

# Reasoning for the Launch of a Master's Programme Political Consulting and Lobbying at The University of National and World Economy

Ivka Tsakova\*

## Summary:

The proposed draft of a Master's Programme entitled, *Political Consulting and Lobbying* is the result of a three-year scientific research project, Political Sciences at University of National and World Economy (UNWE) – Facing the Business, financed by the university's Scientific Fund. The main goal of this programme in the field of public affairs management is to provide interdisciplinary knowledge to comprehend and manage the contemporary processes in the new political, economic and socio-cultural situation in a globalised world. The project offers applied knowledge, aiming to develop analytical and institutional entrepreneurship skills.

This paper consists of three parts: 1) An overview of the topics of the Master's programme draft; 2) A brief overview of Master's programmes in public affairs at five leading universities in Europe and the U.S.; 3) Fundamentals of the Master's programme and suggested curriculum.

The curriculum content of the Master's programme is interdisciplinary and applied knowledge-oriented. The proposed courses focus on professional activities in the public sphere, which help students act as public affairs practitioners in the field of government relations, parliamentary relations, media relations and public opinion formation; political persuasion, coalition building and networking, interest representation, event management, advocacy campaign, etc. The Master's programme will provide the graduates with competencies for future careers as political advisors, analysts, mediators, organisers and consultants on political issues at state institutions, civil society organisations, political parties, trade unions, business associations, employers' organisations, etc., as well as in the EU institutions. The paper draws special attention to political consulting services and lobbying activities, which should be legal (compliant with the law), legitimate (not causing detriment to the public interest), ethical (compliant with definite ethical codes) and public (listed in public records and green papers).

\* Associate Professor, Ph.D, Department of Political Science, University of National and World Economy, Sofia, e-mail: ivkatsakova@hotmail.com

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This Master's programme draft is the result of a three-year (2009-2012) scientific research project *Political Sciences at UNWE – Facing the Business*, financed by UNWE's Scientific Fund, contract 21.03 – 43/2009, carried out by a research team comprising project manager Assoc. Prof. Ivka Tsakova, Ph.D. (Department of Political Science); Assoc. Prof. Sonya Chipeva (Department of Statistics and Econometrics); Assoc. Prof. Soc. Maxim Mizov, Ph.D.; Ph.D. (Department of International Relations), Ch. Assist. Prof. Nikolay Krstev, Ph.D. and Assist. Prof. Ivayla Stoeva (Department of Political Science), Sr Assist. Prof. Boyko Valchev, and Georgi Zhechev, Teodor Slavev, Gergana Tomova and Alexandar Yanev, political science students at UNWE.

We would like to point out that the title of the proposed Master's programme could be worded alternatively: Public Affairs Management, or simply, Political Consulting. We, however, have opted for the extended title, *Political Consulting and Lobbying*, as we find it important to outline the area of specialised professional activities which the programme graduates should acquire, i.e. - monitoring (of legislation); problem identification and analysis, coalition (networks) building, political communication activities, especially contacts with the media, contacts with politicians and public officials, advocacy activities, grassroots lobbying, etc. We believe that UNWE is capable of training such experts who

can pursue a career in government and non-governmental organisations, civic organisations, business associations, employers organisations, trade unions and business.

Considering the needs of Bulgaria's labour market seven years after the country joined the European Union, we believe that such applied skills and expertise are much needed. This assumption is based on the findings of a recent survey we conducted, *The Employers Organisations' Expectations Regarding Political Science at UNWE*. The survey respondents included managers and members of the management of sectorial and local branches of the Bulgarian Industrial Association, the Union for Private Economic Enterprise, the Confederation of Employers and Industrialists in Bulgaria, the Association of Industrial Capital in Bulgaria, and the Union for Private Bulgarian Entrepreneurs Vuzrazdane (see Tsakova (ed.), 2011).

The authors of the draft Master's programme are aware of the risks of the word "lobbying" appearing in the title of the Master's Programme. They stem from the ongoing discourse on lobbying in Bulgaria, which is mostly negative, lobbying being identified with corruption, influence peddling, and conflict of interest. The term "lobbying" is usually being used in phrases such as "lobbyist laws", "lobbyist amendments", "lobbyist interests", "lobbyist lawmakers", etc. to denote illegal and immoral exercise of power by persons holding a public office, who serve private interests. Regrettably, the border between public and private in Bulgaria is blurred, undermining the

democratic legitimacy of the government.

We, for our part, believe a positive discourse on lobbying in Bulgaria should be promoted, and a new Master's Programme, *Political Consulting and Lobbying* would help do so. It would treat lobbying activities as activities related to participation and involvement of stakeholders (public and private organisations) in democratic policy making. Lobbying and consulting are professional activities aiming to initiate political decisions or influence the amendment or repeal of existing legislation. In Europe, the concept is known as *lobbying through consulting*. The European institutions consult the civil society in the process of decision-taking, and this is considered *lobbying*. For sure, all attempts for lobbying influence on the part of organised business and civic interests has to be public, legal and legitimate – compliant with the public (common European) interest.

Another argument in support of promoting in Bulgaria a positive understanding of lobbying lies in the need to protect Bulgaria's national interests in Brussels through lobbying on the part of national and local authorities, employers and trade unions, business and civic organisations. As a member of the European Union, Bulgaria (represented by public and private organisations) should be involved in the initiation and drafting of EU directives, regulations, etc., and not just in their enactment.

### **I. An overview of the topics of the Master's programme draft**

An alternative term in English for *Political Consulting and Lobbying* is Public Affairs,

or Public Affairs Management. The Anglo-Saxon understanding of public affairs includes several interrelated activities: a) Legislative Monitoring; b) Professional Intelligence; c) Adopting a Strategy; d) Networks; d) Coalitions Building; e) Lobbying; g) Institutional Communications (Gueguen, 2008, p. 118). Obviously, lobbying is part of a broader area – that of public affairs. Probably that is why almost everywhere in Europe lobbyists prefer to be called *public affairs professionals*, or *public affairs practitioners*. In the UK the term *political consultants* is being used.

The Master Programme's title could be worded in a different way that would sound more neutral in Bulgarian, e.g. *Political Consulting, Public Management, or Public Affairs Management*. We, however, believe that the title should refer to the whole area of specialised professional activities which the programme graduates should acquire, i.e. - monitoring (of legislation); problem identification and analysis, coalition (networks) building, political communication activities, especially contacts with the media, contacts with politicians and public officials, advocacy activities, grassroots lobbying, etc.

The main aim of the Master's Programme curriculum is to reflect the evolving understanding of *politics* in the modern globalized world, the new notion of *public policy*. Apparently, public (democratic) policy is no longer limited solely to what state institutions, politicians and parties do but is seen as encompassing various interactions and power dependencies (especially networks) among various stakeholders – public and private organisations.

The Master Programme will also reflect the new meaning of *economics*, seen as *political economy* – a hybrid discipline between economic theory and politics. Political and economic systems are not isolated from one another but function within a single system comprising powerful economic actors that compete with each other to promote their interests before the government. The neoliberal globalisation and understanding of "*subpolitics*" (politics beyond the nation state, Ulrich Beck) have led to the outbreak of the global financial and economic crisis and the search for new solutions for future development with the active participation of the state, the market subjects and the civil society.

We will view political consulting and lobbying as a high-end management discipline bridging politics, economy and society. It contains elements of both legal counsel - its main task is to influence legislators or decision-makers - and PR as communication is essential to achieving this task. Lobbying is generally referred to as the practice of public affairs as lobbying involves the management of a stakeholder's affairs in public, hence the name "public affairs" (Geiger, 2006, p. 15-16).

UNWE is a leading Bulgarian university where the following professional fields are institutionalised: a) Sociology, Anthropology and Cultural Studies; b) Political Science; c) Public Communications and Information Studies; d) Law; e) Administration and Management - with sub-fields: Business Administration, Public Administration, Regional Development; f) Economics

- with sub-fields: Economics and Business, Applied Informatics, Communications and Econometrics in Finance, Accounting and Control. In our view, UNWE departments have the required capacity of qualified lecturers and researchers who could prepare courses relevant to the interdisciplinary issues covered by the proposed Master's Programme.

We have found very useful the experience of leading foreign universities in the field of public affairs. We present the Master's Programmes of four European and one American university – the London School of Economics and Political Science, Master of Public Affairs; Sciences Po, Master of Public Affairs; Italy's Luiss School of Government, Master of International Public Affairs; the Berlin University for Professional Studies, Master of European Public Affairs - Advocacy, Lobbying, Networking; the Columbia University, School of International and Public Affairs, Master of International Affairs.

Public Affairs tuition has an almost 40-year tradition in the United States, while in Europe the graduate programs in Public Affairs have been introduced in the past 10 years. Tuition in Public Affairs in the U.S. is an interdisciplinary subject and includes various social sciences such as economics, psychology, sociology, political science, planning, business administration, statistics, law, ecology, etc. It is perceived as a complement to the traditional field of public administration and political science (Mackelprang, Fritscher, 1975).

The Public Affairs curriculum (especially in Europe) has radically

changed over the past 10 years, reflecting the processes of globalisation and European integration and the new specific public relations that require elaboration of new paradigms to explain the institutional changes taking place. The traditional approaches and accompanying dichotomies are losing a great part of their heuristic potential. Firstly, the traditional distinction between policy making and policy implementation has become obsolete – nowadays the process of policy making predetermines the results of its implementation. Secondly, the traditional public/private dichotomy is increasingly losing its significance. Public policy is no longer seen as being limited to the activities of the state and its institutions. It is a product of a new type of collective action and of the growing interdependence of different actors - public, private, governmental and nongovernmental, local, national and transnational. Thirdly, the distinction between domestic and foreign affairs is disappearing in the context of globalisation and the advent of new information technologies.

The main mission of the graduate programmes in public affairs and management of public affairs is to offer interdisciplinary knowledge to explain and manage the processes in the new political, economic and socio-cultural situation in the globalised world. A review of the five Master's programmes shows that they all offer *mostly applied, and not so much theoretical, knowledge, organised around three main pillars:*

1) **Mastering of theoretical knowledge.** The Master's programme applied skills focus does not exclude,

but rather presupposes theoretical knowledge. The programme balances between economics, politics and sociology, focusing on comparative political economy and taking into account the role of the various administrations as well as network actors and stakeholders for the formation and implementation of public policy. There is a certain difference between the Anglo-Saxon and European (continental) models of this interdisciplinary collection of knowledge that is expressed in different understanding of the relationship between public and private. This different understanding is reflected in the five models of relations between the public and private spheres – a) interdependence between the public and private sector, b) public interventionism c) private interventionism; d) public-private antagonism e) public-private partnership (Rinus van Schendelen, 2010, pp. 33-37).

2) **Analytical skills and diagnostic abilities development.** Students learn to interpret, discuss and analyse social facts, processes and institutions, on solid theoretical basis. The aim of the programme is to make students not only analyse (with the instruments of political, economic, statistical analysis, etc.) the decisions taken (laws, regulations, etc.) and their effect, but to also produce alternative analysis, statements, expert assessments and policy papers that will underpin future legislation. The application of various analytical tools outlines possible solutions to various problems – both public and private, national and European, local and global. They are being solved through the

interaction and involvement of different stakeholders in the activities of local, national, European and other institutions. A key criterion for the success of public policies is their compliance with the common interest - the interests of all or at least the majority of citizens.

3) **Leadership skills and competencies for institutional entrepreneurship formation.** The Master's programme develops the ability to formulate and work out innovative policies. Successful policy formation requires leaders or institutional entrepreneurs, whose strategic and tactical actions unfold within public and private organisations and networks. Institutional entrepreneurs are business leaders, whose innovation (creativity) affects public institutions. Lobbyists within this specialised professional discourse are referred to as "political entrepreneurs."

## II. A Brief Overview of Master's Programmes In Public Affairs at five Leading Universities in Europe and the U.S.

### 1. London School of Economics and Political Science, (LSE), UK

In 2011, the Public Affairs Institute at the LSE was established as a multi-disciplinary initiative that brings together specialists from different areas aiming at tuition in public policy under Master Programme's flag in Public Affairs. The Master Programme targets to meet the educational market's emerging demands of highly educated specialists and professionals in the forming, analysis and implementation of policies, including

professionals in political decision-taking. The programme is focused on satisfying the needs of both public institutions and private sector for specialists capable to maintain relations with the authorities (Government Relations), specialists in political consulting and lobbying, in public-private partnership, consultants in planning and organizing advocacy campaigns, to maintain contacts with the media (Media Relations), with non-governmental organizations, business associations, specialists in organizing events (Event Management) and others.

The proposed interdisciplinary knowledge core within the Master Programme's framework is the knowledge of economics and politics. This becomes obvious by the planned compulsory subjects, covering mostly knowledge related to political and economic analysis. Learning process goes for two academic years and ends with a collective project – a Master's thesis called "Capstone" project.

The Master Programme proposes to the students a choice of five *specializations*: a) MPA Public and Economic Policy; b) MPA Public Policy and Management; c) MPA International Development; d) MPA European Public and Economic Policy; e) MPA Public and Social Policy. The mandatory lecture courses for all fields are: Microeconomics, Macroeconomics, Quantitative Methods and Policy Analysis, Organizations, Power and Leadership, Political Science and Public Policy.

The education in the first specialisation focuses on the economic and policy analysis of public policies, on basic knowledge of political science, basic knowledge in economics and



statistics. Compulsory discipline is Economic Policy Analysis. The second specialisation offers students knowledge about the process of decision making and public sector management and knowledge on the drafting of the state budget. Compulsory subjects are: Public Management - Strategy, Innovation and Delivery, Public Budgeting and Financial Management. The third specialisation focuses on the analysis of economic and public policies in developing countries, with a focus on the subjects of Development Policy and Management and Development Economics. The fourth specialisation covers European Union's issues and provides knowledge and skills for economic and political analysis at European level. Competencies acquired by Master degree graduates allow occupation of positions in European institutions, national administrative offices, the private sector and other structures interested in European legislation. A compulsory subject is Political Economy of Europe. Tuition in the fifth specialisation is concentrated on the economic and policy analysis of public and social welfare – with an additional compulsory discipline Welfare Analysis and Measurement.

Students at the London School of Economics and Political Science are given a broad range of disciplines to choose among, such as: Social Exclusion, Inequality and the "Underclass" Debate; Education Policy, Reform and Financing; Politics of Social Policy: Welfare and Work in Comparative Perspective; Environmental Problems and Development Interventions; Economic

diplomacy; Political Economy of International Trade; Comparative Political Economy; International Institutions; Anthropology of Economy; Nationalism, Democracy and Development; Network regulation; Cyber law; Globalization and Democracy; Comparative Public Policy Change; Legislative Politics; European Models of Capitalism; Europeanization: The Comparative Politics of Domestic Change, etc.

## 2. Sciences Po, France

This leading French university's Master Programme in Public Affairs lasts for two years and provides knowledge and analytical skills in regard to public affairs at the local, national and global levels, with an emphasis on comparative perspective. It includes courses in economics, quantitative analysis, political science, organizational sociology and public management. The Master Program curriculum has been reorganised and changed during the 2011/2012 and 2012/2013 academic years. This change both in terms of topics and organization is relevant, and we will therefore follow briefly what this change suggests.

Originally lectures were organised into *seven thematic groups*: the first - *Organizations and Leadership* (with disciplines: Situating Ourselves in Complex Settings; Scenario Planning; Management of Organizational and Institutional Conflict; Transnational Collective Action; Organizational Leadership and Ethics; the second - *Methods for Policy Making* (Statistical and data-Analysis for Policymakers; Seminar on qualitative research methods), the third - *Policy and Politics*,

which includes disciplines: State Restructuring and Political Change; Governing by Delegation; Comparative Public Management; From Analysis to Policy; Comparative Politics of Policy Reform; the fourth - *Economics* (Microeconomics for Public Policy; International Macroeconomics and Policy Making; Globalization: theory and evidence; Public finance and financial management; Research methods; the fifth thematic group *Law* (Global Management and Conflict Resolution beyond the State; Global Dimensions of Democracy and the Rule of Law); the sixth *Policy-making in Transition* (Policy-making in Transition: tools and strategies; European Union / Asia in a comparative perspective; Trade and development in Low Income Countries) and seventh *Critical Policy Challenge*" includes the following disciplines: Environmental Policy; Innovation Management in a Globalizing Knowledge Economy; The Role of Innovation and Innovation Policy in Economic Development Strategies; Risk Governance; International Health; Economic and Territorial Development; Human Security; Global Governance for Sustainable Development; Comparative and Global Social Policy and Governance of Welfare States; Generation of Individual Action in Synchrony/Asynchrony with Public Policy.

In 2013 the training program was organised in four semesters as each contains basic elective disciplines and the implementation of a research project. The first semester includes the following compulsory disciplines: Situating Ourselves in Complex Settings; Statistics and Data Analysis for

Policymakers - part 1; State Recruiting and Policy Change: government and governance; Microeconomics for Public Policy; International Macroeconomics and Policy Making; Foundational Proseminar: Understanding Ourselves as Public Affairs Actors. Elective courses are as it follows: Complexity Science: New Ways of Thinking for Policy makers; Policy-Making in Transition: Tools and Strategies; East Asian Political Economy in Transition; Trade and development in Low Income Countries; European Union/Asia in a comparative perspective.

Education in the second semester covers the following *basic* subjects: Study trip; Governing by Delegation; Comparative Public Management; Statistics and data Analysis for Policymakers, second level); Microeconomics for Public Policy - Level 2); International Macroeconomics and Policy Making - Level 2; Microeconomics for Public Policy, level 3). *Elective* disciplines (study courses) are: Management of Organizational and Institutional Conflict; From Analysis to Policy; Transnational Collective Action; International Health; Global Dimensions of Democracy and the Rule of Law; Scenario Planning; Capstone project.

The third semester includes the following *compulsory* subjects: Globalization: theory and evidence; Elective modules (one out of two disciplines) - Risk Governance; Multilevel Economic Governance; Global Governance for Sustainable Development; Economic and Territorial Development; Comparative and Global Social Policy and Governance; Human Security. *Elective* subjects: Complexity Science: New Ways of Thinking for Policy



makers; Policy-Making in Transition: Tools and Strategies; Trade and Development in Low Income Countries; East Asian Political Economy in Transition; European Union / Asia in a comparative perspective; Capstone project.

The curriculum for the last fourth semester includes mandatory lectures in Public Finance and Financial Management and the election of a study course from two groups: a) First group: Risk Governance; Multilevel Economic Governance; Global Governance for Sustainable Development; Economic and Territorial Development; Comparative and Global Social Policy and Governance; Human Security; Second group: Management of Organizational and Institutional Conflict; From Analysis to Policy; Transnational Collective Action; International Health; Global Dimensions of Democracy and the Rule of Law; Scenario Planning.

Master programme curriculum changes taken only in one year reflect the new realities of the national-state, regional and global levels and that require new ways of thinking and action. Some disciplines are dropped out and other, new ones appear. The new disciplines are: East Asian Political Economy in Transition; State Recruiting and Policy Change: government and governance; Complexity Science: New Ways of Thinking for Policy Makers. Instead of the seminar dedicated to qualitative research methods, a new seminar has been introduced - Foundational Proseminar: Understanding Ourselves as Public Affairs Actors. Lecture courses such as Organizational Leadership and Ethics, Managing Innovation in Globalised Knowledge

Economy, Generation of Individual Action in Synchrony/Asynchrony with Public Policy dropped out.

### **3. The Luiss School of Government (SoG), Italy**

This is the first of its kind Italian university which prepares specialists to be appointed at key positions in both the public and private sectors, key positions in politics and government. The aim is to provide the necessary theoretical and practical skills for good governance to future leaders in the field of legislative and executive authorities, in administrative agencies and other offices in the field of industry and commerce, in the activities of industrial and trade associations, civil society organisations, political parties, consultancy companies, research centers (think tanks), foundations, etc.

The Master Programme is entitled *International Public Affairs* and is designed for those who hold a Bachelor Degree in social and political sciences, law, history and offers the necessary theoretical and practical knowledge for managing the challenges of policy making in a globalised world.

Here are some of the *basic courses* included in the program: 1) Democracy and Global Governance; 2) International Regulatory Reform: A Focus on Energy Policy; 3) Processes of Democratization; 4) Negotiation and Diplomacy in a Globalised World; 5) Global Dimension of Democracy and Rule of Law; 6) Global Politics: Power Shift in an Age of Globalization; 7) The Other Side of Global Politics - Mobilising Strategies of Civil Society; 8) Collaborative Governance:

new approaches to decision making process; 9) Diplomacy and International Communication; 10) Regionalism and Global Governance; 11) Globalization and Europeanisation; 12) International Labour Law; 13) Policy through Law; 14) International Public Policies, 15) The International Role of the European Parliament; 16) The Logic of Decision-making in Public Administration and Private Organisations.

The lecture courses from the past study year that were eliminated from the Master Programme curriculum are: the European Approach to Policy-making and Its Global Impact; Statistics and Data Analysis in Public Policy; International Political Economy: before and after the 2008 Crisis; Labour Market and Welfare Policy: Globalization and Inequality, European Economic Crisis and Democracy Challenges.

#### **4. Berlin University for Professional Studies, Germany**

The Berlin University offers Master Programme, titled *European Public Affairs - advocacy, lobbying, and networking*. The Master Programme lasts two years and prepares professionals to be acquainted in excellence with the work of the European institutions and to be able to draft strategies for professional advocacy and lobbying on various public and private organizations at European level.

Tuition is conducted in six *major modules*: The first is *Principles of the European Union and International Communication*. Basic knowledge of public affairs, lobbying, public communication and advocacy is

provided. The second module is titled: *Institutions and Processes of the European Union*. It offers in depth knowledge of the EU institutions and the legal framework they operate within, respectively the European taking-decisions procedures with the inclusion (participation) of stakeholders, legal framework, legislative procedures and advocacy interventions methods in the European political process. Knowledge on how to identify the relevant European institutions and officials to whom to address the requests accordingly (of relevant stakeholders) is available. The third module is titled *Public Affairs in the European Union*. Students study political competition in the European public sphere, get familiar with advocacy practices at European level, public affairs strategies development - lobbying strategies in benefit of business players, public institutions or NGOs. The fourth module is called *General Management*. It provides knowledge and skills in management, corporate lobbying, project management, marketing research. The fifth is dedicated to *Personal Skills* and emphasizes on the broadening and deepening of personal abilities to work in multi-cultural environment. The sixth module covers the draft of the Master's thesis.

#### **5. Columbia University, School of International and Public Affairs, USA**

The Master Programme at Columbia University is International Affairs (Master of International Affairs). The program is designed with the aim to prepare professionals in the field of international affairs to understand well and get

oriented in the increasing complexity of various problems, going beyond the nation-state borders, and to ensure the management skills they need to apply their knowledge into real situations.

Among *the main study subjects* are: 1) Decision-making Policy; 2) Basics of International Affairs - Conceptual Foundations; 3) Economic Analysis; 4) Quantitative Analysis; 5) Public Management: Power of Social Innovation; 6) Financial Management; 7) Economic and Political Development; 8) Energy and Environment; 9) Human Rights; 10) International Finance and Economic Policy; 11) Applied Science;

12) International Media, Advocacy and Communications; 13) International Conflict Resolution; 14) Management of International Organizations

The purpose of this overview of similar Master's programmes at five leading universities is to prepare a comparative analysis of their curriculum content, based on the course titles. We have determined eight areas in which we grouped the courses - both compulsory and elective. We have added in the table a column with the suggested courses of our Master's programme draft on which we will elaborate further down.

UNIVERSITY	LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE		SCIENCE PO.		LUISS SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT		BERLIN UNIVERSITY FOR PROFESSIONAL STUDIES		COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY		UNIVERSITY OF NATIONAL AND WORLD ECONOMY LAUNCH PROGRAMME		
	Courses	Basic	Elective	Basic	Elective	Basic	Elective	Basic	Elective	Basic	Elective	Basic	Elective
Fields													
Methods for Policy Making and Assessment	2	0	3	2	0	0	1	0	4	0	1	2	
Democratic Policy and Comparative Politics	4	5	3	5	5	2	2	2	2	5	3	1	
Communication	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	3	
Law and Ethics	0	3	0	0	2	0	2	0	1	0	1	1	
Economics	4	3	5	6	0	1	2	2	3	3	2	6	
Leadership and Personal Skills	1	0	3	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	4	
European Affairs and Globalisation	1	3	1	2	3	3	4	3	2	0	3	1	
Lobbying	0	2	0	0	0	0	5	3	1	0	2	9	

The comparative table requires some explanations. Firstly, some of the listed courses could fall in more than one group. Secondly, the different universities offer a different number of compulsory and elective courses, which is why the numbers given in the table are not fully comparable. Nevertheless we believe they reveal the highlights of the curriculum content of the respective university. And thirdly, even though the topics covered by the Master programmes in the five universities is similar, each of them has a different focus, e.g. LSE highlights Democratic Policy and Comparative Politics and Economics, Science Po stresses Economics and Democracy, Luiss School of Government accentuates theoretical knowledge of Democratisation and Europeanisation, the Berlin University for Professional Studies concentrates on European knowledge and Lobbying, and the Columbia University is predominantly interested in Methods for Policy Making and Policy Assessment.

We have concluded that our draft Master programme is closest in terms of curriculum content to that of the Berlin University for Professional Studies with its focus on lobbying and advocacy, as well as to the Sciences Po and LSE with its stress on economics. This is understandable considering UNWE's economics-oriented specialties and Bulgaria's membership in the European Union.

### **III. Fundamentals of the Master's Programme and Suggested Curriculum**

#### **1. Abstract of the Master Programme**

The Master Programme *Political Consulting and Lobbying* is designed

for students, who have completed a Bachelor's degree in specialties from different professional fields - political, economics, administrative and management sciences, law and other social sciences. The leading unit in the organisation and implementation of the programme will be the department of Political Science or Political Science professional field at UNWE, but it may also be an interdepartmental endeavor.

The content of the Master program is interdisciplinary and practical skills-oriented as its core methodology and apparatus belong to the field of applied politics. However, the programme offers a mix of economics (economic analysis) and statistics, comparative political economy, management (public management - political, administrative and executive, financial management, etc.), comparative politics - especially comparative democratic public policies; EU issues and globalisation. Applied political science is treated as a set of theoretical methods, methodological principles, approaches, procedures and techniques for the practical application of political science knowledge and skills in order to achieve specific political effect in relation to the objectives and needs of the customer (client professional services) – government and non-government organisations.

The major part of the proposed courses is focused on professional activities in the public sphere (public affairs) and on specific activities of political consultants and lobbyists

(public affairs practitioners, public affairs professionals). *The proposed programme will help the students to:*

- Maintain relations with the authorities (government relations, parliamentary relations) for mutually beneficial exchange of information;
- Carry out activities to influence politicians and officials in the decision-taking process (political persuasion);
- Provide professional expertise that is useful for institutions as consultants - "providers", "assistants", "advisers" of institutions;
- Establish personal contact with decision-makers;
- Form informal networks of allies, partners (coalitions) to pursue specific interests and objectives;
- Engage with functional representation of organised interests (interests representation) – tripartite and bipartite councils.
- Conduct permanent monitoring on the activities of institutions and officials, government insiders;
- Create and maintain a positive image of an organisation (client of lobbying services); form a certain public opinion through media contacts (image making, public opinion formation, media relations);
- Organise advocacy campaigns and actions for mass support and social mobilization for certain social causes (advocacy campaigns);
- Organise special events - round tables, conferences, commercial fairs, receptions and others.

The programme examines the specifics of consulting and lobbying at national and European Union level. It acknowledges the fact that the

process of professionalisation of lobbying activities in the EU is in its very beginning, as well as the existing problems with the legal and ethical regulation of lobbying. Despite being highly valued and well-paid, political consulting services are still being viewed with distrust by the public and arouse suspicions of corruption and illegal interaction between politicians and consultants, acting in the best interest of their clients. This is why the programme lays a strong emphasis on the regulation of lobbying activities by legal (statutory) and ethical (recommended) norms reflected in laws, public records, ethics codes, green papers, etc.

For its great part, the Master programme will feature discussions focusing on: a) a comparative analysis of European and international practices in political consulting and lobbying aiming to tap their experience; b) the theoretical and practical aspects of a particular issue, the prescribed and the actual state of affairs, democratic publicity and "shadow government", etc. c) specific laws, public records, ethical codes, etc. pertaining to political consulting and lobbying in Bulgaria and problems arising from their implementation; d) activities labelled as lobbying which are detrimental to the public interest and issues of legitimacy/illegitimacy of governmental practices, corruption, conflict of interest, etc. e) development of specific case studies, models of

## Articles

lobbying strategies, media campaigns, advocacy campaigns to protect civil causes, scenario analysis, etc.

### **2. Content highlights in forming study courses**

The titles of the proposed lecture courses are exemplary and derive from the experience of the five leading universities in Europe and the United States, reviewed above. We have revised the titles of the subjects to better reflect the academic discourse and the conditions in Bulgaria, as well as to adapt the curriculum to the available academic capacity within the UNWE.

Suggested *compulsory subjects*:

- 1) State Power, Social Power, Democracy
- 2) Public Management
- 3) International Political Economy
- 4) Public Budgeting and Financial Management
- 5) Statistics and Data Analysis
- 6) Professional Profile of the Political Consultant and Lobbyist
- 7) Globalisation and the New Role of the State
- 8) Comparative Democratic Politics
- 9) Lobbying in the European Union
- 10) European Public Policy
- 11) Elaboration of a Lobbying Strategy
- 12) Media and Political Communications
- 13) Legal and Ethical Regulation of Public Affairs
- 14) Representation of Group Interests

Suggested *elective disciplines* (they could be grouped together into different modules):

- 1) Legislative and Administrative Lobbying
- 2) Citizen's Organisations and Advocacy

- 3) Policy Impact Assessment
- 4) EU Funding and Lobbying
- 5) Organisational Behavior
- 6) Macroeconomics and Public Policy
- 7) Microeconomics and Public Policy
- 8) Public-Private Partnership
- 9) Corporate Social Responsibility
- 10) Budget Advocacy
- 11) Image Management
- 12) The new Public Diplomacy and Lobbying for National Interests
- 13) The Discourse on Lobbying in Bulgaria
- 14) Bulgarian Think Tanks and the Global Networks of Influence
- 15) Organizational Leadership
- 16) Scenario Analysis
- 17) Management of Organizational and Institutional Conflicts
- 18) New Forms of Collective Action
- 19) Public Procurement and Concessions as Targets for Lobbying
- 20) Event Management
- 21) The New Public Management
- 22) Election Campaigning and Lobbying;
- 23) Social Economy and Social Policy
- 24) Coalitions and Networks as Instruments for Lobbying
- 25) Institutional Entrepreneurship
- 26) Formation of Public Opinion
- 27) Moral Issues in Politics

The expected results of the Master programme would be the following:

a) the *acquisition of basic knowledge* in the field of applied political science and political techniques; of economic theory (micro and macroeconomics), of political economy, public management, public budgeting and financial management, the European Union (institutions,



procedures, regulations, policies); democracy, globalisation, etc. and b) the *acquisition of skills* in political consulting and lobbying – analytical, diagnostic, organisational, leadership and communication. Analytical skills (political, economic and statistical analysis) will support drafting of statements, opinions, expert policy papers, etc. which can influence the adoption of laws and regulations. The organisational and leadership qualities which the programme will develop will help students conduct advocacy campaigns and create networks and coalitions to solve a particular problem in contact with the authorities.

Equipped with these theoretical, analytical and practical skills, the future political consultants and lobbyists will be capable of solving practical problems, providing professional services to their customers (institutions, organisations and companies) on specific issues that have local, national, European and even global dimensions. In other words, the Master's programme will provide the graduates competencies for professional development as *political advisors, analysts, mediators, organisers and consultants on political issues* in the offices of state institutions (bodies of legislative and executive authorities at national and local level) in civil organisations, political parties, trade unions, business associations, employers' organisations, etc., as well as in the EU institutions.

The Master's programme will adhere to the vision that in order to

be professional and effective, political consulting and lobbying should be legal (compliant with the law), legitimate (not causing detriment to the public interest), ethical (compliant with certain ethical codes) and public (registered in public records, green papers, etc.).

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