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OBJECTIVES OF THE BOLOGNA PROCESS AND THEIR REALIZATION IN THE EDUCATION OF HUNGARIAN CUSTOMS OFFICERS

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Abstract

In line with the obligations of joining the Bologna Process in the field of law enforcement a modern higher education institute of a linear and multiple-cycle system came into existence in 2006, in whose first main training cycle it is possible to acquire a Bachelor's degree (BA) and a higher education law enforcement qualification. The second training cycle based on the first training cycle can result in a Master's degree (MA) and the law enforcement certificate verifying the MA degree.

Having acquired a BA qualification, the graduates can start their duty as officers, state or government employees for a law enforcement body or in the civil security sphere, or they can continue their studies in the Master's programme of the Police College¹ or that of the cooperating universities.

The future strategic objective is to develop itself on the basis of its own achievements as a multiple-cycle, Eu-conform, law enforcement institute of higher education, which is highly respected in Hungary and abroad and to ascertain the acquisition of competitive, excellent professional knowledge; the education of an intellectual law enforcement board which is committed to national and European values, to strengthen its features of a scholarly-intellectual centre, and to get involved in the adult training system more closely to provide the chance for lifelong learning to be periodic and objective oriented.

Keywords: Bologna process, higher education, Customs education, law enforcement education

Introduction

The aim of this study is to afford a review of the objectives appearing in the Bologna Declaration and to describe their effects in the national higher education with special regard to the particular segment of the training system: law enforcement/Customs higher education.

1. Transparency²

Probably this is the most important objective aiming simultaneously at the principle of transparency, which is vital from the point of view of the mobility of employees in the EU and the economic competitiveness of the EU as well as from the point of view of

¹ Since 1 January 2012 National University of Public Service Faculty of Law Enforcement

² Bologna Declaration: "Adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees, also through the implementation of the Diploma Supplement, in order to promote European citizens employability and the international competitiveness of the European higher education system. "

competitiveness of the higher education system of the EU.³ In 1997 the Lisbon Declaration already raised the issue of acknowledging the knowledge, the credits, and the certificates acquired in other institutions.⁴ At the same time this is a policy currently on the European agenda as the Declaration has not been ratified by several member states. In 2001 Hungary did so and passed an Act of Parliament of acknowledgement of degrees and certificates⁵ and the national higher education leadership took the necessary steps forward the application of certificate supplements and for the introduction of the Europass document-family, albeit only in the Bachelor and Master qualifications. Since 2006 a certificate supplement in English and in Hungarian has had to be issued free of charge in addition to the certificate.

The issue of the certificate supplements takes place also at the Faculty of Law Enforcement (FLE), but its real importance can be felt in cases of application to customer/host government organizations (the Police, the Prison Service, the National Tax and Customs Administration) or to Master's degree courses. The mobility of employees is accessible for graduates in the major of private security, and we must not forget that the National Public Service University was established on 1 January 2012, which may also raise the issue – as this is the main objective of this government action – of the possibility of acknowledging the degrees and credits acquired at one of the faculties of the new university and that of joining some further training at another faculty of the University at any stage of a civil servant career.

2. Multiple training⁶

The first training cycle is basically the stage of mass higher education; it serves to qualify the numerous specialists with a higher education qualification required by a modern economy, whose knowledge is directly applicable, thus satisfying the demands of practice. This forms the basis of university education (MA), which provides students with a more theoretical approach, and further the basis of the top of elite training, the PhD education. Having joined this system of education, the EU chose to use the linear system already existing in the Anglo-Saxon countries to leave the dual system used earlier. The linear system seems to be more effective, and flexible in satisfying the needs of the global economy for mass human resource. This has also been recognized by the leading economic powers of Europe. This system can ascertain adjustment to the changing demands and a more flexible adaptation, involving a large number of people in higher education at a lower risk, and the realization of student mobility among different institutes and fields. The system is pyramid-like; it is wider at the bottom, tapering upwards.

In line with the obligations of joining the Bologna process in the field of law enforcement a modern higher education institute of a linear and multiple-cycle system came into existence in 2006, in whose first main training cycle it is possible to acquire a Bachelor's degree (BA) and a higher education law enforcement qualification. The second training cycle based on the first training cycle can result in a Master's degree (MA) and the

³ Barakonyi, Károly, *Sorbonne-tól Prágáig: A Bologna-folyamat*, http://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&q=cache:7k1_q5MdZNwJ:unicum.sci.klte.hu/ttkar/bologna/barakonyi1.doc+barakonyi 2011.02.28.10.12.PM

⁴ Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region, Lisbon, 11.IV.1997. Section IV. Article 1.

⁵ 2001. évi C. törvény a külföldi bizonyítványok és oklevelek elismeréséről, illetve a 2001. évi XCIX. törvény a felsőoktatási képzéseknek az európai régióban történő elismeréséről szóló, 1997. április 11-én, Lisszabonban aláírt Egyezmény kihirdetéséről.

⁶ Bologna Declaration: "Adoption of a system essentially based on two main cycles, undergraduate and graduate. Access to the second cycle shall require successful completion of first cycle studies, lasting a minimum of three years. The degree awarded after the first cycle shall also be relevant to the European labour market as an appropriate level of qualification. The second cycle should lead to the master and/or doctorate degree as in many European countries..."

law enforcement certificate verifying the MA degree.⁷

A Bachelor's degree (BA) can be acquired in the specializations of Criminal Investigation; Economic Crime Investigation and Financial Investigation in the field of criminal management, and in the specializations of Corrections, Border Policing, Traffic Policy, Public Order, Customs and Excise Administration, Private Security, Administrative Policing and Disaster Management in the field of Policing Management.

Having acquired a BA degree, the graduates can start their duty as officers, state or government employees for a law enforcement body as a National Tax and Customs Administration (NTCA) or in the civil security sphere, or they can continue their studies in the Master's programme of the Faculty⁸ or the University⁹ or that of the cooperating universities.

The aim of MA programme to train such law enforcement professionals who will be able to carry out in the middle and high management positions in the professional knowledge of special fields like judicial, municipal, financial, correction, policing administration, disaster management as well as the NTCA, national security service and civil security. The graduates will be able to solve efficiently the management tasks in a frame of international cooperation too, furthermore to continue their studies with PhD research.¹⁰

After having received the MA degree graduates may start or continue their professional career at the law enforcement bodies as the NTCA or in the private security sphere or take part in postgraduate training courses at the Faculty or the University (e.g. that of forensic experts) or in other forms of training related to lifelong learning.

The FLE in all training level continues divided trainings which are eligible to the Bologna Process. The Doctoral School of Police Sciences and Law Enforcement was established in 2015, the first training year started in 2016.

3. System of credits¹¹

The above-mentioned objective is destined to create the facilities of the foregoing. It will support student mobility by loosening the time limits of the study period, by facilitating the possibility for students to modify their studies at a smaller loss, and by linking the forms of training related to lifelong learning with university studies. The Police College started to operate the training with a credit system in 2003, thus realizing the credit-based registration of studies one year before the deadline.¹²

The aim of a credit transfer system is to ensure the mobility of credits as proof of the knowledge acquired at a certain institute of higher education and with this to facilitate the mobility of students among the different institutions and countries. This system may also operate among training programmes, and among different modules and periods within one curriculum. Experience of recent years shows that the operation of the credit transfer as part of the credit system has faced some difficulties, primarily in acknowledging the credits acquired in other institutions than the parent institution, thus making student mobility insufficient. That is why we can talk about the students being bound to an institution.

⁷ Szabó, Andrea 2013, "The history of the Hungarian law enforcement higher education and its possible future objectives", *Customs Scientific Journal CUSTOMS*, 2013, No 2, pp. 77-83

⁸ Started in 2008, called Law Enforcement Manager. This was a big step forward in the history of the Police College because earlier university degrees could only be obtained at universities but the changes derived from the Bologna process have put an end to this exclusivity.

⁹ National University of Public Service (NUPS)

¹⁰ Szabó, Andrea 2017, "New direction in the field of Customs higher education – analysis and assessment specialization", *Customs Scientific Journal CUSTOMS*, Vol. 7, No 1, 2017, pp. 71-79

¹¹ Bologna Declaration: "Establishment of a system of credits - such as in the ECTS system – as a proper means of promoting the most widespread student mobility. Credits could also be acquired in non-higher education contexts, including lifelong learning, provided they are recognized by receiving Universities concerned."

¹² Blaskó, Béla 2005, *Rendészeti felsőoktatás – ma és holnap*, In: Belügyi Szemle, 2005/7-8, p. 42

4. Mobility¹³

The issue of mobility arises in connection with students as well as tutors. It is important that not only the flexible mobility of employees should be carried out in the European region but barriers should be broken down for every person in the European Higher Education Area. Having had an opportunity to study in an EU member country as students, employees will probably be more flexible and more easily adaptable. In addition, student/tutor mobility will have a significant impact on the formation of the European identity. Nevertheless this area – beside every favourable impact and development – must also face a lot of problems.

Mobility management is not without defects in Hungary despite the increasing mobility of students and tutors. Fundamental problems are “the differences between standards of living, the high costs of living which impede outward mobility, or at least have an effect of reducing the time spent abroad; the imbalance between the numbers of outgoing and incoming students as far as the countries of destination are concerned, the lack of detailed information provided by the institutions about themselves, about their training programmes and about the subjects which can be studied in foreign languages, as well as the lack of decent quality and customer-friendly student services (not only from the point of view of accommodation and meals, but also from that of the administration in foreign languages, of the administration of studies and of general information).”¹⁴

Promoting student/tutor mobility, providing foreign field trips, sub-studies, and professional practices – in connection with the Bologna Declaration as well - are outstanding priorities in the life of the Faculty or Law Enforcement. The Police College joined the programme in 2006 and within five years gained 243.890 Euro to support student/tutor field trips. The first steps were very difficult because on the one hand foreign partners had to be found, and on the other hand the arrangement of the programme had to be organized within the Police College, and new internal regulations had to be developed while the ones already existing had to be harmonized with the programme. It was difficult to find any foreign partners in the first place, because in contrast to other institutes of higher education only a few law enforcement higher education institutions have an accredited Bologna-type training or just a few of them have an Erasmus registration number, thus only universities of law could come into consideration as institutes with similar modules.¹⁵ Among the advantages of the programme we should mention the acquisition/practice of foreign languages, and the fact that participants can also get acquainted with the specialist language and with the professional activity of the foreign law enforcement agencies and tax and Customs authorities.

5. Quality assurance¹⁶

The mutual recognition of degrees is only one condition of transparency (i.e. that the content and applicability of the acquired knowledge should be obvious). It has at least the same importance that an independent institution should evaluate the training in the given institution and these evaluation institutes should operate under the same principles in the EU.

¹³ Bolognai Nyilatkozat: “Kreditrendszer – mint amilyen az ECTS rendszer – bevezetése, amely a legmegfelelőbb módon elősegíti a legszélesebb hallgatói mobilitást. Legyen lehetőség a kreditek megszerzésére felsőoktatáson kívüli, például az élethosszig való tanulás keretei között, feltéve, hogy azt felsőoktatási intézmények is elfogadják.”

¹⁴ Derényi, András 2008, *A Bolognai folyamat célkitűzéseinek magyarországi megvalósítása*, Áttekintés, Bologna füzetek 5, Tempus Közalapítvány, 2008, pp. 25-26

¹⁵ Forizs, Sándor 2010, *Az Erasmus program a Rendőrtiszti Főiskolán*, In: Magyar Rendészet, X. évfolyam, 2010/1-2, pp. 135-141

¹⁶ Bologna Declaration: “Promotion of European co-operation in quality assurance with a view to developing comparable criteria and methodologies.”

The 2003 Berlin announcement set forth that 'in accordance with the principle of institutional autonomy the institutions themselves have primary responsibility concerning the quality assurance of higher education'. This forms the basis of realistic accountability of the academic system within a national framework."¹⁷ This also supports the fact that today the quality has become one of the main objectives of the Bologna Process.

The Hungarian Accreditation Committee has taken over the standards put down in the document entitled 'Quality Assurance Principles and Directions for the European Higher Education Area' accepted at the Bergen meeting in 2005, and has declared them as expected standards for the domestic higher education institutes, although some elements of the internal quality assessment, - e.g. evaluation of tutors by students, evaluation of tutors and researchers' scientific activities - have been generally accepted for long without any consequences.

In accordance with the currently effective Higher Education Act the internal regulations of the institutions regulate the rules concerning the tutors' regular evaluation and their career progression. What is more, some institutions have their own conscious full-scale quality management system.

The quality policy determined by the Faculty of Law Enforcement and the quality assurance system and procedures conforming to the rules serve as a guarantee for the necessary quality of the knowledge acquired and the certificates issued. The professional presentations and attendance in lectures by the professional bodies of the customer, and their opinions on the topics and on the curriculum - form an important part of quality assurance.

The Students Union has an important role in every forum, for example at the meetings of heads of departments, in the Disciplinary Committee, in the Study Committee, in the work of the Senate, in the Student Committee of the Hostel is made up of students.

Talent care is considered one of the top priorities at the Faculty; promoting teaching assistant activity is a short-term-task, as well as giving opportunity to students for joining the Students' Scholarly Circle and it may be a long term goal to provide the supply of tutors.

6. European Higher Education Area¹⁸

"It is required from the European Higher Education Area - apart from the expectation to satisfy the mobility demand, which is based on the economy - to contribute to strengthening the citizens' EU identity, to protecting the European cultural heritage and to strengthening the leading position of Europe in world culture. Forming the EU identity, taking care of the European cultural heritage has to appear in education; as well as in the curriculum and also in multilevel interinstitutional relations."¹⁹

With regard to the intellectual values set forth in the 'Magna Charta of European universities and in the outstanding declarations of the Bologna Process, and to the Act on Higher Education and its own development strategy and mission statement, the Police College deems that its mission is to operate as an up-to-date institution with a modern, linear, multi-cycle training system resulting from the Bologna Process in the field of law enforcement. This institution must help to create a knowledge-based society with the utilization of its opportunities at the highest level. It must also strive to adapt itself into the European Higher Education Area as soon and as effectively as possible and to promote the EU harmonization of the customer law enforcement forces and the private security sphere.

¹⁷ Kozma, Tamás-Rébay 2008, *Magdolna: A bolognai folyamat Közép-Európában*, Oktatás és Társadalom 2, Új Mandátum Könyvkiadó, Budapest, 2008, p. 334

¹⁸ Bologna Declaration: "Promotion of the necessary European dimensions in higher education, particularly with regards to curricular development, interinstitutional co-operation, mobility schemes and integrated programmes of study, training and research."

¹⁹ Barakonyi, Károly, *Sorbonne-tól Prágáig: A Bologna-folyamat*, http://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&q=cache:7k1_q5MdZNwJ:unicum.sci.klte.hu/ttkar/bologna/barakonyi1.doc+barakonyi
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7. Lifelong learning

In line with the Lisbon-strategy it is set out as a strategic objective to create the possibility of lifelong learning (LLL) by more and more countries.

The domestic higher education institutions have further opportunities in this field; they have a chance to successfully enhance the number of adults participating in higher education and the number of non-traditional trainings.

The Act on Higher Education facilitated the entrance of these institutions to enter into the field of adult education, which provides for the stimulation of growth of the options in short-term training (various courses, further education and conversion courses) which can lead to acquiring a diploma instead of a degree.

There is a need for a change in attitude to make lifelong learning accessible not only for graduates within the framework of higher education. The participants in the domestic higher education have a narrow range of options for students studying with a full-time job in the field of professional training and further education. The harmonization of the learning needs of a wider sphere of interest with the higher education possibilities is missing.

The Faculty provides every possible form of postgraduate training for students by the terms and within the framework of lifelong learning (e.g. with the contribution of the Criminal Expert and Research Institute the further education training for the specialty of forensic expert)

Summary and concluding remarks

The future strategic objective of the Faculty of Law Enforcement is to develop itself on the basis of its own achievements as an autonomous, multiple-cycle, EU-conform, law enforcement institute of higher education, which is highly respected in Hungary and abroad and to ascertain the acquisition of competitive, excellent professional knowledge; the education of an intellectual law enforcement board which is committed to national and European values, to strengthen its features of a scholarly-intellectual centre, and to get involved in the adult training system more closely to provide the chance for lifelong learning to be periodic and objective oriented. It could be read in the mission statement of the institution. The training activity of the FLE – for the 40 years of existence of the institution – has continuously changed following the reforms in higher education, and the day-to-day expectations of the customer forces. The recent transformation of the College into a faculty of the new university may probably be considered the biggest change, which will have a long-term influence on the form of the institution, on its training and on the curriculum. In consequence of this change the MA training, which was difficult to interpret within the framework of a college, was able to find its proper place and it allowed founding the PhD school in Policing to fulfill the growing requirements. Examining the question from the point of view of the customer forces we can get to a very interesting result. Is it in the interest of the customer that its future employees should take part in foreign studies and the degree they can obtain should offer them the chance to move to other institutions and is it important to have a unified credit system? The interests of the customers are clear and explicit; to ascertain that well-qualified but - first and foremost - skilled employees should leave the Faculty with a degree and appropriate knowledge behind it within the shortest time possible, and start their job in the field of law enforcement and NTCA. My opinion is that there is a need for a change in the customer's perspective as well; they must realize the advantages of employees with foreign experience, – not to mention the language skills. And they must harmonize the development of the position-based human resources management systems with the training system.²⁰ By supporting quality assurance they should take part in professionally and financially supporting the training ordered by them more actively and in

²⁰ Magasvári, Adrienn 2017, "Position-based human resources management system in Hungarian public service", *Customs Scientific Journal*, Vol. 7, No 1, 2017, pp. 63-70

helping the students in carrying out their professional practice and their core values, professional, operational and management competencies defined by European Union Customs Competency Framework²¹,

and last but not least in supporting colleagues who have decided to participate in lifelong learning.

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²¹ Magasvári, Adrienn: "Pénzügyőrt keresünk... De milyen legyen?" Az EU vámügyi kompetencia-keretrendszere", *Magyar Rendészet*, 2016/3, p. 149