



30th anniversary

Hungarian Rectors' Conference



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

PROCSEE >

NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

Hungary

Executive Summary

The policy-oriented EU project PROCSEE (Professional Higher Education Excellence Program in Central and South Eastern Europe) aimed at positioning the knowledge-service roles of professional higher education (PHE) in line with the 21st century challenges. The work was carried out along four priorities. Experts and umbrella organizations of the seven countries participating in the project (Belgium, Czech Republic, Croatia, Hungary, Malta, Romania, Slovenia), after the diagnosis of the current situation and the future challenges, formulated proposals for EU and national political decision-makers which would be needed to implement in this large region of Central and South-Eastern Europe.

Strengthening the Regional Development Role of the Hungarian Professional Higher Education (Priority 1)

1. Proposed goals

1. It is needed to establish and operate a much closer, actually institutionalized system of cooperation among the regional stakeholder groups and the PHE in the regions.
2. In view of the fact that there could be more higher education institutions (professional and / or academic) in a particular region and may be interested through their knowledge services, it is necessary to achieve coordinated co-operation in contributing to the development of the region.
3. It is necessary to realize the substantial participation of PHEIs as knowledge centers in the development and implementation of regional development strategies in the region.
4. Involvement of PHEIs in the socialization of regional development strategies is indispensable because without the continuous mobilization of local social actors (social capital), meaningful and professional strategic developments are not possible.
5. It is necessary to harmonize the initiated dual education and regional development strategies, as the developments are stalled without adequate, qualified workforce (human capital).

6. At the same time, it is necessary to involve local / regional stake-holders in the development and implementation of PHEI's institutional development strategies as they must also respond to regional challenges.
7. In every countries, including Hungary, the social responsibility of higher education, including the PHEIs, and their involvement in the implementation of the regional sustainability paradigm shift is already a priority.
8. In the future, the central role of PHEIs as knowledge providers will be an inevitable task in the design and operation of regional knowledge and innovation networks.

2. Proposed operational program

1. Revision and formulation of HE-policies to encourage a regional mission. Responsible: Government, proposed deadline: 2019
2. Demonstrating a regional role in PHEI strategies. Responsible: PHEI, suggested deadline: 2019
3. Measuring the regional effects of PHEIs. Responsible: HRC, proposed deadline: 2020
4. Strengthening consciousness + communication of the regional importance of PHEIs. Responsible: HRC, PHEI, proposed deadline: 2019
5. HR policy reinforcing regional knowledge service competencies. Responsible: PHEI, suggested deadline: 2021
6. Developing Regional Educational and Learning Networks. Responsible: PHEI, suggested deadline: 2021
7. Strengthening PHEI competencies in identifying specific and changing local needs. Responsible: PHEI, suggested deadline: 2022
8. Strengthening regional and governmental co-operation in local development Responsible: Government, proposed deadline: 2019
9. Involvement of PHEIs in the elaboration and implementation of regional development programs. Responsible: Regions, proposed deadline: 2020
10. Strengthening mobility among PHEIs and the regional business sector. Responsible: PHEI, regions, proposed deadline: 2020
11. Launching joint leadership development programs with the participation of regions and PHEIs. Responsible: PHEI, regions, proposed deadline: 2020.
12. Development of PHEI governance structure involving regional stake holders, Responsible: PHEI, regions, proposed deadline: 2020

Promotion of the Professional Higher Education in Responding to Skill Shortages (Priority 2)

1. Summary for promoting PHE in responding to skill shortages

Companies should analyze requirements against higher educational programs and its outcomes (quality requirements system, aka 'KKK' in Hungarian) in case of the degree programs they are concerned. These required competences should be frequently updated in the requirement system ('KKK') based on the proposal of a consultative body consisting of the representatives of the industry.

People from the industry should also be involved into the higher educational program-, institutional accreditation processes, and curriculum assessment/development with a special focus on the learning outcomes, and they should also be actively involved in the final exams of the higher educational degree programs. Learning outcomes should also regularly be assessed and examined how relevant they are in certain professions. The result of the assessments also give input for skills-related developments.

The quality of work practice through the degree program should be improved, and developments should be based on the recommendations of students and industry people.

Establishment of a system for regular communication and cooperation between the higher educational institutions and the world of work would be crucial. A possible way is to involve industry partners in the governing bodies of the higher educational institutions. Universities should also be motivated to be more active in collaboration with the industry.

Relevant parts of the students gain work-experience before their higher educational studies. This practice should be taken into consideration throughout the students' studies.

2. Proposed operational plans

1. Creating close and meaningful partnerships between PHE institutions and other actors from the world of work (both public and private entities, including for-profit and non-for-profit sector). These partnerships will envisage all activities such as curriculum design, evaluation, assessment, practical training, permeability between industry and teaching career, research projects and other related activity of a PHE institution
 - PHE and a more profession-specialized knowledge (compared to the presently typical knowledge level of the newly graduated people) are welcome by the labor market
 - A special attention should be addressed to the development of new professions in line with automation trends
2. Improve data collection, analysis and reporting at institutional and system level aiming at the support of
 - evidence-based policy-making
 - the promotion of PHE
 - the increase of public awareness of the significance of PHE
 - identification of good practices, benchmarking
 - discovering study opportunities and their links to the world of work

Governmental guidelines regarding the types of skills to be taught in PHE should be backed up with the data collection and the outcome of the analysis. A way to improve data collection can be manifested in further development of the Hungarian 'Graduate Tracking System' (DPR).

3. In order to inform stakeholders about the competences of graduate students, it is needed to increase the transparency and comparability of
 - the provided and recognized qualifications
 - learning outcomes
 - the types and lengths of students' work experience
4. Establishing alliances and synergies among institutions of different levels and types to facilitate knowledge (cognitive and practice-based) exchange, resources exchange, the promotion of study programs and the creation of joint projects.
 - Permeability between the different levels of study programs should be enforced. There should be an option to get into higher education from Professional Secondary Education (VET), and also the opportunity to shift from BA degree programs to the lower level higher educational program, called 'FOSZK' in Hungarian, a one or two years professional program after secondary education. The latter option would lead the student to a professional shift while receiving a qualification, if he/she realizes that his/her professional ambition differs from the one being taught during his/her BA program.
 - Developing synergies between the different PHE strategies and societal initiatives is also very important. There are existing strategies that effect PHE, such as the 'Change of Pace in Higher Education' strategy, the 'Irianyi program' or the Industry 4.0 framework program, but they should support each other more.
5. Promoting Professional Higher Education to prospective students and non-traditional learners, as well as to the wider society by means of smart communication about the role and mission of PHE. Communicators should involve current PHE students, recent graduates, career counsellors and the actors of the industry.
 - Relevant parts of media coverage could help in proper streaming of information that would inevitably support families in decision making regarding the professional carrer of the youth.
 - Private institutions giving low quality graduates should be eliminated.

Organization and Monitoring Student Placements in the World of Work (Priority 3)

1. Summary

The ideal higher educational system reflects the needs of the labour market, and it is improving dynamically and constantly in response to the social-economical changes.

PHE institutions should provide high quality, world standard education and training on the given fields. This implies also a performance-based competition both among the Hungarian institutions and internationally, and also the fact that the Hungarian PHE sector covers all the knowledge-fields and levels with collaborating institutions in a network.

Interested, motivated, hardworking students have the opportunity to progress faster and further in their studies supporting each other. They are able to receive experience abroad, try themselves in the labour market, and they are able to join live business projects or basic research projects even during their studies.

Suggested main activities in the next years are:

1. Extend the activities of Student Service Centers in local and at national level.
2. Involve Alumni students into the education.
3. Creating experience-based quality tools.

Consequently, the main demands against the government are the followings:

1. To provide economic incentives (tax reduction, tax exemptions, mentor paying) for companies that are accepting students as interns.
2. Determine guidelines in the review process of requirements against all higher education programs with a special attention on the involvement of industry actors.

2. Proposed operational plans

1. Install / nominate a “manager” as an interface between the students, stakeholders and the world of work – in order to make him / her a “key-account manager” for the representatives of industries related to the study program and a “product manager” of the study program.
2. Involve students in the process of obtaining / applying for work placement and competing for the best practical training – in order to simulate the conditions on the labor market and to give students the responsibility of their own training.
3. Set up a committee structure at institutional level for strategy development, study programs and quality management, having regular meeting and a rigorous definition of roles – partners from industries related to the study program should be members in this committee.

4. Provide a framework for learning outcomes tailored for the work-placement, as part of curricula (the learning outcome are usually related to what students study inside the PHE institution, but it is needed to extend them, in order to include activities as the work-placement as well).
5. Create practical and quality tools (handbooks, manuals, database etc.) for stakeholders, students, mentors and tutors - it is important for mentors and tutors to become familiarized with pedagogical skills and communication skills, in order to be able to pass their know-how; also, students need guidance for acting as team players at the work-placement.
6. Establish alumni department with dedicated staff to manage alumni database and keep in contact - Alumni could be instrumental in recruiting pool for future guest lecturer and in facilitating work-placement for current students.
7. Implement a PR awareness campaign, targeting the employers, about the benefits of student placement.
8. Offer economic incentives (tax reduction, tax exemptions, mentor paying) for companies that are accepting students as interns.
9. Increase work-based learning/teaching in PHE institutions by inviting practitioners as guest lecturers, on a regular base - this measure should become part of a strategy.
10. Define policies for student's engagement in companies in order to enable the student to work in different departments during the placement period and, thus, to discover what suits his talents best.

Personalization of learning environments in Professional Higher Education (Priority 4)

In order to achieve success in the labor market possession of comprehensive lifelong learning competences is vital. Consequently, personal learning environments play a crucial role in acquiring such skills and aptitudes.

The present three-year consultation project emphasized that the concept of personal learning environment includes both types of instruction based on the students' physical presence and on-line work respectively. While digitalization supported activities are gaining increasing importance, knowledge acquisition cannot be limited to on-line environments alone. Throughout the project we kept this tendency in mind.

One of our conclusions was that the main challenge in influencing personalized learning environments is the lack of thorough knowledge regarding the respective concept and the relevant development methodology, mostly due to less than optimal levels of awareness, motivation, interest and commitment. Such deficiencies are partly due to a general mistrust toward new approaches to learning environments among the four parties concerned: the institutions, the students, the labor market, and the society. Therefore, any solution to this problem requires the commitment and creativity of these four actors.

Professionals of the field must have an open mind and be willing to develop methodologies capable of providing an effective answer to the latest challenges via monitoring and evaluating the learning process. Another important concept is the flexible design and support of such learning environments while retaining the flexibility of learning as well.

It is beyond doubt that a clearly defined and effective framework system facilitating interactive learning while adhering to the relevant governmental and institutional regulatory background is vital. Success is dependent upon modern educational materials and methodological training schemes aimed at not only instructors and students but also mentors supporting the design of personalized learning environments, and the management of the given institution.

Consequently, intending to meet the respective challenges, we developed a three-part proposal package addressing the levels of the EU, the general international arena, and the national educational sphere.

In line with the above, we urge the modernization of the ERASMUS mobilization framework system, in order to enable it to support distance learning-based personal knowledge and experience acquisition. Furthermore, we propose the establishment of a Common European Digital Course Repository functioning as a type of a catalogue helping students to explore or examine the distance, or blended training schemes combining on-line and physical contact, and facilitating enrolment in the respective programs of higher education institutions in the given member states. Moreover, the elaboration and application of a shared digital standard is indispensable for the development of personalized learning environments as well.

We also recommend the appointment of sector-specific specialists or experts responsible for the development of personalized learning environments in the practice-oriented higher education sphere. Furthermore, we insist on the importance of technological support adaptable to the given learner demands.

Regarding the international level, we propose the establishment of joint degree networks based on blended learning along with e-Learning schemes delivered exclusively via distance learning methods. Above said methodological renewal should be extended to internship programs as well. The realization of such objectives requires the development of shared accreditation procedures and the identification of currently available best practices.

The functioning of such scheme requires a uniform e-Learning system, based on the cooperation of the members of the institutional network. Consequently, students would be able to complete another course offered by a participating profession-oriented higher education institution. We also urge the expansion of the ECTS European Credit Transfer System to distance learning programs in order to promote the formation and sustainable operation of ERASMUS programs utilizing open and distance learning options.

On the national level, we believe the current felvi.hu website should be modernized and transformed into a National Higher Education Portal and Digital Knowledge Base performing a research and instruction support function while promoting the design and development of personalized learning environments.

At the institutional level, we recommend the formation and eventual implementation of the Competence Development Centre concept. Such centers, taking into consideration the local situation and features, are designed to provide support to students.

The realization of these objectives requires government level decisions reinforcing the legitimacy, financial background, and general support behind the development of personalized learning environments in the profession-oriented higher education sphere.

Edited in December 2018

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