department of Spatial Planning is a relatively new Department formed in the academic year 2006-2007. The first students graduated in 2010. Until 2016 a total of more than 160 students have graduated from this Department. It has 20 full-time academic staff members, 13 part-time staff members, 6 staff members engaged in research and 10 staff members engaged in professional activities. The staff's profiles cover a wide range of subjects mainly in the fields of geography, environmental studies and spatial planning.

### **b. Programmes in planning**

The Department offers a 4-year undergraduate autonomous planning programme with 240 ECTS. Upon the completion of this first cycle studies, students gain both theoretical and practical knowledge within the field of spatial planning. Students are qualified to perform spatial planning practice, solve current spatial development problems and prepare different development studies and planning documents. After graduation, students are able to work at higher-education institutions, scientific-study organizations, institutes, planning bureaus, administrative institutions and commercial subjects.

The curriculum has strong elements of physical geography, environmental studies and human geography but also offers a considerable number of pure spatial planning courses. The programme's main courses are: Introduction to Spatial Planning, General Applied Geology, Climate Studies, Cartography, Applied Statistics, Soil Studies, GIS in Spatial Planning, Population and Spatial Planning, Urban and Rural Ecology, Hydrology, Theory of Spatial Planning, Rural Geography, Methods in Spatial

Planning, Law and Self Governance, Urban Governance, Geography of Resources, Geopolitics, European Dimension of Spatial Planning, Infrastructural Systems in Spatial Planning, Rural Planning, Spatial and Urban Economics, Spatial and Regulation Plans, Environmental Planning, Landscape Architecture.

The Department also offers a second-cycle graduate degree in spatial planning (1 year programme, 60ECTS). Presumably, this course has started recently and, as indicated in the application, it had only 1 graduate in 2015.

Both programmes are accredited by a professional body.

Regarding involvement in research, it appears that the Faculty of Natural Sciences as whole has participated in various projects whereas the Department appears to be currently involved in the TEMPUS programme NETREL (Network for education and training for public environmental laboratories), which aims to train researchers and experts in Serbia and Bosnia & Herzegovina in environmental analytical techniques

**In conclusion**, based on the above information I think that the Applicant Department covers the basic requirements to become an Associate Member of AESOP and therefore it is without hesitation that I recommend it.

Yours sincerely,



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