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Preface

Researchers, doctoral students, policy makers and university leaders from ten countries met on 16 and 17 June 2016 in Budapest at the second conference of the Central European Higher Education Cooperation (CEHEC) project to reflect on current trends and key issues in the region’s higher education. The conference, entitled “Distinctiveness of Central and Eastern European Higher Education,” was organized and co-hosted by the Center for International Higher Education Studies (CIHES) at the Corvinus University of Budapest and the Yehuda Elkana Center for Higher Education at Central European University. The aims of the CEHEC project are multiple. First, it wishes to create a forum for sharing experiences, best practices, models and for discussing challenges, progress and possibilities of academic collaboration and policy sharing in the region’s higher education. Second, it aims to build a professional network that can provide support to relevant stakeholders in higher education. Last but not least, the series of conferences that emerged from this cooperation seek to provide more visibility of Central and Eastern Europe in the global higher education landscape and recreate the attractiveness the region had in the 1990s for researchers and policy makers.

Conference participants debated whether certain topics and issues are particular to the region’s higher education and brought a local perspective to the major debates in contemporary higher education. Some of the invited keynote speakers represented higher education systems from outside the region and brought an external, comparative perspective to current topics in Central and Eastern Europe. Jonathan R. Cole, former provost of Columbia University and member of the CEU Board of Trustees, who opened the conference with his keynote speech, discussed the future of research universities in the US and also launched his latest book “Toward a More Perfect University” at the conference.

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The five articles published in this special edition of HERJ can be considered as a thematically and geographically representative cross-section of the scholarly and professional dialogue stimulated by the 18 papers presented at the conference. Whether focusing on a specific country - Hungary, Romania, Georgia – or on a region - such as the Visegrad Four countries - these papers address problems that carry an important significance beyond the immediate location where they were researched.

The authors employed a variety of research methodologies and approaches – rooted in disciplines ranging from sociology to economics – that show the truly interdisciplinary character of higher education studies. The collection includes papers that are based on empirical studies carried out by their authors, some relying on existing broader secondary statistical data, while others used primary data collected for specific research purposes.

The issues addressed in the papers - changes in national higher education systems, social changes triggered by the massification of higher education, predictors of adult skill proficiency, models of local community colleges, and policy perspectives on student success and dropout – although analyzed and presented as part of distinct case studies, are topics of interest to many scholars or professionals concerned with the major debates in contemporary higher education.
Reforms for the external legitimacy in the post Rose Revolution Georgia. Case of university autonomy

Elene Jibladze

Abstract

This article investigates higher education system-change in a region undergoing post-Soviet transition, specifically – in post-Rose Revolution Georgia. It considers the Bologna Process-inspired reforms that represent instances of transnational policy and institutional transfer into national contexts. On the example of university autonomy, the article argues that in Georgia, Bologna-inspired reforms were introduced in order to gain legitimacy in the global higher education arena. However, these reforms have produced a symbolic system-change and have created decoupled institutions. The findings of the article bare policy relevance to those post-Soviet transition countries that have embarked or plan to embark on transformative changes in their national (higher) education systems.

Keywords: university autonomy, post-Soviet transition, Bologna Process, transnational policy transfer, decoupled institutions

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Introduction

Higher education (HE) reforms that were launched by the Government of Georgia (GoG) after the Rose Revolution were largely framed by the Bologna Process. The country joined the Bologna Process in 2005 and the reforms that followed this affiliation were perceived as successful by both domestic and international actors (Crosier et al, 2007; MES, 2006). This analysis contests positive assessment of the reforms and suggests that while the reforms dramatically altered the institutional framework of HE in the country, they hardly contributed to the overall improvement of the HE climate in the country.

The main question that has been usually posed with regards to lack of development in the HE systems in general and vis-à-vis the Bologna-guided reforms in this region, is about seeking proximity of the local HE systems to the Western European educational models and explaining the challenges that hinder this approximation. The explanations that are provided in this regard, analyze internal factors that could hamper the progress in the HE system. The authors usually appeal to two factors: omnipresent corruption (Osipian, 2007, 2008, 2014; Heyneman, Anderson & Nuraliyeva, 2008) and strong Soviet legacy (Dobbins & Khachatryan, 2014; Heyneman, 2007; Silova & Steiner-Khamsi, 2008).

However, neither of these arguments are revealing when exploring the Georgian case since corruption was addressed during the state reforms and was considered as one of the uncontested successful reforms of the post-revolution government (Kupatadze, 2012; Mitchell, 2013). The preservationist arguments also run thin, given that the post-revolution government had made a conscious political choice to disregard, discredit and fight the Soviet legacies. This research suggests that the spectrum of the analytical tools should be refined by considering different internal factors to allow more accurate understanding of the challenges in the HE systems of the post-Soviet transition.

It should be highlighted that this research aims to understand the reasons for the discrepancy between the successful institutional transformation of the HE system and its poor results. The analyses explores the rationale behind the adoption of the reforms that were primarily concerned with the alteration of the institutional framework of the HE system and poses the following research question: why did the post-revolution government adopt Bologna-inspired reforms to transform the Georgian HE system? To answer this question, the case of HE reforms is situated within the globalization processes that diffuses neoliberal agenda across the countries and interprets the behavior of post-revolution government from the point of view of the state at the Europe’s periphery.

Literature that is dedicated to the HE system development in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) offers useful insights in this regard. The most common theme in the literature is Europeanization of the HE systems in this part of Europe and the role of the Bologna Process in this endeavor. The majority of works stem from the common
aim to address dual agenda of the CEE states' post-communist reconstruction and their EU accession. Here, authors largely assess the impact of the Bologna Process and its specific goals on the national HE systems (see Deca, 2015; Kwick, 2012; Leisyte, Zelvys and Zenkiene, 2015; Oprean, 2007;; Pabian, 2010;; Zgaga and Mkdavič, 2011 for selected country cases). On the one hand, the authors treat the Process as an opportunity for the HE systems to modernize and contribute to the CEE states' European integration (e.g. Zgaga, 2003; Pabian, 2010). On the other hand, there are Bologna-skeptics, who argue with disappointment, that the Process had a potential to act as a HE system transformer in this region, but the authors of the Process did not fully explore this opportunity (e.g. Kwick, 2004). On a more critical note, the authors recognize the coercive economic agenda behind the Bologna Process that is in line with the global neoliberal agenda (See Kwick, 2004; Neave, 2004, 2012; Tomusk, 2007).

While this body of literature is informative in revealing the complexities of the HE system change in the countries of post-communist transition and critically assess the role of the Bologna Process in the formation of the HE system, authors largely emphasize the coercive nature of the Process, but neglect the voluntary institutional transfer. However, the distinguishing feature of the Georgian case is that the post-revolution government deliberately embarked on the neoliberal reforms. The GoG enthusiastically shared the neoliberal idea of knowledge economy and viewed education as a root of Georgia’s economic development.

Moving beyond the argument of the coercive nature of the globalized neoliberal script, this research anchors its argument in the Sociological Neo-institutionalism, specifically world society theories. The argument of institutional emulation is well elaborated here and suggests that the states and policy makers are enculturated in the neoliberal discourse and voluntarily opt for the neoliberal reforms (Meyer, 2015). The primary motivation of the states (especially at the periphery) to adopt transnational policy models (Bologna Process-inspired educational models in this case) is to gain legitimacy at the global political and economic arena (Meyer, 2000). However, new institutions that serve as transnationally created models neglect the national context. Therefore, institutional reforms only symbolically change the systems and in reality create decoupled institutions.

Based on these considerations, the author argues that Georgia as a state at Europe’s periphery chose to join the Bologna Process to ensure institutional proximity with the educational models that were promoted by the Process and in this way gain legitimacy in the common European Higher Education Area (EHEA). Consequently, the Georgian HE system has indeed gained high institutional proximity to its Western prototypes, however it has failed to address the reality of its own, thus creating decoupled institutions in the system (Jibladze, 2016). Using the example of the university autonomy reform, the research establishes that the policy makers have introduced the legislative changes to accommodate the rhetoric employed by the Bologna Process on promoting ‘impartiality with accountability’. Furthermore, it was analyzed whether the university
autonomy, as an institution is decoupled, as it is suggested by the world society theory in the context of policy change aiming at external legitimacy.

**University Autonomy - Analytical considerations**

The authors who write about the neoliberal pressures and influences of market logic in HE, treat university autonomy as an amalgam of the Western idea of the University, which is an impartial knowledge generator and transmitter (Neave, 2012) and ever so increasingly popularized idea of the HEIs as autonomous, self-sustained actors on the competitive market (Lynch, 2004; Naidoo, 2008). As mentioned earlier, the institutions that are carriers of the neoliberal norms present the main interest to this research. From the point of view of policy transfer, university autonomy represents a transnational construct that was introduced in the Georgian HE system through the Bologna Process. University autonomy reforms are discussed through the lenses of the world society theory.

The World Society theory argues that states decide to transfer the transnationally promoted models of education domestically, seeking legitimacy in the global educational arena. While doing so, the states overlook whether these transnational educational models match the local context (Drori et al., 2006; Meyer et al., 1997). The quest for legitimacy does not necessarily aim to address the issues that exist in higher education, but it intends to create a framework that is easily recognizable to, and acknowledged by Western European actors. Thus, creating locally decoupled institutions, which only symbolically meet the external expectations (often manifested in the structural similarities), but serve a different purpose domestically (Meyer et al., 1997). The authors assert that during the globalized policy adoption the context is neglected in favor of the universally acknowledged institutions, therefore, the reformed systems end up being locally decoupled. One of the main manifestations of decoupling is symbolic change, which is when institutional frames are aligned with the globally promoted prototypes, but the purpose of the institution does not match the purpose of its global prototype (Meyer, 2000). In order to assess whether the university autonomy reforms produced decoupled institutions, brief conceptual clarification needs to be made regarding the purpose and intuitional frame of the university autonomy. Below, the conceptual toolkit is put together mainly based on the definitions of the *university autonomy tool* devised by the European University Association (EUA).

There is no one precise definition or understanding of university autonomy. However, scholars unanimously treat university autonomy as an ultimate principle of HE governance and acknowledge that university autonomy is multidimensional. This is maintained by all of its interpretations (see Bladh, 2007; Henkel, 2007; Neave, 2006). Moreover, the EUA shies away from providing a definition, but describes university autonomy as the relation between the state and the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and the degree of control that the state exercises towards the HEIs (Estermann & Nokkala, 2009; Estermann et al., 2011). With the rise of importance of the Bologna
Process, the attention toward university autonomy grew at the policy level within the signatory countries. The association has developed the *university autonomy tool* that identifies four main dimensions of autonomy. The tool considers the multiple voices that discuss university autonomy and reconciles them in the main elements of each dimension in a coherent manner. These four dimensions are: organizational autonomy, financial autonomy, staffing autonomy, academic autonomy (Estermann & Nokkala, 2009, Estermann et al., 2011). Therefore, the combination of these dimensions comprehensively describes the relation between the state and the HEIs and the degree of control that the state exercises towards the HEIs.

This analysis is guided by the four dimensions of the University Autonomy Tool of the EUA. However, all four dimensions could not be accounted for separately, such as those that were not reflected in the legal framework that governs HE. More specifically, in Georgian Higher Education Law, while *organizational autonomy* is substantially presented as the main state priority (Law on Higher Education 2004, Article 2, Section b), less attention is paid to academic and financial autonomy, and staffing autonomy is hardly captured. As a result, this analysis is based on three dimensions of the university that are defined in accordance to the University Autonomy Tool. The *organizational autonomy* refers to the ability and the authority of a HEI to determine its own goals, appoint its governing body, and choose and employ its faculty and staff (Estermann et al., 2011). For the purposes of the analysis, elements of the staffing autonomy were integrated with the organizational autonomy, treating the prior as an important, but a composite part of the latter. The *financial autonomy* refers to the capacity of the HEI to acquire and allocate funding, to set tuition fees, and to own and manage buildings/infrastructure (Estermann et al., 2011). *Academic autonomy* is the “capacity to define the academic profile, to introduce degree programms, to define the structure and content of degree programms, (...) and the extent of control over student admissions” (Estermann & Nokkala, 2009, p. 32).

The analysis that follows is presented according to three dimensions of the university autonomy presented above. First, the analysis compares the main purpose of university autonomy in Georgia with that promoted by the Bologna Process. At the instances when purpose of the university autonomy diverges from that promoted by the Bologna Process, the rationale behind the policy makers’ choice of not following the original purpose of the institution is analyzed. In the same manner, the structure of university autonomy is also discussed in juxtaposition to the three-dimensional autonomy model and the reasons of divergence are explained.

**Data collection and research methods**

This is a qualitative study, which covers the first six years of the HE reforms in the country (2004-2010). Two methods were used to collect the data: document analysis and in-depth interviews.
The launching point of this analysis is the Law on Higher Education of Georgia that was adopted in 2004. Findings in the Law are supplemented with the secondary literature on the university autonomy reforms in Georgia. These mainly represent the governmental reports, as well as analytical accounts of the international and transnational organizations, such as United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Bank and United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

While the base of documents revealed the structural determinants of university autonomy, the interviews aimed at investigating the role of local actors in the reform. Forty in-person interviews were collected mainly during three visits in Georgia in 2010-2011 years. Representatives of top and middle management of the Ministry of Education and Science (MES), top and middle management representatives of the National Education Accreditation Centre (NEAC) and of the five state universities included in the analyses were interviewed; third party representatives – NGOs and HE experts – were also approached.

The interview guide had two kinds of questions: descriptive questions and explanatory questions. The first aimed to collect accurate information to bridge the gaps in the six-years of HE reforms that were not reflected in the analyzed documents. The second type of questions was seeking for interviewees’ interpretation of the reform processes. All the interviews were conducted in the Georgian language. Collected material was analyzed by the ATLASit. The interviews were coded in two steps. First, by topical coding, where main themes that the interviewees deemed important were identified and an extensive list with the corresponding quotes was created. Later on, these themes were submerged into larger topics. Analytical clusters were identified in the second phase of analysis.

**University Autonomy as part of the HE system decentralization**

In order to understand whether an institution is decoupled, this section discusses the main purpose of university autonomy in the Georgian HE system. Moreover, the structural elements of university autonomy are identified, and the policy makers’ reasons to introduce the concept and policies with regard to the university autonomy are explored. This is done in order to establish whether university autonomy was introduced to institutionalize the principles of ‘impartiality with accountability’ or to gain legitimacy at the European Higher Education Area.

During the field work, the purpose of university autonomy as of a generic principle of HE governance was explored first. Secondly, the policy makers’ perceptions concerning the separate dimensions of university autonomy were collected and analyzed to see how much they were aligned with the articulated purpose of university autonomy. Furthermore, the main elements of the structure of each dimension were assessed.

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4 Five out of 15 state accredited universities (according to the 2010 NEAC data). Three in the capital and two in eastern and western centers of the country.
Lastly, the set of variables for each dimension of the autonomy developed by the EUA in the University Autonomy Tool was used to guide the analysis of the collected material. However, these indicators were not strictly applied to the analysis, for measuring the level of university autonomy falls beyond the scope of this article.

Organizational Autonomy: decentralization under supervision

The Law on Higher Education provided legal bases for the HEIs to carry out administrative, financial and academic activities independently, without state intrusion. In the law, autonomy is defined as “freedom of the HEI and its main units to independently decide and implement its academic, financial and economic, and administrative activities” (Law on Higher Education 2004, Article 2, Section b). Furthermore, the law introduced principles of HEI governance by separating academic and administrative functions, and establishing separate decision making bodies - the Academic Council and the Senate. The law established that a Rector is an elected figure, and sought to ensure student' involvement in university governance (Law on Higher Education, 2004). The law’s content thus fully corresponds to the building elements of organizational autonomy proposed by the Bologna Process and reinforced by the EUA reports.

However, in the Georgian HE system the structural elements of organizational autonomy were not necessarily linked to the declared purpose of organizational autonomy. Although the law established the HEIs as autonomous governing actors, at the same time, it created a rigid legal framework to guide the autonomous action. The elements such as organizational set up, division of functions between decision making bodies, quota for the student representation in the decision-making bodies, the election rules of decision making bodies and an executive head (rector) were defined in the law to the point of procedural nuances. Hence, the statement about the organizational autonomy of the HEI and the level of detail to which the granted autonomy was regulated clashed.

This contradiction is well observed in the example of the rector’s elections. For instance, sub-section 2 of Section 22 reads: “the academic council elects the rector with a secret ballot, with the majority of the vote. Duration of the rector's term in service is defined by the statute of the HEI. The term should not exceed the duration of the council’s term of operation.” (Law on Higher Education, 2004, Chapter 4, Section 22, sub-section 2). Sub-section 3 goes into greater detail: “the academic council announces the call for applications no later than 1 month before the registration and no later than 3 months before the elections ... carried out in accordance to the principles of transparency, impartiality and competition” (Law on Higher Education, 2004, Chapter 4, Section 22, sub-section 3). Sub-section 4 defines that a candidate can serve only for two terms and sub-section 5 defines the circumstances under which the head of administration can be elected as a rector. The list continues. A university faculty member expressed concern that the detailed provisions in the law only changed the organizational makeover of the
HEIs, however the ministry took away the leverage of the autonomous action from the HEIs and maintained the centralized command:

Adoption of a very detailed higher education law, which defines how the dean should be elected, what should be the framework of the faculty [academic department], etc. ... this is a major issue! First, it constrains the autonomy of the university. But secondly, it constrains the capacity of participation in the decision making [in the HEI]. Even if these are centralized [at the HEI level] decisions (R3-HEI1).

Therefore, these detailed provisions in the law took away the possibility for the HEIs to exercise self-governance. I term this state of affairs as decentralization under supervision.

Organizational autonomy reforms fell under the government's rhetoric of creating a small and efficient government through de-regulation and decentralization. Reorganization of the state HEIs was a product of decentralization of the HE system and, as it is discussed below, the policy makers' decision to decentralize under supervision was purposeful. Policy makers were mainly driven by two reasons in their approach. The head of the law department at the MES (in 2004) was well aware that the HE system that they had put together in 2004 did not leave much room for independent action. Thus, she very clearly explained the aspirations and the rationale of the policy makers' decision to decentralize under supervision:

The system that was designed was quite rigid and applied to all universities. ... We had to create a system that had never existed before. Professors did not have enough information on how universities were governed abroad. ... In absence of previous experience of [and awareness about] the civic responsibility, there was a fear, that [HEIs] would not be able to bear this responsibility, unless the law regulated the process of the reform implementation in detail. (R42 - PA11)

Effectively, during the phase of policy design, policy makers faced the problem that the democratic institutions as well as the experience of democratic action were absent in the HEIs. Consequently, they decided to introduce the democratic institutions but accompany those with the authoritative means to ‘educate’ the HE community to an appropriate action. The new government was well aware that the window of opportunity for the system's transformation was only open for a limited amount of time. Therefore, many of the principles that the policy makers found necessary for the system to develop in a healthy manner were overshadowed by the practical circumstances of the short-time frame. This is the reason, why the former Minister of Education (in the office in February-December, 2009) did not find it surprising that the principle of university autonomy was compromised during the reforms:

Autonomy was not a priority in the first years of the reform. On the contrary, it was suspended, because the priority was to transform the system in a short time. (R37-PA6)

This reason was coupled with a mistrust of the policy makers toward the HEI community’s capacity for positive change. It was manifested in the 'problem of rectors',
as a majority of the interviewed policy makers labeled it. As one of the main figures at the MES explained, before the revolution the ministry faced an unresolved problem of the state university rectors. The rectors had privileged position in the HE system and governed the universities according to their private interests. They were under the personal patronage of the President Shevardnadze (in the office from 1995 to 2003). Thus, over the course of the following years the state HEIs became closed systems that did not practice any accountability measures towards the state (or wider public for that matter). It was believed that they were involved in various corruption schemes even going beyond the practiced favors in admission. The common example was the use of university-owned premises to operate business enterprises that were owned by the rector's families. This situation lingered until the 2003 revolution, when the power flux created a window of opportunity to confront the rectors.

The problem of corrupt rectors was framed as a political threat to the legitimacy of the new government and thus, to the political stability of the country. In the interviews, some of the policy makers were of the opinion that the rectors had created political hubs in their universities, hence they could manipulate the students against the government. Therefore, it was important to remove the political undercurrent from the HEIs. According to the second Minister of Education and Science, the HEIs needed to be free from ideology and this was accomplished by the new government (R7-HEI2). In other words, at the system-level the awareness of what was happening within the universities did not exist before the revolution. For this reason, the number one problem identified by the policy makers was to shake the ‘feudal dominions’ of the rectors and subsequently, turn the HEIs into manageable organizations (R7-HEI2).

Overall, decentralization with supervision was justified because of the time brevity and institutional fragility of the newly built system. At the same time, the mistrust for the HEI community not to abuse the decentralized system convinced the policy makers to maintain the rigid legal framework. However, it is more important to note that regardless of the legal framework’s peculiarities, in practice both ministry as well as the HEIs compromised the principles of organizational autonomy. Local expert, involved in the reorganization of one of the state universities pointed out that legal framework and the reality in the HEIs were decoupled.

De Jure you have everything (in order). Councils hold meetings. They raise hands (to vote). Someone’s for and someone’s against. You have all documented in minutes... but [...] on paper everything is fine, while the reality is different. (R44-LExpert 2)

The election process had been repeatedly contested by the involvement of the MES. In 2005, the state HEIs had to start the reorganization process according to the provisions in the new Law, which stipulated that by 2007 all the state HEIs had to create representative decision-making bodies and elect the rector (Law on Higher Education 2004, Chapter 14). In the process, those rectors that had held the positions before the
revolution, were dismissed and the Minister of Education and Science appointed interim rectors.

Within one month after the appointments, the first elections took place. In all five state universities included in this analysis interim rectors were the only candidates to the position of an executive head of the HEI. Subsequently, they were elected by the academic council. Therefore, in contrast to the former deputy minister’s statement that the rector’s elections increased the autonomy of the universities (R38-PA7), HEI representatives thought otherwise. One of the policy makers and currently, a faculty member of a state university shared his observations that what was provided by the law, was overridden by the government itself.

The rectors of the universities are (meant to be) elective bodies. In reality, the state still partakes in it. For instance at Georgian Technical University (as well in others). Therefore, (HEIs) are not actually independent. They depend on 1. funding, 2. political weather, 3. rectors that are (at first) appointed (by the ministry) – later get elected (by the academic council). [...] the process is not political but is influenced by the politicians. For instance, last year, firing of one rector (provides the name) met high resistance, because he had a strong lobby (from the politicians). (R10-HEI2)

The same perception is confirmed in different ways by the representatives of other HEIs. The expectation that the state would informally intervene and override the formal rules that the government instituted itself, was confirmed for many. It was believed that these dismissals, or new appointments were not initiated from within the universities, but from the outside. Consequently, this created mistrust among the faculty as well as within the representatives of the non-governmental sector towards the ministry’s genuine intentions to decentralize the HE system and ‘set the universities free’ (R7-HEI 2, R43-LExpert 1, R44-LExpert2).

The inclination toward increased regulation of the HEIs was apparent in the interviews. The former Deputy Minister explained that if there were certain deviations in the newly created HE system, those were usually addressed by issuing additional decrees (R42-PA11). The former Head of the national QA agency justified the central government’s close supervision of the HEIs with a sentiment that without their guidance, the universities acted as ‘abandoned children’ (R33-PA2).

In turn, the HEIs practiced compliance, which reinforced the government’s conviction that the HEIs were still too fragile to assume autonomous action. As discussed earlier (pp.13-14) governing bodies never actually became decision-making units at the universities. The division of power hardly materialized and the university remained an oligarchy where the authority of the rector was supreme. With constant intrusion of the MES in the election processes of rectors in the state universities, the illusion among the HEI representatives that the state intended to withdraw vanished, and HEIs adhered to the centralized rule of the MES.
In essence, the HE system was established with the formally decentralized HEI structure that lacked organizational autonomy. Policy makers formulated the legislative framework in a preventative manner to avoid errors in the fragile system at the expense of actual organizational autonomy.

To summarize, organizational autonomy is locally decoupled, as its main purpose was to breach the oligarchy of the rectors in the state HEIs. This was accomplished with the decentralization of the HEI’s organizational structure. Effectively, the purpose of the organizational autonomy did not match the Bologna Process prototype. However, the main structural elements of the organizational autonomy were present in the system and in the case of university autonomy, the decentralization mechanisms were labeled as (organizational) autonomy. For the policy makers, decentralization was a measure to minimize the risk of accumulating the power in the rector’s hands. Therefore, it was not the autonomy, but the closely supervised decentralization of university life.

**Academic Autonomy**

In this section attention is paid to the ability of the HEI to manage its own academic content and its capacity to decide on the number of students and the admission criteria (Estermann & Nokkala, 2009; Estermann et al., 2011). According to the law, the state ensured “freedom of an HEI to determine independently its strategy, methodology and contents of teaching and research” (Law on Higher Education 2004, Section 1). This statement did not include the elements such as student admission, introduction of academic programs, nor the language of instruction as part of the academic autonomy. One of the policy makers considered that since the HEIs could manage their own teaching plans, it already provided considerable 'academic autonomy' to the institution.

> If we look into the law of Soviet times, it will become clear that the academic [teaching] plan was developed by the ministry. Now this is no longer the case. The ministry set the universities free (R7-HEI2).

The interviewee views the matter of the academic autonomy as part of the overall decentralization policy. The decision that the ministry was no longer in control of the academic plans of HEIs was a step forward in the decentralization process and not particularly, towards ensuring academic autonomy, however this was sufficient for the decision makers. The discussion with the policy makers did not go further than this regarding the academic autonomy, as they considered it premature to be concerned with the academic autonomy before the institutional transformation of the HE system.

Policy makers were disproportionately concerned with and focused on the institutional problems of the HE system. As discussed in the previous section, problems such as corrupt rectors were considered of the highest priority thus the need to build a transparent, efficient and accountable HE system was also emphasized. This was complimented by the poor education quality in the HEIs. The academic programs lacked structure, the courses were redundant, program offerings were outdated, and many of
the programs simply had no counterpart in the international education space. As respondents explained, the academic offerings were catered to the individual professors, their availability and expertise which, at very least, compromised the coherence of the academic programs (R44-LEXpert 2; R1-HEI1; R5-HEI1). Faced with this challenge, policy makers considered it most important to bring coherence to the academic life. One of the policy makers shared his assessment of the situation in the Georgian HEIs by 2004:

*It was not important for the universities how teaching or research was developing within the institution. In fact, state did not demand much either. Thus, no one asked for, for instance, course content. Secondly, it was vague, how learning was recognized. There was no measure for it. While I think that the number of credits is a superficial measure to grant a degree, it is still better than nothing. One department claimed one thing and the other one claimed [something] completely different. (R10-HEI2)*

A policy solution to address the issues of poor education-quality was creation of the quality assurance (QA) system. In Georgia, QA system was set up according to the basic recommendations of European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA). External QA was provided by the independent body – the National Education Accreditation Centre (NEAC). The QA process was guided by the QA criteria; HEIs’ self-assessment as well as the peer-review was based on these very criteria; HEIs developed internal QA processes. Ideally, independent QA system would be one of the guarantors of the academic autonomy (Estermann et al., 2011). Except, in the Georgian HE context, independent NEAC maintained subordinate relations with the MES and assumed the role of a state regulator. As the collected evidence shows, policy makers continued to introduce system-wide policies that would standardize and closely regulate HEI life. The QA system became a tool to create a level playing field among the HEIs. One of the former deputy ministers explained that through QA it became possible to move from the outdated teaching practices toward student-centered learning.

*The primary aim (of the QA) is to reorganize teaching planning process. So that the student’s work load and the professor’s work load were somehow balanced in the course. Creation of internal QA units improved teaching processes in the HEIs. i.e. what should be the number of credits for a course? How should the (course) components be distributed? – these all are controlled by the QA (R38 - PA 7).*

Through the criteria of the institutional accreditation, the policy makers aimed to create a situation where academic programs would be comparable within the country, as well as outside. In order to ensure coherence, the policy makers used the standardization tools of the Bologna Process. Thus, the academic life was reorganized according to the three-cycles, program offerings were calculated in credit/hours, in accordance to the European Credit Transfer System, and in terms of curriculum development the focus was made on the learning outcomes. These tools were articulated in the accreditation criteria and the HEIs were assessed according to their conformance to those. In this manner, QA system as a state standardization tool, suspended academic autonomy.
In its turn, internal QA units at the HEIs acted as enforcement units of the NEAC's regulations. The law on higher education obliged public HEIs to create QA units. According to the law, QA units aimed to regularly assess the quality of teaching, research, and to foster professional development of the academic personnel. QA units had to also increase transparency of the HEI's operations. In addition, they were to assist the HEI in self-assessment process and prepare it for the external review (Law on Higher Education, 2004). As many describe in their interviews, QA units started to organize university life and brought in elements of accountability to the HEIs where the authority of professors was never questioned. A local expert shared insights from her experience as a head of the QA, where she considered the interventions of the QA unit to leave a positive mark on the university life:

> When the QA units (in the HEIs) were created, professors realized that someone actually reviews whatever they write. Previously, when we were writing annual reports, we had cases, that they (professors) were submitting the same document repeatedly. They were only changing the cover page. That’s because there was no one to read it. QA units brought certain level of accountability (R44-LExpert 2).

On the downside, together with a certain level of organization and certainty, QA units encouraged conformance. The institutional accreditation was a mandatory procedure for the state HEIs to gain degree awarding power and to be eligible for the state grant. Most of the state HEIs, in order to minimize the level of deviation from the state requirements, standardized their academic life. For instance, in most of the state HEIs, the outlines of the syllabus were standardized across the HEI, so were the assessment methods. For instance, in one of the HEIs all midterm evaluations were carried out through centralized mid-term tests (R43-LExpert 1). Standardization of academic life became perverse. Firstly, the ministry was prone to overregulated academic life and secondly, the HEIs were then prone to apply more rigid requirements internally.

The growing centralization and constant intrusion of the government, particularly of the MES in the HEI’s life aggravated the few but vocal members of the academic community, who took these actions of the government as an offence on academic freedom. For instance, a local expert and long-term faculty of one of the state universities considered it unacceptable that state had stripped HEIs from their autonomous rights, and viewed it as the main offence on the ultimate mission of the university as a knowledge generator:

> (The system) is being centralized not because there are no (human) recourses that (would take responsibility for autonomous action), but for the university as a space for critical thinking to seize to exist! [...] The government should stop intervening in the university! It should not think that if the university has a critical perspective towards the government then these universities are the spaces that compromise their political rule (R45 – LExpert 3).

Although other respondents did not express themselves so dramatically, the majority viewed the standardization of the academic life negatively and considered it often irrelevant (R2-HEI1; R12-HEI2; R31-HEI5).
Furthermore, another component of academic autonomy is the HEI’s ability to decide upon the number of students and on the selection criteria of students. The first has important implications for the HEI’s profile and finances. The second contributes to ensuring quality and matching student interest with the programs offered (Estermann et al., 2011). In both instances, an HEIs’ decision making power is close to nonexistent.

Previously, the decision over a student’s admission resided with the HEIs. However, in 2004 it was taken away from the HEIs as the main source of corruption and was substituted by a unified national entrance examination. The admissions process was managed by the National Examination Centre. Based on three exams, the center determined the level of success of the prospective students and granted student vouchers according to the 100%, 70% and 50% success scale. Students that had succeeded in the national entrance exams could choose from a number of preferable educational institutions, where they would allocate their state-provided vouchers (MES, Decree N 19/N, 2011). In the first years of the reform, HEIs were not allowed to introduce additional admission criteria either. Moreover, the number of students was also decided according to a formula that was developed by the NEAC. The same center, as a part of the institutional accreditation process would determine the maximum number of students that the particular HEI could admit (NEAC, 2006). These restrictions greatly affected the academic autonomy of the HEIs. One of the faculty members of a newly established university complained that the university had no mechanisms to select students. On the contrary, the students were choosing the HEI.

The unified exams were designed to abolish corruption at the admission phase. The exams were also designed to create equal opportunity for the students of different social and economic backgrounds (Chakhaia, 2013). Thus, accommodation of the HEIs’ concerns regarding the quality was not prioritized.5

To conclude, the evidence provided in this section shows that, for policy makers, academic autonomy was part of their decentralization effort. Policy makers viewed decentralization as a main tool of institutional transformation of the HEIs, thus they left academic autonomy outside of the sphere of their interest. Ever increasing standardization, which caused the discontent of the academic community was also justified according to the ministry’s conviction that the institutional framework of the HE system was so fragile that the provision of a considerable degree of autonomy would compromise the development of the system.

5 Only in 2011, the HEIs’ plea for the state to relax the strict student admission mechanism was accommodated by introducing a fourth elective examination in the scheme. According to this scheme, the examination center provided a list of possible disciplines, in which it would hold an exam and the HEIs could assign one of them to the degree program that they wanted (MES, Decree N19/N; 4. 2011).
Financial Autonomy

Financial autonomy is certainly the area where the links to the other dimensions of autonomy are the most obvious. The ability or inability of universities to decide on tuition fees has implications for student admissions, state regulations on salaries for academic staff of the public institutions impinge on staffing autonomy, and the capacity to independently disperse university funds directly impacts the ability to implement a defined strategy (Esterrmann et al, 2009). In the University Autonomy Tool, financial autonomy is defined as capacity of the HEI to acquire and allocate funding, to set tuition fees, and to own and manage buildings/infrastructure (EUA, 2011). Put differently, the purpose of financial autonomy is to provide the mechanism of financial stability and independence to the HEI in order to pursue academic freedom.

The perspective of preserving or granting academic freedom to the HEIs through financial stability and independence was not apparent in the discussions with the Georgian policy makers. Nevertheless, financial autonomy, as a term, is part of the definition of the HEI autonomy in the Law (Law on Higher Education, 2004, Chapter 2) and provisions to decentralize previously centralized financial control were also developed (Law on Higher Education 2004, Chapter 26).

In further analysis, several system level factors need to be considered. For the policy makers, financial decentralization together with financial transparency were part of the decentralization reforms that were both supported domestically and recommended by the international community. Domestically, it was driven by practical considerations of efficiency. Over the course of the years of post-Soviet transition, the country suffered significant resource erosion thus, maintaining higher education institutions under the state-subsidy was a tremendous burden, especially under the budget constraints that the ministry was facing. One of the former deputy ministers explained that the state was moving towards minimizing its financial responsibilities with the HEIs and at the same time, aimed at boosting competitive environment among them (R39 -PA8). Externally, the MES was fulfilling the commitment that the country had made in 2004 to the UN, articulated in the Millennium Development Goals Georgia (MDG Georgia). According to the MDG Georgia “[t]he main objectives of tertiary education reform should include the full autonomy of tertiary institutions, the establishment of a competitive climate for public and private institutions, the eradication of the state order tradition...” (UNDP, 2004, p. 31-32). These considerations implied changes in the funding scheme of higher education that in turn had implications for the commitment of the government to the financial autonomy of the HEIs.

In brief, to overcome scarcity of state funds, policy makers introduced the concept of revenue diversification, pressuring HEIs to diversify their funding portfolios through introducing tuition fees, attracting grants, donations and other nonpublic revenues. To

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6 my emphasis.
support the transition from the state-subsidized operation to the self-sustained mode, the state made several revenue sources available to the HEIs. In order to support research in the HEIs, the state made funds available for the research and created the new semi-governmental agencies of the Georgian National Science Foundation and the Foundation of Kartvelian Studies, Humanities and Social Sciences. Most importantly, instead of the state subsidized higher education, the funding scheme was changed into per capita funding, known as the “money-follows-student” scheme. Those students, with the high scores at the national unified entrance exams were eligible for the state grant, which they could allocate at the HEI and the academic program of their choice. Both research grants and student voucher grants were available for public as well as private institutions (Law on Higher Education, 2004). Apart from the per capita funding, the state financed state HEIs through direct budgetary lump sum allocations and through earmarked allocations for infrastructure development and research (Machabeli et al., 2011; UNDP, 2008).

For the state HEIs, tuition fees accounted for 75% of the total income. Only about a fifth was offset by state-funded merit and needs-based grants. By the year 2009, about 25% of state HEI income came from direct state allocations (18% in the form of lump sum funding and 7% from other forms of state support). Including the student merit based vouchers and other funding schemes, the state funded 42% of the costs of state HEIs (Machabeli et al., 2011). Overall, the Georgian HE system went from the state-funded to the private funding scheme, where only 25% of the HEI’s budget comprised of direct state allocations. For the remainder, they were in competition with other public as well as private HEIs. It is true that the state was a major funding source thus increasing state HEIs’ dependency on the state and hindering its financial autonomy.

With the efforts of financial decentralization, the HEIs’ budgets were no longer subject to the approval of the ministry. According to the law, HEIs could create and approve their budgets. HEIs were free to manage their finances, but had to make their budgets publicly available (Law on Higher Education, 2004, Chapter 26, NEAC, 2007). According to the Law, another component of financial autonomy was to decentralize the budgeting process to the departments within the universities. While the Law formally gave greater autonomy to the academic departments, financial decentralization was not practiced by the universities. The departments remained dependent on the central university budget allocations (R20-HEI4; R4-HEI1; R28-HEI5). During the interviews, the deans and rectors of the HEIs did voice concerns regarding the level of

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7 In 2010 the two organizations were merged into Georgian National Science Foundation (GNSF).

8 In a comparative perspective, taking the university system as a whole, in 2009, the state funded 35% of the costs of the HE system, which is about half of the average OECD public expenditure (67% in 2008) on tertiary education institutions (Machabeli et al, 2011)

9 The distribution of budgetary funds within the HEI is a controversial issue since it involved the governance relationships between central administration representing the HEI as a whole and individual units within the HEI (See Geiger, 2004).
decentralization within the HEIs as they thought that departments were not yet ready to accept the responsibility of budgeting themselves (R1 - HEI1).

However, the constraints were higher than the benefits of the decentralized system. Once the tuition fees were institutionalized, it was also decided that the state was to calculate the cost of the academic programs across the state HEIs. The decision was made because of the time and financial efficiency. As an interviewee explained, there was no time to calculate the real costs of programs which is why the ministry set the standard ceiling for all academic programs under which the HEIs could maneuver. The ceiling of 2250 GEL (840 Euro) was set for every program. The student grant of 100% comprised the same amount. Many HEIs disagreed with this policy choice.

In addition, state HEIs were subject to the legal provisions of the public law under the supervision of the MES. This means that certain restrictions applied. For instance, the salary ceilings for the HEI’s staff could not exceed the salary of the ministry’s employees, which obviously, made it difficult to attract qualified staff to the HEIs. One of the HEI representatives perceived this as a disadvantage of the state HEIs in comparison to the private HEIs:

These organizations (HEIs) have no right to pay their staff higher salary than to the staff at the ministry. It is also difficult to attract professors, this is also restricted by a certain rule about hiring and firing of the academic personnel. (R10-HEI2)

In addition, HEIs were subject to the inflexible state procurement policies and were also not able to keep the surplus, but had to return it to the state budget.

The third component that needs attention is the level of financial transparency. Financial transparency was a main state priority falling under the anti-corruption reforms. After the revolution, in the country, a separate entity of financial police was created to address the gaps in the financial operations for both public and private organizations. State HEIs were subjects of the same scrutiny. They were reporting on a quarterly basis to the State Revenue Office and were submitting annual financial reports to the ministry of education as well. However, HEIs were rarely providing internal transparency. This is how one of the faculty members describes the situation:

I have been a member of a faculty board for three years. It has been three years that I am requesting a financial report from the faculty. […] I have not seen that report. … and I receive a ridiculous response from one of the administrators that this information will be made available [internally] only after the financial declaration has been submitted to the revenue office. My answer to this is: ‘The declaration is submitted [to the Revenue Office] by 15th of each month, and if the date of today is 20th, then it [the declaration] has been submitted already. Let me see the report’. The response is: ‘We don’t have it’. (R45 - LExpert 3).

To summarize, the purpose of financial autonomy as of a guarantor for the HEI to maintain academic freedom was absent among the policy makers. The main consideration for financial autonomy was efficiency; the state meant to elevate financial
burden from the state budget and relocate it to the HEIs. Financial decentralization and financial transparency were part of the decentralization reforms that overwhelmed the transition phase of the reforms from 2004 to 2007. In essence, the purpose of financial autonomy did not resemble its original purpose proposed by the EUA (2001, 2003, 2011). Despite this, some structural elements were created in the system although the scarcity of recourses keeps HEIs dependent on state funding. This allows for the finding that financial autonomy is also decoupled.

Conclusion

The analysis of university autonomy reforms in Georgia shows that policy makers introduced the reforms to gain external legitimacy at the EHEA. University autonomy reforms created a decoupled institution that only symbolically bears resemblance to its Bologna-promoted prototype. The structural elements of the university autonomy framework were aligned with the Bologna-promoted model of autonomy. However, the purpose of the autonomy in the HE system of Georgia did not fit with the original purpose of ‘impartiality with accountability’ promoted by the Bologna Process. University autonomy as a principle of the university’s governance was never part of the policy discussions. Instead, it was a part of the government’s overall decentralization efforts.

In more specific terms, while legally ensuring university autonomy as the main principle of HE governance, university autonomy has been compromised with the standardization and overregulation efforts of the government. In order to have a system-wide effect, the ministry of education set up a detailed regulatory framework to guide the universities into autonomous action. With the aim of creating a level playing field for all HEIs in the system, policy makers standardized university life through the quality assurance requirements, hence suspending academic autonomy of the HEIs.

In its turn, the decentralization was a measure for minimizing the risk of accumulating power in the rector’s hands. Therefore, it was not autonomy, but a closely supervised decentralization of university life. With the rhetoric of autonomy, the post-revolution government curbed the independence of the state universities. By instituting rigid regulations to autonomous action, the MES indirectly gained authority over the state HEIs. Authority which it did not have before the revolution. In other words, while emulating the principles of autonomous actor-hood, the policy makers became reluctant to give up the control over the HEIs, which they had gained during the institutional flux brought by the revolution.

Finally, this analysis of university autonomy provides a distinct example of the tensions between a transnationally pursued purpose of the institutions and the considerations of the local policy makers. The local conditions and policy makers’ perceptions regarding the challenges of the Georgian HE system come in almost complete contradiction with the principles of university autonomy, as proposed by the Bologna Process. Yet, they are
symbolically reconciled at the institutional level. Essentially, university autonomy “speaks” of autonomy, but demands compliance.

As the results of the research show, Georgia as a state at Europe's periphery consciously adopted the Bologna-guided reforms for the primary purpose of gaining legitimacy at the European level. As a result, I argue that the Georgian HE system gained high institutional proximity to its Western prototypes, however failed to imbed those in the national context thus creating a decoupled institution in the system.

The examples of decoupled institutions can also be found in other policy areas. Hence, I suggest that the findings of this study are relevant not only for the developments in higher education but in other policy areas as well. The findings discussed in the article are not unique to the Georgian context and are relevant for the countries that underwent the post-Soviet transition. The article suggests that the countries in a post-soviet transition are subject to the transnational policy transfer and are prone to creating decoupled institutions. On this front, findings provided in this article shed light on the policy making processes that are at play in transitioning societies. Moreover, by mobilizing the theoretical toolbox of the world society theory, this study helps to address the gap in the literature on policy transfer explaining the cases of decoupled institutional constellations.

References


Predicting the Skill Proficiency of Central European Adults: The Role of Higher Education, Work Experience, and Socioeconomic Background in “Credential Societies”

Kata Orosz10

Abstract

In this study, I use data from the PIAAC 2012 survey and instrumental variable regression to identify predictors of adult skill proficiency in three Central European countries. I find that higher education attainment and work experience are both predictive of cognitive skill proficiency, and that even after accounting for differences in socioeconomic background, higher education credentials in Central Europe capture important information about adult skills.

Keywords: higher education, cognitive skills, international survey, human capital, Central Europe

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Introduction

Skills can be defined as “personal qualities” that are “expendable”, “productive”, and “socially determined” (Green, 2013, p. 10). Skill formation is endorsed as an effective policy for increasing individual and societal well-being by national governments and influential intergovernmental organizations alike (e.g., UNESCO, 2012; World Bank, 2011). The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) calls skills “the global currency of 21st-century economies” and warns that “without adequate investment in skills, people languish on the margins of society, technological progress does not translate into economic growth, and countries can no longer compete in an increasingly knowledge-based global society” (OECD, 2012, p. 10).

Higher education attainment is frequently used as a measure of skill supply, both at the individual and at the societal level (e.g., Barro & Lee, 2013; OECD, 2014). However, using higher education attainment as a proxy for the stock of highly skilled individuals in any given country is problematic for at least two reasons. First, focusing on higher education attainment “does not take account of the skills and experience gained after formal education” (Barro & Lee, 2013, p. 192). In addition, it is not just an individuals’ desire to increase their future earnings through increased productivity but also societal forces that influence higher education attainment (Perna, 2006). An individuals’ socioeconomic background plays an important role in determining who enrolls in, and completes, tertiary education programs.

Understanding the extent to which higher education attainment captures information about differences in individual productivity rather than about socioeconomic background or work experience may be especially important in “credential societies.” Collins (1979) proposed the concept of the credential society to describe the increasing reliance on educational credentials for hiring in twentieth century United States as a mechanism to limit access to well-paid or “elite” positions to individuals from high socioeconomic background. Findings from prior research suggest that Central European countries fit Collins’ (1979) characterization of the credential society at least to some extent. Matějů and Anýžova (2014) found that the association between socioeconomic background and formal education, and the association between formal education and earnings were stronger in the Czech Republic, Poland, and Slovakia compared to Belgium, Denmark, and the Netherlands.

It is unclear to what extent higher education attainment in Central Europe sends signals to prospective employers about one’s socioeconomic background, and to what extent about one’s productivity, as measured by skill proficiency. In this study, I compare and contrast predictors of adult skill proficiency in three Central European countries - Czech Republic, Poland, and Slovakia - to address this knowledge gap.
Guiding Perspectives

The economic theory of human capital assumes that individuals develop skills because doing so increases their productivity, and increased productivity is rewarded by higher wages in the labor market (Becker, 1993). The two primary sites of skill formation in modern societies are schools and firms; individuals may develop their skills through formal education or through on-the-job training and work experience (Becker, 1993; Hillmert, 2008). All else being equal, individuals with higher levels of educational attainment and more work experience are expected to have higher skill proficiency (Edin & Gustavsson, 2008; Hanushek et al., 2015; Mellander, 2014).

When empirically testing the relationship between educational attainment, work experience, and adult skills, the expectation that a higher level of educational attainment and more work experience will be positively associated with skill proficiency may be confounded by the negative relationship between the attainment of higher education and work (Mellander, 2014). While many individuals participate in paid employment during higher education, a substantial proportion of university students either fully or partially abstains from paid employment during their studies (Passaretta & Triventi, 2015; Perna, 2010; Weiss et al., 2014). Without accounting for the endogeneity of work experience in explaining variation in adult skill, estimates of the strength of association between educational attainment and adult skill, and between work experience and adult skill may be biased (Mellander, 2014).

Prior research assessed the extent to which adult cognitive skill proficiency is determined by a combination of formal education and labor market experiences. In a study of the four Nordic countries, Mellander (2014) found evidence that higher education attainment and paid work experience were positively associated in all four countries, and across most skill domains. He also found that a certain type of cognitive skill (numeracy) was associated with experience in work settings and in formal educational settings to a comparable degree, while other types of cognitive skills (literacy and problem-solving in technology-rich environments) were more strongly associated with higher educational attainment than with comparable years of paid work experience (Mellander, 2014).

While there is evidence that both educational attainment and work experience are predictive of adult skill proficiency (Mellander, 2014), theory and prior research also suggest the need to account for variation in demographic characteristics and the nature of the work experience to better estimate the strength of the association between higher education attainment and adult skill. Moreover, age must be accounted for, since older individuals tend to have higher levels of educational attainment and more work experience than young adults (Mellander, 2014). Differences in gender and number of children must be accounted as well due to the differences in typical patterns of female and male employment in European countries. In the Nordic countries, number of children was inversely related to years of paid work experience among women but
positively related to years of paid work experience among men, after accounting for differences in age and educational attainment (Mellander, 2014).

Findings from prior research suggest that socioeconomic status (SES) is positively associated with higher levels of educational attainment and occupational prestige in many countries (Collins, 1979; Matějů & Anýžová, 2014; Marginson, 2016). The type of labor force participation is important to account for, because findings from prior research suggest that time out of work may be associated with a decline in cognitive skills (Edin & Gustavsson, 2008). Lastly, findings from prior research suggest that work experience in occupations that typically employ highly skilled workers may provide more opportunities for skills development than low-skilled or unskilled occupations, suggesting the importance of accounting for differences in workers’ occupation (Green, 2013; Mellander, 2014).

**Empirical Approach**

To compare predictors of skill proficiency among Central European adults, I used instrumental variable regression to answer two research questions:

1. What are the relationships between higher education attainment, work experience, and adult skill proficiency in the selected Central European countries, after controlling for differences in socioeconomic background, demographic characteristics, employment status and occupation type?

2. How do the relationships between higher education attainment, work experience, and adult skill proficiency vary across the selected Central European countries?

**Data**

I used data from the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) 2012 International Survey of Adult Skills to identify predictors of adult skill proficiency among adults who live in one of three Central European nations: Czech Republic, Poland, and Slovakia. The PIAAC survey was developed by the OECD and is administered to adults aged 16 to 65 by authorities in participating countries. The selection of Central European nations for this study is based on data availability: only three of the four Visegrad countries participated in PIAAC 2012.¹¹

To implement PIAAC, participating countries are required to sample a minimum of 5,000 individuals in their country based on a multi-stage, random sampling design (OECD, 2013a). The resulting PIAAC samples are nationally representative when sample weights are applied. PIAAC measures adult skills in three domains: literacy, numeracy, and problem-solving in technology-rich environments. The surveys are administered in national languages and, depending on the country, may involve administering the survey

¹¹ The fourth Visegrad country, Hungary, is scheduled to participate in the third round of PIAAC, which will conclude in 2019 (Education Counts, n.d.).
in multiple languages within the same country. Survey items were developed to be valid cross-culturally and cross-nationally. Public use data files from PIAAC 2012 are available for researchers on the OECD's website.

**Methods**

I modelled my study based on a study conducted by Mellander (2014), who used PIAAC 2012 data to test the relationships between work experience and adult skills in the four Nordic countries. I fit instrumental variable regression models very similar to the ones Mellander (2014) proposed, with minor differences, to the data from the three Visegrad countries.¹²

The analytical samples in this study consist of adults aged 20 to 65 who had at least one year of paid work experience. Similarly to Mellander (2014), I excluded adults without work experience to be able to account for the indirect role of educational attainment on skills through its direct link to work experience. I excluded adults aged 16 to 19 from the analytic samples, because even if these young adults have paid work experience, it is likely qualitatively different from the work experiences available to adults once they conclude upper secondary education (Mellander, 2014). I also excluded from the analytic samples all observations that had missing values on any of the variables included in the regression models.

The instrumental variable regression approach involves fitting two equations per model: one equation to predict work experience, and another equation to predict adult skill proficiency (Mellander, 2014). In the second equation, the predicted values of the endogenous variable from the first equation (i.e., work experience) are used as an instrument. In the first equation, work experience is a function of age, the quadratic term of age¹³, educational attainment, gender, number of children, and an interaction term between gender and number of children:

**Equation (1)**

\[
\text{Work Experience} = g(Age + Age^2 + Educational Attainment + Gender + Number of children + Gender \times Number of children) + \varepsilon_1
\]

In the second equation, adult skill proficiency is the function of age, the quadratic term of age, parental education, educational attainment, employment status, the predicted value of work experience from the first equation, and occupational type:

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¹² The difference between the models fitted in this study and that of Mellander's (2014) is that I did not control for differences in receipt of on-the-job training and differences in the industry where PIAAC participants were employed. The focus of Mellander's study is on the role of work experience in explaining adult skill proficiency, while the focus of my study is on the role of higher education attainment.

¹³ The relationship between age and adult skill may not be perfectly linear if cognitive skills deteriorate as individuals age; the quadratic term is included to capture potential nonlinearity in this relationship.
Equation (2)

\[
Skill = h(Age + Age^2 + Parental\ Education + Educational\ Attainment + Employment\ Status + Predicted\ Work\ Experience + Occupation\ Type) + \varepsilon_2
\]

Work experience in Equation (1) is operationalized as years of part-time or full-time paid work experience during the individual’s lifetime.\(^{14}\) The outcome variable in Equation (2), adult skill proficiency, is operationalized as the individuals’ PIAAC 2012 proficiency score in the three domains of literacy, numeracy, and problem-solving in technology-rich environments. Predicted work experience in Equation (2) is not a measure of actual work experience, but the predicted years of work experience instrumented on number of children and its interaction with gender from Equation (1).

Instrumental variable regression is a method used for mitigating omitted variable bias (Schneider et al., 2007). Work experience and adult cognitive skills are both presumed to be correlated with ability, i.e., cognitive capacity that pre-dates the cognitive development that is hypothesized to occur in formal and informal educational settings and at work. Since ability is not observed in the PIAAC data, the omission of this variable biases the ordinary least square estimate of the relationship between work experience and adult cognitive skill proficiency. To mitigate this bias, I used the number of children and its interaction with gender as instruments in a two-stage least squares regression framework. Following the example of Mellander (2014), I selected these variables for instrumenting work experience because they are correlated with paid work experience in my analytic dataset, and because I assume that they are not correlated with (unobserved) ability.\(^{15}\) If my assumption is correct, then the estimate of the relationship between predicted work experience and adult skill proficiency in Equation (2) will be unbiased by pre-existing differences in ability (Schneider et al., 2007).

I used STATA 13 software to process and analyze publicly available PIAAC 2012 data files. I ran a total of 12 regressions: three first-stage equations, one each for the Czech Republic, Poland, and Slovakia; and nine second-stage equations for the three countries in each of the three skill domains. All analyses of PIAAC data must account for the fact that the PIAAC dataset includes so-called “plausible values”. The use of “plausible values” is an approach common to large-scale surveys that involves statistical imputation to minimize missing information (Wu, 2005). To mitigate concerns about bias in the estimation of population parameters that may result from imputation, I followed best practices in averaging across the ten “plausible values” of the outcome

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14 The question corresponding to variable “C_Q09” was: “In total, approximately how many years have you had paid work? Only include those years where 6 months or more was spent in either full-time or part-time work.” (OECD, n.d.)

15 Using number of children and its interaction with gender for instrumenting work experience would be problematic under the assumption that high-/low-ability individuals of a particular gender self-select into having fewer/more children. Mapping the relationship between ability, gender, and fertility decisions falls outside the scope of this research.
variables when calculating point estimates and standard errors. In all analyses, I used sample weights and bootstrap replications for variance estimation in line with OECD guidelines for using PIAAC data (OECD, 2013a).

Findings

In this section, I report the results of the regression models. The findings are based on analytic samples that represent 3.2 million adults in Slovakia, 6.1 million adults in the Czech Republic, and 21.4 million adults in Poland. Analytic samples exclude adults younger than 20 years old, adults with no work experience, and observations with missing values on variables used in the regression models.

**Predictors of skill proficiency among Central European adults**

Table 1 reports results from Equation (2) in the three Central European countries by skill domain; the dependent variable is adult skill proficiency in the respective domain. The analytic samples used in these regressions were created by combining all three country samples into one. While the analytic samples of the models used in the literacy and numeracy domains are identical, the analytic sample size for the problem-solving domain is substantially smaller, because groups of respondents who were determined by PIAAC staff as not meeting minimum computer literacy requirements to display proficiency in problem-solving in technology-rich environments were excluded from the imputation of plausible values for this domain. As such, regression results from Models 1 and 2 (literacy and numeracy) can be readily compared with each other, but comparison of coefficients between Models 1 and 2 on the one hand, and Model 3 on the other hand, should be avoided.
Perhaps as a result of differences in the composition of the analytic samples across domains, the independent variables explain 24% and 20% of the variation in the dependent variable in the literacy and numeracy domains, respectively, while the same independent variables explain only about 3% of the variation in the problem-solving domain. The direction of association between higher education attainment and skill proficiency is positive, as predicted by the conceptual framework. Central European adults who attained some form of tertiary credential scored, on average, 8 to 25 points higher on PIAAC than individuals who had the same observable socioeconomic and demographic characteristics and work experiences but only attained upper secondary education. These differences in mean scores correspond to about one fifth to over one-half of a standard deviation in skill proficiency between adults with and without tertiary educational attainment.
After accounting for differences in demographic and socioeconomic background, educational attainment, employment status and occupational type, the predicted years of paid work experience among Central European adults is positively associated with proficiency in numeracy and problem-solving in technology-rich environments. However, it is not associated with proficiency in literacy. Parental education, a proxy for socioeconomic background, is strongly predictive of adult skill proficiency across all three skill domains. Parental attainment of a tertiary education credential is associated with 16 to 23 higher scores on PIAAC across the three skill domains, compared to the PIAAC scores of adults whose parents had not attained upper secondary education.

Country-by-country variation in predictors of skill proficiency

Figures 1.a. through 1.c. report regression results from Equation (2) in the three Central European countries separately by skill domain. The outcome variable is adult skill proficiency (as measured by PIAAC 2012) in the respective domain. Thus, the dots represent the regression coefficients for each predictor variable, while the whiskers around the dots represent 95% confidence intervals around the point estimates.

*Figure 1.a. Regression results in the literacy skill domain. Data: PIAAC 2012.*
Note: Cross-country comparisons within the ‘problem-solving in technology-rich environments’ domain must be undertaken with the caveat that “the populations for whom proficiency scores for problem solving in technology-rich environments are reported are not identical across countries” (OECD, 2013b, p. 72).

There is a country-based variation in the relationship between higher education attainment and adult skill proficiency. Table 2 reports the unstandardized and standardized regression coefficients for higher education attainment by country and skill domain from Equation (2). While holders of bachelor’s and master degrees in all three Visegrad countries performed better on the PIAAC 2012 test in all three skill domains than adults who only attained upper secondary education, the skill proficiency advantage associated with having a bachelor's or a master degree is greater in Poland and the Czech Republic than in Slovakia in the literacy and numeracy domains. For
example, Slovak adults with a bachelor's degree on average scored only 0.14 standard deviations (SD) higher in the numeracy domain compared to other Slovak adults with only upper secondary attainment, compared to a 0.39 SD score difference in Poland and a 0.59 SD score difference in the Czech Republic. Similarly, Slovak adults with a bachelor's degree outperformed other Slovak adults with only upper secondary attainment with an average of only 0.22 SD in literacy, compared to a 0.38 SD score difference.

Table 2. Relationship between higher education attainment and adult skill proficiency in the three Central European countries. Data: PIAAC 2012.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill domain</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>CoefBachelor</th>
<th>βBachelor</th>
<th>CoefMaster</th>
<th>βMaster</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td>CZ</td>
<td>18.41</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>27.36</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PL</td>
<td>17.92</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>27.44</td>
<td>0.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SK</td>
<td>8.42</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>15.93</td>
<td>0.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>CZ</td>
<td>25.29</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>38.09</td>
<td>0.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PL</td>
<td>19.38</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>0.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SK</td>
<td>6.33</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>21.93</td>
<td>0.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem-solving</td>
<td>CZ</td>
<td>11.61</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>31.07</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PL</td>
<td>15.97</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>26.46</td>
<td>0.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SK</td>
<td>11.28</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>23.19</td>
<td>0.62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: “Coefs” denote the unstandardized regression coefficient, while “βs” denote the standardized regression coefficient, of having attained a bachelor’s degree or a master / research degree, compared to the reference category of upper secondary educational attainment. The full regression output is available from the author upon request.

Discussion and Conclusion

Findings from this study provide evidence that: 1) Central European adults with higher education attainment and more work experience display higher cognitive skill proficiency than comparable adults without tertiary degrees and less work experience; and 2) higher education credentials capture important information about adult cognitive skill proficiency in Central Europe, even after accounting for differences in work experience and socioeconomic background. These findings are discussed in more detail in the following sections.

Credential and work experience are both predictive of skills, to varying degrees

Both levels of higher education attainment (bachelor’s and master / research degree) are predictive of higher skill proficiency among Central European adults across all three cognitive skill domains. Moreover, an additional year of paid work experience (as predicted by gender and number of children) is predictive of higher skill proficiency in the numeracy and problem-solving domains, but not universally and not substantially so in the literacy domain. These findings are similar to the pattern found in the Nordic countries (Mellander, 2014).

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16 The association between paid work experience and adult literacy is significant at alpha level=0.05 in the Czech Republic and in Slovakia, but the association is not substantial. Czech and Slovak adults with an additional year of work experience scored, on average, less than one-tenth of a standard deviation higher on the literacy proficiency test than comparable adults with less work experience.
Findings from this and other studies (Matějů & Anýžova, 2014; Mellander, 2014) suggest that work experience is a better predictor of adult skill proficiency in the numeracy and problem-solving skill domains than it is of proficiency in the literacy skill domain. In contrast, higher education attainment is predictive of higher adult skill proficiency across all three cognitive skill domains measured in PIAAC 2012. A possible interpretation of these findings is that adult literacy proficiency in Central Europe and in the Nordic region may be predominantly developed through institutions of formal education rather than through on-the-job training or informal learning at work. Meanwhile, numeracy and problem-solving skills may be developed both at institutions of formal education, as well as (formally and informally) through paid work.17

**Higher education credentials capture important information about skills**

The findings from this study provide evidence that adults with bachelor's and master / research degrees display higher skill proficiency across all three cognitive skill domains than comparable adults without such credentials. The observational nature of this study does not allow for causal inference. It is possible that instead of developing skills, institutions of higher education in Central Europe are simply effective in selecting individuals who already display higher than average cognitive skill proficiency. Alternatively, an interplay of causation and selection may explain the observed strong positive association between higher educational attainment and adult skill proficiency. Future research should establish the relative contribution of each mechanism to variation in adult skill proficiency.

While findings from this study are not appropriate for arbitrating between the competing explanations offered by human capital theory and credentialism, they do provide evidence that higher education credentials in Central Europe capture important information about the skill proficiency of university graduates. Similarly to Matějů and Anýžova (2014), I also found that parental education is highly predictive of adult skill proficiency across all three domains in the Central European countries. Nevertheless, the strength of association between higher education attainment and adult skill proficiency in Central European countries indicates that university graduates perform at levels of skill proficiency that are even higher than what is predicted by their (typically high) socioeconomic status. Specifically, Central European adults with a bachelor’s degree performed 0.14 to 0.59 standard deviation higher than comparable adults with upper secondary attainment, depending on the country and skill domain. Adults with master / research degrees performed 0.41 to 0.88 standard deviation higher than comparable adults with upper secondary attainment, depending on the country and skill domain.

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17 The significant and substantive association between adult literacy proficiency and parental education also suggests the important role of informal education that occurs within the family.
Findings from this study shed light on cross-country variation in the relationship between higher education and adult cognitive skills in Central Europe. The skill advantage of having a bachelor's degree was smaller in Slovakia in both the literacy and numeracy domains compared to the skill advantage of having a bachelor's degree in the Czech Republic and Poland in 2012. In the recent past, higher education policies and practices in Slovakia differed from those in the Czech Republic and Poland: the tertiary participation rate in Slovakia was lower, while the proportion of total public expenditure on higher education that is provided directly to households was higher than in the other two countries (Czarnecki, 2014). It is unclear whether either of these differences may be related to the relatively lower skill advantage of having a bachelor's degree in Slovakia. Future research should explore what characteristic of the national context in Slovakia may explain this distinct pattern within the region.

**Concluding thoughts**

To conclude, findings from this study contribute to the evidence base for higher education policy in Central Europe. The finding that Central European adults with higher education credentials tend to display higher cognitive skill proficiency than comparable adults without such credentials is perhaps not surprising. However, the study makes a novel contribution to understanding the process of skill formation in the Central European region in three ways.

First, this study mitigates bias in estimating the relationship between higher education attainment and adult skill proficiency by accounting for the confounding effect of socioeconomic background and work experience, and provides standardized estimates of the skill advantage of having a bachelor's or master / research degree, compared to upper secondary attainment. Secondly, findings from this study shed light on differences in predictors of adult skill proficiency across domains. A possible interpretation of study findings is that skill formation in Central European countries may take place in both formal educational settings and at work, and that work experience may be particularly important for developing numeracy skills and problem-solving skills in technology-rich environments. Lastly, by documenting cross-country differences in predictors of adult skill proficiency in this region, findings from this study confirm the important role of national context in understanding how adult cognitive skills are formed in Central Europe, and elsewhere.

**References**


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Study of the success and dropout in the higher education policy in Europe and V4 countries

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Abstract

In Europe, including the Visegrad region (Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic and Slovakia), the issue of student success and dropout is increasing in attention among policy makers on both the national and international level. This paper provides an overview of the major policy perspectives on the issue as well as the main categories of measures adopted to stimulate student success. The Visegrad countries show substantial similarities in their policy attitudes, yet they retain differences, in particular how much importance they assign to the agenda. The regional trends are illustrated by the case study of the Czech Republic: although the goal of reducing dropout rates has been included in policy documents since 2000, so far only few measures have been implemented and the dropout rates continue to grow.

Keywords: dropout, higher education policy, student success, Visegrad countries

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Relevance of the issue

The issue of studying success/dropout in higher education (HE) has received considerable attention mainly in the United States (see for example Berger & Loyd 2005). Since the number of students quitting their university studies has increased across Europe, the European Commission (EC) has started to be alarmed. High dropout rates and excessive duration of studies became considered as expenditure inefficiencies, as well as barriers in human capital development in multiple EC policy documents (EC 2003 a, EC 2003 b, EC 2005).

The European Commission initiated a large-scale international comparative study on dropout policy and related trends in 2014. The study, conducted by the Centre for Higher Education Policy Studies (CHEPS) in the Netherlands, and the Nordic Institute for Studies in Innovation, Research and Education (NIFU) in Norway, was published in late 2015 with the acronym HEDOCE (Vossensteyn et al. 2015).

According to the HEDOCE study, the success/dropout issue is on the policy agenda in most European countries, and in almost half of them it is “very high or high” on their policy agenda. The same is true for countries in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). The Visegrad countries (V4) are represented in all three categories – while not much attention is dedicated to the issue in Slovakia (according to a contributing national expert), it is a subject of discussion in the Czech Republic and Poland, also indicated as a trending issue in Hungary.

Table 1. Importance of study success in national agendas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Importance of study success</th>
<th>Countries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very high or high on the agenda</td>
<td>Denmark, England, Estonia, Finland, Flanders (Belgium), France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Serbia, Slovenia, Sweden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the agenda</td>
<td>Austria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Switzerland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No or little relevance</td>
<td>Bulgaria, Cyprus, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovak Republic, Turkey</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: HEDOCE Study (Vossensteyn et al. 2015), survey of national experts

Data and methods

The authors of this paper contributed to the HEDOCE study mentioned above as national experts with two policy reports and one in-depth national case study based on a number of observations and interviews with policy-makers and the representatives of higher education institutions (HEIs) leadership. Summaries of the contributions and the case study were edited by the HEDOCE team and published as annexes to the report. The

22 Multiple terms are used in literature for phenomena related to student success, such as completion, graduation, retention, persistence, survival, attainment, re-enrolment or, eventually, time-to-degree. Other terms can be used as equivalent to dropout, e.g. stop-out, discontinuation, attrition, wastage, turn-over, dismissal, withdrawal or student departure. In this paper, we decided to use “success” and “dropout” over other options to keep in line with the HEDOCE study (Vossensteyn et al. 2015) quoted further.
HEDOCE study (cited as Vossensteyn et al. 2015) is a major source of inspiration as well as of comparative data for this paper. Although this paper builds extensively on data from the study, it focuses on aspects not fully covered by the original report and goes deeper in particular in the Czech Republic case study.

The following country reports have been used as a basis for this paper:

- Czech Republic, written by Aleš Vlk (with the support of Vaclav Švec and Šimon Stiburek) and summarized by Martin Unger (Vossensteyn et al. 2015, Annex 2, p. 31-35),
- Hungary, written by Jozsef Temesi and summarized by Renze Kolster (ibid., Annex 2, p. 76-79),
- Poland, written by Marek Kwiek and summarized by Sabine Wollscheid and Elisabeth Hovdhaugen (ibid., Annex 2, p. 119-121),

Besides those, additional data were collected to elaborate the case study of the Czech Republic. First, we reviewed all the major national strategy documents from 2000 to 2015, as cited below. Second, we conducted additional interviews with HE representatives. Altogether, we interviewed, individually or within a focus group, 13 national policy representatives (Ministry of Education officers, members of the National Accreditation Commission, members of the Higher Education Council, including student members), 15 employees of two selected HEIs (from vice-rectors to lecturers and student advisors), and two groups of students at the same institutions. The average duration of an interview was about 60 minutes.

**The context of student success policies**

There are multiple reasons leading HE policymakers to consider student dropout as an issue that needs to be solved. However, the perspectives vary among European countries, as well as among stakeholders. Therefore, analyzing the reasoning behind implemented measures is important for understanding differences in national policies and conflicts in policy discussions.

First, dropout can be considered a barrier to access higher education. In regard to the European Union’s goal that 40 % of young adults would attain tertiary education by 2020 (see European Commission 2010) and the efforts of many developed countries to raise the overall education level of their populations, high dropout rates can be easily perceived as an obstacle to be dealt with. In some countries, rapid increase of dropout rates significantly eliminated the gain from broadened access to HE over the last two decades, leading to a slower pace of increase in the number of graduates compared to the number of new enrollees. This can be considered a problem both for national competitiveness – undermining the strategic transition to innovation-based economy
and knowledge society – and to the individuals’ life chances and social mobility. European institutions in particular, support this perspective.

Second, the efficiency of both public and private spending can be questioned. Extensive amounts of public funds spent on studies not leading to graduation and increasing average time-to-degree have become an increasing concern for authorities in many countries as well as European institutions (see e.g. Quinn 2013). As discussed below, in Visegrad countries this perspective dominates over others.

Third, dropout should be taken seriously also on the institutional level. For example, Wild and Ebbers (2002) see dropout rates as important measures of institutional effectiveness with a broader impact to relevant stakeholders in the higher education system – internal administrators, academic staff, taxpayers, legislators, public policy makers, etc. Ozga and Sukhnandan (2004) argue the importance of dropout in economic terms – they see it as:

- a waste of university resources which are limited;
- damage to the institution’s reputation;
- a negative long-term influence on attracting new students.

Fourth, individual consequences of dropout should also be taken into account. Quinn et al. (2005) point out that the dropout experience can substantially affect one’s attitudes, leading to loss of motivation and self-confidence, which can even turn into apathy and a sense of inferiority. “Drop out was even seen as hindering young people from being active citizens, for example acting as a barrier to participating in the voluntary sector,” (ibid.: 49). Social stigma and other inter-personal consequences can also be related to the dropout experience, particularly when family expectations are not met. Besides, consequences of high student fluctuation might also be observed at the social environment of individual HEIs, weakening the social bonds between faculty and students as well as among students themselves, leading to academic anomie.

Finally, it can be argued that to dropout is not a problem per se, but it is a result of something else going on in higher education. As Quinn et al. (ibid.) claim, increasing dropout rates are not an inevitable effect of broad access but rather a sign of low sensibility to the needs of a diverse student body and a lack of student-centered thinking in HE. In this perspective, one can conclude that HEIs are losing their ability to attract students, offer them something worthwhile, and stimulate their enthusiasm for the chosen field of study. In other words, this is close to what Tinto (1993) calls integration as a main driver of a student experience at the university. In this respect, not only are students who drop out affected but the quality of education of those who make it to graduation is at stake.

Regardless of which perspective one prefers, the steady rise of dropout rates makes the issue difficult to neglect. Unfortunately, there are no internationally comparable data on
student success in Europe, and inevitably, different calculation methods and definitions lead to mutually incomparable results (Vossensteyn et al. 2015: 30-32). Therefore, only little is known about the actual development in an international perspective but the trend might be illustrated on the national level, in this case utilizing the Czech data.²³

In our contribution we focus mainly on the national level with respect to the public higher education policy and accompanied measures. At the same time also some aspects of institutional policy are discussed.

**Student success policies in Europe**

In the HEDOCE study (Vossensteyn et al. 2015) 170 national and institutional policy measures adopted in the last ten years with an explicit aim to support student success were identified in 35 participating countries. This figure itself indicates that a lot of attention has been paid to this issue in Europe in recent years.

Authors of the study divide the measures into three broader groups based on the policy instruments applied. These are:

- Funding and financial incentives,
- Information and support for students,
- Organization of higher education.

The category of **funding measures and financial incentives** covers both stimuli for institutions and students. Dropout or completion rates have been reflected in funding formulas, and project-based resources have been dedicated to programs so as to develop institutional capacity to support student success e.g. by quality teaching, advisory or infrastructure. Attempts have been made to change students’ behavior and decisions by positive stimuli (grants, loans, need- or merit-based scholarships, tuition waivers) as well as sanctions such as cost-sharing and extra fees for slow progressing individuals.

Moreover, in the case of **measures based on information and support** there are multiple target groups affected. Access to information for applicants has been in focus in multiple countries in order to improve their study program choices, and to reduce the mismatch between programs and students’ preferences and abilities. Mentoring and counselling have been provided to students in many aspects, covering both academic and non-academic (health, housing, funding, etc.) issues as well as, for example, career counselling to stimulate students’ motivation for learning. Finally, initiatives have been

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²³ Data from the Czech Republic were chosen to illustrate the trend taking into account the following factors: First, authors have good access to the data and can interpret them correctly with respect to the actual method of collection and calculation applied. Second, this case is presumably more relevant for the focus of the paper than data from a non-V4 country. However, it is not an intention of the authors to anticipate that the situation is the same in other Visegrad countries or in the rest of Europe.
taken to provide advisory to institutions (lecturers, administrators and managers), spread experience and good practice, and monitor student progression to create a solid empirical background for further policy-making.

Changes in organization of higher education cover measures to increase flexibility, simplify credit transfer, and recognition to meet the needs of non-traditional learners. In many countries, student success is also reflected in external quality assurance and accreditation processes as HEIs are incentivized to adapt the curriculum in order to stimulate students’ engagement and motivation, e.g. by emphasizing straightforward links from curricula to later career chances and labor market needs. Lastly, changes in admission procedures have taken place, HEIs are expected to select applicants with the best chances of completing their studies.

Student success policies in Visegrad countries

The HEDOCE study (Vossensteyn et al. 2015) includes a set of country reports written by national experts covering, among others, all the V4 countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia). We used these reports as a source of data for secondary analysis to look for aspects not fully covered by the original study.

In the reports, we identified joint aspects across the region as well as differences in the attention dedicated to the topic in the national policies. Undoubtedly, in every country, there is a broad range of perspectives and opinions backed by various stakeholders including academics. Yet, certain aspects, predominant in all four countries, might be extracted, indicating a shared ideological and cultural background for the policy discussion.

First, student dropout is often perceived as a direct result of broadening access to Central European HE systems over the past decades. The changing structure of the student body, in particular in relation to individuals’ cognitive capacities, is considered a key limit for student success and, in some cases, high dropout is explicitly mentioned as an instrument to keep the “quality” of education high.

Second, in the case that dropout is being considered a problematic issue, the claim is usually grounded in economic reasoning. In particular, but not exclusively, in Hungary low success is considered an issue of cost-efficiency for the HE system, and stakeholders highlight that investing resources into numerous studies not leading to graduation is a waste. In line with that, in all four countries, the time-to-degree aspect of student success is often emphasized over completion. Adopted measures tend to focus on stimulating students to finish their studies on time rather than on prevention of dropout and failure.

Third, although a different priority is assigned to success policy in the individual V4 countries, in none of them does it dominate the agenda. Employability of graduates, quality of education, international reputation of universities and research performance
are usually prioritized over student success. Moreover, these priorities are considered to be, to a certain extent, in conflict with student success. Efforts to improve the quality of teaching and career relevance of curricula are rarely mentioned as a way to increase success rates.

In line with the previous points, the V4 countries jointly ignore a range of measures that can be implemented in order to face student dropout. Despite extensive theoretical reasoning (see e.g. Larsen et al. 2013) only small measures have been taken to stimulate student success. Among these are better integration of newcomers to the academic community and encouraging student engagement. However, further measures such as experience sharing and mutual learning among HEIs leadership, lecturers or non-academic staff, present in some other European countries, were never mentioned as a measure in the reports.

Nevertheless, one measure is shared across the four countries – fees for students exceeding standard duration studies. It was introduced first in the Czech Republic in 1999, and most recently in Poland in 2013 where the constitutional court abolished them in 2014 for being in conflict with the Constitution. The explicit aim of the fees is to motivate students to complete their degree on time.

Despite the similarities mentioned above, the V4 countries differ in the scope to which success policy has been developed so far and in the amount of measures adopted. According to the reports, Hungary seems to be a regional leader in this respect. Following an excited national debate on the efficiency of HE, a complex policy was developed covering a broad range of measures. These include changes in tuition fees policy, students’ and applicants’ information support and advisory, as well as the reflection of dropout and completion data in external quality assurance processes.

In Poland and the Czech Republic, measures were taken to improve study success but these were more limited in number as well as in scope of implementation. Options for a success policy are discussed but the topic is not being assigned a very high priority and it remains controversial in the academia. Finally, according to the report, in Slovakia, only a few measures have been adopted so far, and the topic is in general low on the agenda.

Case study of the Czech Republic

The subsequent text demonstrates the establishment of success / dropout policy on a case study of the Czech Republic. Although no individual country is fully representative of an entire region, taking a more specific look at one case allows us to illustrate some of the general trends, with concrete examples and thus, deepen our understanding of the actual development.

In this chapter, “dropout” is referred to at the level of individual study, i.e. each time a student quits a particular study program (regardless to whether she/he studies
somewhere else or not), she/he is calculated into the dropout rate as discussed below. In line, when referring to “completion”, we evaluate the graduation from a particular study program, regardless to whether the student studies also somewhere else or whether she/he completed another program before. In both cases, the entire enrolment cohort is the denominator. Dropout rates calculated according to these definitions are naturally higher than they would be if program-switching were not be considered discontinuation.

Based on analysis of the data retrieved from the national student register, we see that while “only” 27% of students who enrolled into a full-time undergraduate program in the Czech Republic in 2005 dropped out within the first year of studies, the rate grew gradually to 39% in the 2014 cohort. Simultaneously, the 2010 cohort was the first one out of which more than half of the students discontinued their studies within the first five years after enrolment – and the increasing trend does not slow down.

Fig. 1: Dropout rates (on the level of individual programs), bachelor program students, Czech Republic.

The dropout has been dominantly concentrated in the first and second year of studies – 44% of the students who started their study in 2011 discontinued in the two years after their enrolment, compared to only 7% in the following two years. The freshmen year is also the one with the largest increase in the dropout rates, rising from 27% in 2003 to 39% for students who started their studies in 2014. The dropout rates are high in

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24 No aggregation has been applied to the data, dropout within each individual study program is analysed separately - i.e. a substantial proportion of the students dropping out re-enrol later or continue to study in a different study programme.
particular in engineering fields, followed by natural sciences, where the dropout rates continue to increase alarmingly.

In contrast, the dropout rates are rather stable for master's level studies with only minor fluctuations and are also much lower – “only” 20% of students discontinued their study within the first four years in 2003-2011 on average. At the postgraduate level, minor increase in the dropout prevalence can be observed, but it has been rather evenly distributed across individual study years.

Significant differences in the dropout rate can be seen among individual disciplines (study fields) as well as individual institutions (universities) and their parts (faculties). For example, for bachelor studies started in 2009 the completion rate can vary from 8.6% at a particular faculty of mechanical engineering to 87.9% at a faculty of health care. A completion rate higher than 70% can be almost exclusively observed in the fields of medicine and arts.

A brief overview of the policy development in the Czech Republic is provided in the following paragraphs to illustrate policy initiatives and specific measures taken on the national level.

As early as in 2000, when the first HE Strategic Plan was adopted, dropout was identified as a problem; particularly, in relation to flexibility of study pathways and student-program mismatch (MEYS 2000). In contrast, the successive Strategic Plan adopted in 2005 (effective during 2006-2010) highlights exclusively the perspective of economic efficiency and relates the causes of dropout increase explicitly to broadened access (MYE 2005). In this respect, this Strategic Plan is fully in line with the V4-level observations described in the previous part. Moreover, interviews with HE leadership representatives conducted by the authors of this paper ten years later came to very similar findings, indicating that the perspectives reflected in the Strategic Plan remain widespread in the academic community.

The subsequent HE White Paper (MYE 2009) and Strategic Plan 2011-2015 (MYE 2010) paid only very little attention to the issue. As late as 2014, within the Framework for HE Development (MYE 2014), a student success agenda was reflected in detail for the first time and, also for the first time, were the measures proposed grounded on at least some analysis of available data. However, the shift was enforced to a great extent by the requirements of the European Commission putting emphasis on student success and demanding the issue be covered by a strategic framework before the approval of operational programs of the European Structural and Investment Fund (as confirmed in the interviews).

The latest Strategic Plan for 2016-2020 (MYE 2015) follows the Framework for HE Development and builds on its proposals. Compared to all the previous documents, it brings the most specific measures for success policy, and a quantitative goal – 60 % of
undergraduate studies started in 2015 should be completed successfully within the standard duration plus one year (i.e. in 4 to 5 years, depending on the program). Nevertheless, dropout remains a second-tier policy on the agenda.

Throughout the time period, a number of measures on various levels have been considered. In the early years, increasing the flexibility of HE was the only and vague proposal. In the subsequent period, introduction of tuition fees (which never came to effect), restructuring of study programs (referred to also as “the Bologna process”) and implementation of professional / applied programs (finally taking place in 2016) together with students’ advisory were flagships of success policy. After 2014, strategic documents started to highlight the necessity of analyzing the causes of dropout deeper. In particular, on the level of individual institutions and programs. Various aspects such as social integration and role of lecturers are mentioned for the first time, however, the major focus remains on institutional-specific strategies grounded on data-collection and analysis, which is suggested to be required by external quality assurance mechanisms.

It must be stated that most of the measures included in the strategic plans have never been implemented. Many of them were in the form of indirect stimuli and recommendations to HEIs which are not directly enforceable. As Švec et al. (2015) describe, these recommendations rarely affect the actual behavior of HEIs since other environmental pressures, particularly related to funding mechanisms, are much stronger. In this respect, ignoring soft stimuli and focusing one’s strategy on key threats and opportunities can be considered rational, although it might lead to side-lining the essential mission of higher education in society. Moreover, lack of awareness of the issue and subjective beliefs of HEIs leadership members affect the institutional policies, as described in the national report in the HEDOCE study (Vossensteyn et al. 2015).25

To sum up the development on the national level: study success and dropout have been on the agenda of the national policy in the Czech Republic at least since 2000 but have never become the top priority. The economic reasoning was dominant in the period of 2005-2010. However, interviews with HEIs leadership representatives confirm that it is still vivid in the community, together with the belief that the broadened access is the primary source of the dropout increase. Several measures were suggested to stimulate study success but many of them were too vague, indirect in effect, and therefore often remained unimplemented. Although there may be initiatives taken on the national level or some at the level of individual institutions and departments, study success policy is not a priority for the majority of HEIs since it is not directly linked to funding. Currently,

25 However, it is to be pointed out that this article builds on interviews conducted in 2014 and 2015. More recent data indicate the situation in Czech HEIs is gradually changing and the topic of dropout becomes important due to an increasing competition for students in the time of demographic decline. Nevertheless, in the time of submitting this paper, our 2016 interviews were not completed and the data processed properly.
an emphasis is being put on the enforcement of institutional-level analysis and measures in order to reflect the specific features of individual HEIs and disciplines.

We can also give a short overview of the main development on the institutional level. When analyzing public documents (yearly reports and strategic plans) and interviewing the leadership of selected Czech higher education institutions, we observed the following prevailing trends. First, we can see that the study success issue has been paid increased attention by almost all higher education institutions in the Czech Republic. Second, institutions with higher dropout rates pay more attention to the topic. Third, Czech higher education institutions seem not to reflect adequately some important factors influencing the study success (for example student social integration), therefore they are not able to use all available approaches to address the issue.

Conclusions and discussion

Although the HEDOCE study (Vossensteyn et al. 2015) contributed substantially to the mapping of the policy initiatives in place, very little is known about which measures are the most effective (and efficient) to stimulate student success, and should therefore be recommended for implementation in other HE systems. Evaluation of the actual effects of measures in international comparison has been very limited so far. There are at least three essential barriers for such initiatives:

First, there is no common understanding of the actual phenomena that would be shared across the EU countries. Definitions often vary even within one country and there is no consensus on what should be considered dropout. Do we take those students who switch programs or move from one HEI to another as dropouts? What about those who discontinue their studies for a couple of years and come back later? Should we impose time limits for successful completion? These and other questions are answered differently in individual countries, and therefore, it is impossible to compare the data.

Second, even if a shared understanding of success and dropout is reached, a consensus on the method and calculation of dropout rates would be needed. Data aggregated on different levels (single study program, HEI, discipline, level of study, national system ...) will provide different results. Multiple indicators (completion rate, dropout rate, retention rate) as well as methods (true cohort vs. cross-section) are applicable – for more information see Vossensteyn et al. (2015: 30-37). Even relatively minor differences in data collection procedures and computational methods might lead to substantial variation in results.

Third, even if comparable data were collected in all countries and one method was used to calculate the dropout rates, effectiveness of individual measures would be difficult to estimate. The effect of a single measure can hardly be separated from a broader policy mix. It can be expected that the outcomes of individual policy programs will be affected by other policy actions as well as by the specific culture and social environment of each
country, HEI and department. Moreover, due to the complexity of policy-making processes, identical measures are rarely implemented in two or more countries.

We can further state that study success policy is currently formed in many European countries with substantial variance in the instruments and measures applied, priority assigned, as well as the reasoning of the issue adopted by dominant stakeholders. Although a direct comparison of effects of individual policy mixes is hardly possible due to a lack of shared definitions and incomparable outcome data in European countries, the area still represents an interesting opportunity for research of higher education policy formation and governance on institutional, national, and international level.

Visegrad countries are of special interest to us due to their geographical proximity, shared communist past and a rapid post-revolutionary development of higher education systems. A short review of major student success initiatives in the V4 countries reveals substantial similarities in the policy trends.

In all V4 countries increased dropout rates are considered to be a result of broadening access to HE, the issue is dealt with in particular in terms of economic efficiency and in no country does the topic dominates the agenda. Although numerous measures are mentioned in the country reports, improvement in student success has rarely been their only or main goal. The impact of dropout policies has rarely been evaluated so far, and if so, the time-to-degree aspect is usually emphasized over completion. On the other hand, a substantial part of the measures was implemented in 2011 or later, so more evaluations can be expected to come.

It seems that V4 countries in general share a rather similar approach toward the study success and dropout issue. It is taken as an indispensable and integral part of the higher education system – as an independent variable which cannot or should not be changed. Despite rich theoretical literature emphasizing a significant role of social and academic integration and individual needs, almost no measures along these lines have been neither initiated nor implemented.

One can say that the systems have not yet fully undergone a systemic internal change taking into account a fundamental shift from the elite into the mass or more recently even the universal higher education. A universal system requires different approaches and techniques in order to accommodate a more diversified student body and individuals with various needs and expectations. It seems that many leaders of the higher education institutions (and not only them) in the V4 countries are still “mentally” operating in the elite system while facing a system which has changed significantly. In addition, unlike many Western European countries, the transition from the elite system into the (almost) universal one took less than 25 years.

26 Mass higher education is usually considered when it contains at least 15 percent of the relevant age cohort and universal when at least 50 percent of the age cohort participates (Trow, 1972).
Presumably, a more detailed comparative exercise across the region would allow us to reflect similar values and beliefs driving the HE development shared in the four countries. It seems that historical, social, and political experience connected with the communist regimes after the Second World War still plays a very important role in how various issues are approached and dealt with. Some aspects of the dropout topic, such as its controversy and normative ambiguity, are a good case to start with when exploring these hidden driving forces behind the policy discussions.

References


An Appropriate Organizational Model for Community Colleges in Hungary

Gabriella Keczer

Abstract

The Hungarian government has recently decided to establish a new type of higher education institution: the Hungarian version of the American community college. While the existence of an institution that serves the local needs is inevitable, the organizational solution elaborated by the Hungarian educational government raises doubts about the viability and efficiency of the so called “community higher education centres” (CHEC). Based on extensive research we propose the modification of and amendments to the present organizational model. Our suggestions do not overrule the most important governmental principle: CHECs should not be independent institutions, but affiliates of existing universities. Yet, according to our proposal, CHECs should be more than just training locations of faraway universities. We are convinced that the organizational solutions outlined in our paper are more appropriate in terms of management, quality, learning outcomes and local impact. We underpin our proposals by analyzing the deficiencies of the current model, building on our primary survey and the foreign experiences well documented in the literature.

Keywords: community college, university governance, affiliate campus, local engagement

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Introduction

In the communist era, Hungarian higher education followed the Soviet system with relatively small, specialized institutions of two levels: colleges and universities. After the change of the political system large universities were created by integrating formerly independent colleges and universities. Several former colleges and college faculties were upgraded to university status. The notion of community college first appeared in the new higher education strategy of the present government in 2014. It says that – following the US model – community colleges should be established in regions with no higher education provision, to keep educated workforce there and to foster local development (EMMI 2014). Then, in the 2015 amendment of the higher education act of 2011 it was declared that the new type of institutions would be called “community higher education centres” (CHECs), and they would not be independent institutions, just training locations of existing universities (HEA 2011). The detailed regulation says that we follow the French model instead of the American one, emphasizing again that CHECs are not higher education institutions, just training locations of one or more universities. It also declares that CHECs should have staff only for facility management, there will be no local faculty nor local student services. As far as the establishment of CHECs is concerned, local government(s) and/or local corporations and/or churches should found a nonprofit organization that operates the local CHEC (Gov. reg. 2015). So far, 4 CHECs have been established in Hungary and the foundation of one more received permission from the ministry.

Providing the fact that this is a new type of institution in Hungarian higher education, it is necessary to have a comprehensive model for its status, structure, governance and operation. The success of any kind of institution strongly depends on the organizational solutions chosen. The current organizational model of CHECs raises doubts about their viability and efficiency. There is a serious contradiction between the chosen organizational model and the expected mission. The CHECs are expected to foster regional economic development, to be intellectual centers. But if only training premises are established on the new higher education locations, and the local actors are responsible only for providing the infrastructure, and all the other functions and capacities remain at the gestor universities, the expectations may not be met. Another problem is that in the given operational model some tasks and decisions, like assessing the training needs of the region, deciding on the proper training portfolio, coordinating between the local actors and the gestor universities etc. do not have an owner. It may be assumed that the CHECs, with ‘travelling’ professors and no local student services do not provide the same learning experience to the students as the gestor universities. The

28 Community colleges were first established in the USA in the 1900s as an alternative to the four-year universities. Their main characteristics is that they give practical training locally and at affordable prices (Dobbins 2008). In 2015 there were 1123 community colleges in the USA, with more than 12 million students (AACC 2016).
governance of the CHECs also has some flaws: without a board including representatives of the local actors and the gestor universities certain authority clashes may emerge and it will be difficult to provide a joint strategy.

Because of the fact that when writing the paper no CHECs have started their operation, we do not have any experiences with them. The aforesaid assumptions are based on international experiences, and are deducted from organizational and educational theory. Taking the experiences of other countries and the principles of organizational and educational theory into consideration when establishing and/or fine-tuning a new type of HEI may reduce the possible flaws and increase the chance of viability and effectiveness. Thus, we propose some modifications and amendments to the present organizational model.

**Methodology**

To underpin our suggestion, we explored the theoretical background, the different foreign solutions and experiences (both in the USA and in Europe) and learned the opinion and ideas of the actors involved in a potential CHEC in Hungary. We studied the history, mission, operation, governance, faculty, relations, local engagement etc. of the American community college; its counterparts in European countries. We also inquired into the challenges of operating and managing multi-campus systems, the conflicts in the relationship of a university and its affiliate institutions; the lessons learnt from the reforms aiming to establish a new type of higher education institution in other countries. We studied the possibility of establishing a CHEC in a county center in South East Hungary with the University of Szeged as a gestor institution. Thus, an interview was made with the rector of the university and the opinion of the local government was explored through several meetings with the vice mayor and through communication with the municipality in writing. The former mayor, now MP, who initiated the project was also interviewed. The secondary schools of the potential CHEC location were asked, but only one of them responded to our inquiry. The local corporations and enterprises were more cooperative: more than 50 employers answered to our questionnaire.

**Community colleges and similar institutions in the USA and Europe**

**Community colleges in the USA**

The community college as a special type of higher education institution was born in the USA in 1900. The basic idea was to provide higher education locally. Nowadays more than 50% of students study in community colleges (Dobbins 2008). In 2015 there were 1123 community colleges in the USA (AACC). It means that community colleges constitute 25% of all the HEIs (Tollefson 2009). Their mission is to grant everybody the opportunity to study: locally, openly and affordably. They may be a bridge to university, to a profession and a job, or to lifelong learning and self-actualization. Thus, they provide bachelor, vocational and non-credit short-cycle training programs. Moreover, they show strong local engagement and have significant local impact.
Community college faculty comprises of full-time and part-time teachers. On the one hand, having part-time faculty not only spares money but, by having a ‘real-life’ job as well, they bring their expertise and practical knowledge in to the colleges (AACC). On the other, there are qualification, quality and career opportunity issues regarding community college faculty (Twigg 1989, Lankard 1993, NCES).

As far as the operation and the governance of community colleges are concerned, some of them are independent colleges, others are affiliate campuses of universities. In the latter case, the college may have a governing board of its own, or it may be governed by the board of the university. Similarly, the administration of a multi-campus system may be centralized or decentralized, in the latter case with full administrative staff on each campus (Creswell et al. 1985, Lombardi et al 2002). Each solution has advantages and drawbacks thoroughly discussed in the literature.

**Similar institutions in Europe**

In each European country, we find institutions that differ from (research) universities and have some characteristics of the American community college. Most of them provide lower-level (bachelor) degrees, and some run professional/higher vocational training as well. Practice-orientation in the education is a common feature, and local engagement is often emphasized, but – unlike their Hungarian counterparts – they were not pronouncedly established to serve the needs of the local labor market. They differ from the Hungarian CHECs in that these institutions are independent in most of the countries. Although, in England further education colleges may be run as university franchises, and in several countries (Austria, Denmark, Finland, Belgium) recent governmental policy decrees integration in the higher education system, and compels colleges to cooperate with universities.

In England *university colleges* are institutions that award taught degrees but which do not meet the numerical criteria of a full-time equivalent of students for a university title. Many other institutions that may use the title *college* do not have degree awarding powers but provide complete courses leading to recognized UK degrees. Courses at these institutions are validated by institutions which have degree awarding powers. Higher education programs are also provided in *further education colleges*. Such programs are normally designed and approved directly by a higher education institution with degree awarding powers, under a formal recognition arrangement. This franchise arrangement means that a student is registered at a higher education institution, which receives the funding and is responsible for quality assurance. The higher education institution then passes a proportion of the funding to the further education college providing the teaching (Eurydice/England).

In Austria *Fachhochschulen*'s primary mission is to educate a workforce in line with the needs of the regional economy. In the academic year 2015/16 additional state-subsidized student places were created in the Fachhochschulen for the training of highly
qualified specialists. The assignment of student places is based on the condition of cooperating with universities (Federal Ministry of Science, Research and Economy).

In Germany Fachhochschulen were integrated in the system of higher education in the Federal Republic of Germany as a new type of institution in accordance with an agreement between the Länder from 1968. They fulfil their own specific educational function, characterized by an application-oriented bias in teaching and research, a usually integrated semester of practical training, and professors who have, in addition to their academic qualifications, gained professional experience outside the field of higher education. Berufsaakademien (professional academies) form part of the tertiary sector and combine academic training at a study institution with practical professional training in a training establishment, thus constituting a dual system (Eurydice/Germany).

In Denmark, there are Professionshøjskoler offering medium-cycle programs and Erhvervsakademier (business academy) offering short-cycle programs. All short-cycle higher educations are now concentrated in nine business academies, and the majority of the medium-cycle education is concentrated in 7 Professionshøjskoler (Eurydice/Denmark).

In Finland polytechnics have the status of independent legal entities and operate as limited companies owned by municipal consortia or private organizations. (Eurydice/Finland) According to the governmental policy Finnish universities and polytechnics are to unite into 4 leagues by 2020 to make the higher education system more effective and of better quality (Boer et al 2009).

In Sweden first and second cycle (undergraduate) education is given at an equivalent level at hogskolor and universities. What traditionally has differentiated the two types of institutions is that universities have had degree awarding powers at first, second and third cycle level while hogskolors have had degree awarding power at first and second cycle level. Since the early 2000s, some hogskolors have additional degree awarding powers at third cycle level regarding a specific disciplinary domain (Eurydice/Sweden).

In Estonia, an institution of professional higher education provides professional higher education, it may provide Master’s study and vocational training and at least two thirds of the students study on the basis of professional higher education curricula. The task of institutions of professional higher education is the preparation of motivated specialists with excellent professional skills and work attitudes at the first level of higher education, considering the needs of the labor market. Study is characterized by flexibility and practical focus of curricula as well as close cooperation with enterprises, vocational unions and other social partners (Eurydice/Estonia).

In Belgium (Flemish Community) university colleges organize the professional Bachelor’s programs and advanced Bachelor’s programs; within an association with one university they also organize academic Bachelor’s programs, Master’s and advanced Master’s
programs. An association is an official cooperation between one university and one or more university colleges. There are 5 associations in Flanders. The Flemish government decided to integrate the academic university college programs in the universities from the academic year 2013-2014. Since then only the universities can offer academic programs. The university colleges will only be able to offer professional Bachelor’s programs (and associate degrees), as they are to transfer their academic Bachelor’s and Master’s programs to the universities or integrate them with the universities (Eurydice/Belgium).

In the Netherlands hogescholen provide higher professional education. They contribute to the development of those occupations to which their teaching is geared and conduct design and development activities and research related to specific occupations. They provide bachelor’s degree programs and, in some cases master’s degree programs, and transfer knowledge for the benefit of the community (Eurydice/Netherlands).

A proposal for an appropriate organizational model

A proposal for the organization and staff of community higher education centers

According to the decision of the Hungarian government, no new higher education institution, faculty or department would be established in the new higher education locations. Instead it would be a nonprofit organization consisting of the local government(s), enterprises and/or churches (henceforth we refer to it as ‘the owner’). This organization would be responsible for providing infrastructure to the off-site training programs of remote universities. All the functions related to education, administration, student services would be located at the gestor universities (EMMI 2014, HEA 2011, Gov. reg. 2015).

At the same time, the strategic document of the government lists the following expectations regarding community colleges:

– they improve the competitive potential of underdeveloped regions,
– they strengthen the service providing character of higher education both towards the students and the local society,
– their everyday operation revolves around quality,
– they are intellectual centers of the region,
– they become crucial factors of local economic development (EMMI 2014).

It is a basic principle in management that the organizational solutions should support the mission of the given organization. But in the case of CHECs, a serious contradiction may be seen between the chosen organizational model and the expected mission. If only training premises are established on the new higher education locations, and the local actors are responsible only for providing the infrastructure, and all the other functions and capacities remain at the gestor universities, none of the above listed expectations will be met. We underpin our opinion with 3 statements.
A) In this operational model some tasks and decisions do not have an owner. For example, it is not clear who would:

- assess the training needs in a given region and provide follow-up,
- define the optimal training portfolio and change it when necessary,
- choose the proper gestor universities,
- coordinate and cooperate with the local enterprises and the gestor universities,
- find resident instructors,
- coordinate the trainings if there are more than one gestor universities.

At present, local governments, particularly in small municipalities, do not have the necessary capacities (labor force, experience, knowledge) to organize higher education provision and it obviously must not be the responsibility of the local enterprises either. Thus, the non-profit organization founded by them to operate the local CHEC may not able to carry out the above listed tasks.

One of the Hungarian county centers, the city of Bekescsaba has had a higher education institution since 1996. Yet, the vice mayor replied to our inquiry that since the operation of the institution has never been the responsibility of the local government and they never had an insight to its operation, at present they do not have the necessary resources (neither in quality nor in quantity), and the competencies to own and operate a CHEC. Then, what about smaller cities that never had education institutions above secondary school level, and have less human and financial resources than a county capital?

The case of the Sumeg CHEC suggests that local governments may make questionable decisions concerning the establishment of a CHEC, the selection of the gestor institution and the training portfolio. The local government of Sumeg (a city in Veszprem county with a population of less than 7000) decided to establish a CHEC in cooperation with the Wekerle Sandor Business College (a private college in Budapest founded in 2006). The CHEC called John Henry Newman Education Centre was to be operated by the John Henry Newman Education Center Ltd. The owner of the Ltd. is the University of the Future of the Carpathian Basin Foundation (a private foundation located in Pécs in Baranya county). The CHEC planned to start business BA training programs. We have serious doubts about the establishment of a higher education institution in Sumeg, since there are several higher education institutions with reputation and tradition in the vicinity (Keszthely in 30 kms, Zalaegerszeg in 50 kms, Veszprem in 60 kms), and the concept of the government was to establish CHECs in regions where there is no higher education provision. Choosing business training as the educational profile of the Sumeg CHEC is also questionable, since business training is already available in Zalaegerszeg and Veszprem. Still, the Sumeg CHEC got permission from the ministry and the training was to start in September, 2016. The partners the municipality had chosen also turned to be unfortunate. It does not seem reasonable to choose a college in Budapest and a foundation in a third location as partners (this entire setup seems rather vague) instead
of the adjacent University of Veszprem. In academic circles there are doubts about the professional content of the University of the Future project and about the professional performance of the academics involved in the John Henry Newman Education Center. In addition to the professional doubts, financial problems also arose recently. First the owner of the Ltd. that operates the CHEC dismissed the CEO of the Ltd. due to the suspicion of financial fraud, there is an investigation in progress. Then the municipality of Sumeg initiated a liquidation process against the Ltd., because it owes the municipality for several months and is not willing to pay in spite of several calls. The local government announced that due to these scandals the training may not start.29 This case seems to be the evidence of a systemic error, and clearly shows the consequences of the lack of expertise and coordination. But the case of another CHEC, established in Hatvan, shows that with a well-grounded concept and the commitment of the municipal, academic and corporate partners allow more optimism concerning the feasibility and usefulness of the program. In Hatvan, the largest employer, the Bosch Electronics Ltd. and the local government together initiated the establishment of the CHEC, and two universities from Budapest joined. In the first semester 35 students were enrolled to electronic engineering BSc, 34 of whom are employees of Bosch, and one student of another local firm.30 Partnering with local employees and running contracted training for their employees may be a viable function of the CHECs.

**B) Off-site training in itself will not have the desired effect on local development.** By studying the mission and functions of American community colleges it is unequivocal that they serve the local community in several ways besides teaching. (For details see for example Mullin, Phillippe 2013). This mission is identified by phrases like “local engagement” or “the steward of the place”. (About the regionally engaged university see Goddard 1999, Chatterton-Goddard, 1999, 2000, Reindl 2005, “Stepping Forward as Stewards of Place”, AASCU 2002). This mission – that is only a “third role” in the case of leading national and research universities – is of equal importance with teaching and is more important than research in case of small local colleges. Local engagement may include a wide range of activities, depending on the characteristics of the city and the institution.

- Professional counselling: Higher education institutions often provide professional counselling to local enterprises (especially to micro enterprises generally lacking the necessary human resources), building on the expertise of the faculty and the creativity of students. It can involve finding technical solutions to production problems, organizational development programs, marketing campaigns, etc. Thus, small enterprises get professional support locally at affordable prices, while students can work on real-life problems and the institution obtains extra revenue.

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29 http://index.hu/gazdasag/2016/07/14/felszamoljak_a_botranyt_kavart_jovoegyetemet

30 http://hkfkk.hu/index.php/hallgatoink
Participation in local governance: Faculty generally take part in the different bodies of local governance and regional development. Thus, local governing actors can use the expertise of the professors. Moreover, higher education and the institution are certainly included in local and regional strategies.

Volunteering, civic initiatives: Higher education institutions initiate and flagship different civic programs directed towards the local community, most often in the frame of social responsibility. Taking part in them may serve as the compulsory professional practice for students, and they may get credits for their participation. The programs can vary from environmental initiatives to projects for social equality and inclusion.

Cultural and sport events open to the public.

Knowledge sharing: Faculty and students of the higher education institution often organize lectures, presentations, seminars, and workshops to educate the public (“open university”), as well as hold preparatory courses for secondary school students. (For good examples see OECD 2007.)

Training programs and local engagement activities jointly have an effect on local development and on the competitive potential of the region. If CHECs are only premises where commuting professors come and go to give lectures, we obviously cannot speak about “intellectual centers” or about “crucial (f)actors of local economic development”.

C) The planned CHECs do not provide the same learning experience to the students as the gestor universities. A higher education provision limited to lecturing by commuting professors, with student services available only at remote universities (in each case the gestor university is farther away than a commuting distance) would deprive students from everything we call learning experience and student life. This problem is well-known in international literature. According to Altbach (2010) and Bambrick (2002) branch campuses provide poorer learning experience than main campuses. Allison and Eversole (2008) emphasizes that both faculty and students may feel themselves on the periphery on branch campuses, Hilary et al (2006) talks about branch campuses feeling marginal.

By analyzing the Hungarian government regulation of 2015 we can see the following “division of labor” between a CHEC and its gestor university:
Everything that makes an organization a higher education institution is located at the gestor university. Of course, info-communication technology may bridge the distance between the students of the CHEC and the gestor university in certain fields, but it does not solve the problem of intercity professors\(^{31}\), it does not replace mentoring, talent management, joint student-professor research, direct communication with teachers and administrative staff, taking part in professional programs, using the library, etc.

Thus, we agree with the Hungarian Accreditation Committee’s opinion: The establishment of CHECs will lead to “garage universities” and the phenomenon of “intercity professors” raises serious doubts concerning the quality of teaching. It would lead to the dilution of higher education provision (MAB 2015). Foreign experiences verify it; according to Singh and Khanna it is difficult to keep quality when faculty is employed both on the main and the branch campuses (Singh & Khanna 2011).

The following is suggested.

**To problem A):** In each of the new higher education locations a professional body should be operating to perform the tasks listed above in point A), at least on the county level, and it must have the necessary capacities to do so. It should not necessarily be a newly set up body; it can be the owner (i.e. the nonprofit organization founded by the local actors) itself, but with more functions than at present. In cases where there is not enough human resources and expertise at the moment, additional funding and strong cooperation of the local actors may contribute to the necessary capacity building. Another solution can be to assign the above-mentioned tasks to the already existing County Committees of Development and Training\(^{32}\) by delegating higher education experts to them. Either setting up a new body or assigning the new functions to existing ones with the necessary capacity-building can ensure that the decisions concerning the establishment of a CHEC in a certain region, the definition of the training needs and the

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\(^{31}\) Intercity professor is a term used in Hungary for faculty travelling by intercity train to off-site training locations of universities or to institutions where they are employed in a second job. The term refers to the fact that intercity professors take a morning train, hold their lectures and go home with the evening train usually only once a week or biweekly. Earlier, the regulations limited the employment of intercity professors.

\(^{32}\) These committees are responsible for coordinating vocational education on county level.
optimal training portfolio, the selection of the gestor institution(s), the control of the CHEC’s operation is a deliberate, professional and well-coordinated process.

**To problem B)**: In the new higher education locations, certain capacities should be established that are able to perform typical functions and activities of community colleges other than teaching, related to the traditional local engagement of this type of institution. Some examples of these functions are:

- working with local enterprises, secondary schools, nonprofit organizations and civic communities,
- initiating and taking part in lifelong learning and contract training,
- organizing professional, cultural, sport activities open to external audiences,
- initiating social responsibility programs,
- doing fundraising,
- initiating and managing joint projects with local actors (clusters, consortia, EU tenders),
- organizing and sustaining alumni.

The case of Bekescsaba shows that without deliberately facilitating these functions, an affiliate campus does not necessarily become an organic part of the city. The municipality told us that, “the institution somehow always stayed away from the cultural, civil and student life of the city”. They added that this attitude should be changed, the college should be incorporated to the city and should open towards local actors, especially towards secondary schools.

It is not likely that all these can be initiated and pursued by the staff at the gestor university – being far away and having no connection with the city – even if the gestor university would have the necessary capacity. But due to the permanent financial cutbacks in Hungarian higher education, gestor universities do not have spare resources (human and financial) to deal with the local engagement issues of off-site training locations. Thus, capacity building is inevitable, and it is definitely the most effective to locate it at the CHECs. According to Penucci and Mayfield, when the mission of a branch campus is different from that of the main campus (like in the case of the CHECs and the gestor universities in Hungary – G.K.) the branch should be rather independent in terms of local administration and management (Penucci, Mayfield 2003). A small, but professional staff and sufficient financial resources have to be provided in order to obtain activities in CHECs that make them “intellectual centers” and “significant factors of local development”.

**To problem C)**: CHECs should have permanent local staff, including faculty and administrative professionals providing certain student services on-site.

As far as the local faculty is concerned, gestor universities should involve professionals from local enterprises and organizations in the teaching, either as lecturers or as master
instructors (a new category introduced in the amendment of the higher education act). They can guarantee that students get practical knowledge, and that they establish a link between the economic actors, local organizations and higher education. The other side of the coin is that part-time faculty is only a partial solution – literature shows that it is a permanent issue in the American community college system. Thus, having resident faculty besides the local part-time professionals and the commuting professors is essential. “The fundamental defining issue of a genuine branch, as opposed to a rented site or ‘storefront operation’, is the presence of a resident faculty” (Fonseca & Bird 2007).

However, in order to make CHECs (and other non-research-university-type higher education institutions) attractive to cutting-edge professionals, to convince young faculty with potential to choose a CHEC as a workplace (and an underdeveloped rural area as a home) an alternative career model is needed. The idea of an alternative career model is based on the distinct tasks and roles of CHEC faculty, deriving from the different missions of the different types of higher education institutions. Instead of the “publish or perish” paradigm, the alternative career model should reward competencies and achievements in teaching and local engagement. (See later in detail.)

Concerning the administrative staff, there are tasks and services that must be provided locally in order to grant a comprehensive educational experience to both students and faculty, such as:

- scheduling training,
- ETR/Neptun assistance,
- library and joint services,
- student administration and services,
- organizing and coordinating practical training (complementary professional practice for students, dual training),
- assisting commuting professors and external lecturers.

It does not mean that full-scale services should be provided locally – this would significantly decrease cost-efficiency. Yet, it is also unconceivable that students do not have anybody to turn to locally with their administrative or educational issues, and that faculty and other lecturers have no professional assistance on the training venue.

**A proposal for the governance and management of community higher educational centers**

Since in our concept CHECs are not only training premises, but organizations with several functions and a permanent staff, their governance and management have to be considered.

First, having a campus director seems to be necessary to supervise the permanent staff and to manage the daily operation of the CHEC. It should also be their task to represent
the CHEC in the decision-making procedures of the gestor university in operational issues, and to be an “interface” towards local actors. As Creswell says, having an administrative leader on the affiliate campus shifts the organizational solution towards decentralization (Creswell et al. 1985). In Australia, most of the branch campuses have a campus director. Their task is to oversee campus operations, implementing the strategy and ensure that the campus meets the local needs (Allison & Eversole 2008).

Since several local and non-local, educational and non-educational actors are involved in establishing and operating a CHEC, a supervising/governing board should be set up from the representatives of these actors. Only the establishment of a board can solve certain authority clashes and provide a joint strategy. Without a board, several authority clashes may emerge, namely: who’s right is it to make decisions regarding certain issues, the owner (the local nonprofit organization) or the gestor university/universities? The interests of the owner, of the local actors and of the gestor university may be different in several cases, just as there may be conflicts of interest between the gestor universities, if more than one is involved. It can be resolved only by corporative decision-making in fundamental and strategic issues. According to Lombardi, governing/supervising board can guarantee the necessary checks and balances, strategic platform, multifocal decision-making. There are several examples for branch campuses having governing boards on their own in the USA (Lombardi et. al. 2002).

CHEC, as a new type of institution in Hungarian higher education is a good opportunity for the government to introduce – as a pilot – shared governance in universities. There are two general types of governance systems in higher education: unicameral and shared. In the unicameral system one body (senate or university council) is responsible for both strategic-financial and academic issues. This body generally does not contain external members, just faculty and students. This is called the European-continental model, since most of the countries of continental Europe have applied this system for a long time. In shared governance, a board is responsible for strategic and financial decisions, while the senate deals only with academic issues. The majority of the board members are generally external, representing the different non-academic stakeholders. This system was born in England and the United States, and is nowadays rather widespread in the world. This is due to the fact that in the last decades of the 20th century, most of the European countries (including The Netherlands, Belgium, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland, Italy, Spain, Austria) switched to shared governance. In the post-communist countries, there were attempts to introduce shared governance in the first decade of the 21st century, but they were aborted.33 (See Keczer 2010, 2014 for details.) However, unicameral governance has several drawbacks. We agree with Taylor: nowadays universities provide professional services in a competitive environment, thus a certain amount of authority-sharing is necessary for their successful governance.

33 The latest amendment of the higher education act introduced the so called konzisztórium, a board including external members appointed by the ministry, and they were set up this year in state universities.
Gayle interprets shared governance as a joint responsibility and cooperation of board members, university leaders, faculty and students based on mutual respect and open communication (Gayle et al. 2003). Or as Fried says: good governance keeps the integrity of academic values, but meanwhile makes the university responsive to the expectations of its environment (Fried 2006). These ideas that justify shared governance are inevitably relevant in the case of CHECs, since they are established as a response to external, local needs, and their founding, funding and operation is a multi-player game.

The board should be composed of the representatives of:

- the owner of the CHEC (local government and enterprises and churches if they are involved)
- other local actors, stakeholders (secondary schools, county assembly, chamber of commerce, regional development agency, largest employees, NGOs, public organizations)
- gestor university/universities

The primary task of the board is to define the mission and strategy of the CHEC and to supervise its accomplishment. The campus director is appointed by, and is accountable to the board. Subsequently, the board synchronizes the different interests of the actors involved, monitors the effects of the CHEC on the region, and makes the fine tuning, if necessary. So, the board does not deal with operational issues, but has authority in all those questions that need the joint decision of the different actors.

A crucial issue concerning CHECs is finding the right training portfolio, namely, what and how to teach. The training in CHECs has to satisfy both quality standards and the needs of the region. It means that training must be standardized but flexible at the same time. The task here is to match the expectations of local employees with academic excellence. From an organizational point of view, the main campus – affiliate campus relation is a typical divisional setup, the question being: where to place the decision on the training portfolio, to the center or to the division?

This divisional (i.e. hierarchical) thinking does not solve the problem outlined above. If the center (the gestor university) has the right to decide, then local aspects might be overshadowed by the general academic interests of the gestor university. The needs of the local employees for specialized, practice-oriented training and for up-to-date, ready-to-use knowledge may be ignored; at best because of guarding the academic standards, at worst because of the ivory-tower attitude or the lack of capacity to flexibly change the training content and methods. If the owner of the CHEC has the right to say the final word in what and how to teach, general academic standards might be overshadowed by the expectations of the local employees at best, by pure financial interests or the lack of expertise at worst.
A matrix approach could be a solution. In matrix organizational structures, two or more equal depositaries of authority make joint decisions, taking into consideration the professional standpoints of all the participants. Thus, guaranteeing a decision of maximum professionalism. In the case of CHECs this means that neither the gestor university, nor the owner has the right to say the final word. They make the decisions jointly, and the aspects of the gestor university and the local actors are taken into consideration with equal weight. Local actors contribute to the decision with their knowledge of the region and its special needs, while the academic units of the gestor university bring in academic standards and disciplinary professionalism. As far as the training methods are concerned, the university knows what is the best pedagogic method to deliver a certain knowledge, and the local actors can suggest ways to make theoretical knowledge practical (e.g. by dual training). Thus, a matrix approach may provide graduates with solid theoretical and useful practical knowledge.

**A proposal for an alternative career model for faculty**

According to Altbach (2010), the greatest challenge in a main campus – affiliate campus relation is the provision of faculty on the affiliate campus. In Hungary, a key factor in the success of CHECs is a proper training staff. Especially in underdeveloped regions that do not have higher education so far, where there is no sufficient supply of professionals to build a faculty entirely from the locals. Professionals of local organizations may naturally compose a significant part of CHECs’ teaching staff (part-time), and the newly introduced category of “master teachers”34 opened the door to it in legal terms. However, we saw when studying this issue in US community colleges that part-time faculty is only a partial solution. Its advantages are sometimes outweighed by its drawbacks, as literature clearly shows. (See Twigg 1989, McGuire 1993, Sczhuetz 2002 and Lankard 1993.) Yet, to provide full-time teachers from the gestor university, then either the problem of intercity professors or the necessity of relocating faculty must be faced.

It is obvious that with ‘intercity professors’ the quality of the training cannot be granted and local engagement is impossible. These people would spend more time on route than in the classroom, and would not be available for the CHEC students and the local community after class. The alternative also has drawbacks: “dragging out” faculty from the gestor university and relocating them to a CHEC would put them into a rather disadvantageous position concerning their career prospects and life quality. It may be assumed that the tenured professors would not be moved from a research university in the capital to a CHEC of a small town in an underdeveloped region to teach in vocational

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34 One may become a master teacher at a university if they do not have a scientific career (PhD), but have a master degree and a minimum 10 years’ work experience in a certain professional field. They may be employed full-time or part-time (HEA 2011, Gov. reg. 2015). The purpose of the introduction of this new type of faculty is to allow practicing professionals of the corporate world to engage in higher education, to make it more practice-oriented.
training, but junior faculty at the beginning of their career. However, since at present, in the traditional career model, promotion depends almost exclusively on scientific output – faculty located at CHECs does not have a chance to climb this career ladder. They lack research infrastructure, they are far from the academic community, they have a higher workload in teaching, etc.

What makes the issue more complex is that CHECs teachers face different pedagogical challenges from those in a research university. Due to the mission of the community college-type institutions, their faculty has to deal with a more heterogeneous student group including young people and adults, students entering and re-entering higher education, full-time and part-time students and on-the-job trainees, etc. They differ in age, motivation, prior knowledge, personal and professional goals, and family background. To educate these diverse student groups special knowledge, competencies and attitude is necessary (Sprouse et al. 2008; Twombly 2005 quoting: Cejda 2010).

Our suggestion is the introduction of an alternative career model for higher education faculty. By alternative career model we mean:

- a role perception that is different from that of the research university (RU) and,
- a special promotion system based on the distinct role of a non-RU professor.\textsuperscript{35}

The alternative career model is based on the notion that teachers’ roles and tasks are different in the different types of higher education institutions. Along this line, the alternative career model should expect and reward performance that is important and valuable in a CHEC with its special mission. These are related primarily to teaching and to local engagement, since these are the most important elements of CHECs’ mission. Thus, achievements in teaching efficiency, innovative pedagogical solutions, and cooperation with local actors should be more important than research and scientific output in the case of CHEC faculty. The alternative career model must also count with the fact that the conditions (e.g. to conduct high-quality research) are different in a CHEC and in a RU. It must be emphasized that there must be a thoroughfare between the traditional and the alternative career model, since the personal goals and professional opportunities of any faculty may change in course of their career. The alternative career path should not be inferior to “university-type” careers. Performances, although in different fields of activity, should be the same in quantity and quality, thus, they should result in the same rewards and prestige.

\textsuperscript{35} The alternative career model is relevant not only in the case of CHECs, but also for other non-RU teachers, e.g. for faculty of a college of applied sciences.
Summary

Underpinned by the extensive study on community colleges and primary research we concluded that the government’s concept of the so called CHECs has certain flaws. Therefore, we propose some modifications and amendments, not overruling the government’s decision on CHECs not being independent institutions. Nevertheless,

- concerning the organization and personnel: a professional coordinating body, permanent staff, resident faculty,
- concerning the governance and management: a strategic board, a campus director and matrix solutions,
- concerning the faculty: an alternative career model

are necessary to facilitate CHECs in fulfilling their mission, engaging in local development, and providing a full learning experience.

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Acts and regulations


Homepages

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NCES: National Center for Education Statistics http://nces.ed.gov/
Social effects triggered by the expansion of higher education in Romania

Valer Veres

Abstract

The recent expansion of higher education in Romania triggered significant social changes in the composition of the country’s student population. Despite the presumption of merit-based admission, prior to 1990 the student body was mostly urban, the massive expansion of university places starting in the early 1990s opened the doors to higher education to a wider category of people. Additionally, certain policies were introduced to increase the access of minorities to higher education. This paper analyzes the characteristics of the student population in terms of gender, place of primary residence (urban/rural) and ethnicity, and it looks at whether the expansion of education contributed to the decrease in structural inequalities between the ethnic Hungarian and Roma minorities and the ethnic Romanian majority population.

Keywords: expansion of higher education, Romania, access and equity, Hungarian, Roma minority, educational attainment

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Introduction

Among young Romanians an expansion marked by the significant rise in the number of those attending middle and higher education institutions has triggered changes. These changes affect young Romanians in general, including young people from Transylvania, who are also being admitted to educational levels beyond general education. However, the circumstances for these changes are determined by the social effects entailed by the regime change.

The empirical foundation of our research is represented by the 2002 and 2011 census data and student surveys from Romania. Moreover, in the analysis of the number of students we have used the official and published statistics of the National Institute of Statistics from Bucharest, as well as the data from the Ministry of Education. Our research proceeds from the fact that historically the evolution of educational chances was guided by three main principles: inherited “merit”, and the principles of equality and equity.

Inherited merit was characteristic to the first period of being admitted to a higher education institution. It represented inherited merits which were at the basis of admission to higher education institutions, but these merits depended on social circumstances. Thus, whether that person was lucky enough to be born into a favorable social environment or position. The position of upper class, urban, (white) men was the most advantageous, seasoned with local variations (see Roemer 1998, Clancy et al 2007.139).

The second period started in the middle of the 20th century, when the obstacles which impeded women, ethnic and racial minorities, and those with more disadvantaged social origins from being admitted to higher education institutions were gradually removed in the name of equality.

Although higher education started to become mass education, social inequalities were being reproduced within the structure of higher education, which was differentiated according to institution type and scientific field. Now in the third phase, the principles of equity and equal opportunities have become norms guiding admission to universities during the last two decades (Clancy et al 2007.138). A more intense mass-production of higher education also began, at a different pace, during this third phase.

Our main research questions in this paper are the following:

How did the educational level change as a result of the extension of higher education, especially the percentage of higher education institution graduates between 2002 and 2011?

How does the expansion of education prevail in the completion of social justice and in decreasing/eliminating ethnic-linguistic inequalities?
Which are the main factors of inequality in higher education in the context of Roma and Hungarian minorities from Romania?

What are the structural factors impeding the “catching-up” of minorities with the Romanian majority?

The literature about educational inequalities provides the framework for understanding the Romanian situation. Bourdieu stated that students with more valuable social and cultural capital fare better than the other students with a lower social and cultural background. The social reproduction describes adequately how ethnicity/race and class influence the transmission of educational equalities (Bourdieu 1977, 1990, see also Boudon 1974).

Blossfeld and Shavit (1993) point out that mass education is inherently unequal. Consequently, the differences in educational attainment persist between children from different social strata.

The factors which mediate the intergenerational transmission of educational opportunity inequality between strata are now well understood and include economic and cultural capital, significant others’ role, and the availability of educated models in the social network of the children. However, they conclude that persistent inequality is valid in a weaker version (Blossfeld & Shavit 1993).

In order to answer our research questions we shall first clarify certain concepts and situations. In minority situations, when analyzing the topic of education, not only is proportionate participation at different educational levels important, but also the language of education. In the sense of Papp’s typology, one could talk about education in mother tongue. This is the case if the members of a national minority receive education in their mother tongue and if that education comprises all levels of schooling. (Papp 2011: 5)

In Romania, there is a relatively extended minority language education system, especially in Hungarian, but not in all fields, neither in a professional, nor in a geographical sense. At the level of primary, general, and high-school education a relatively extended educational network is functioning. This is especially true in counties where the conditions are given, primarily due to the reason of headcount. In order to aid the equality of chances to education in Hungarian and other minority languages, the Romanian state grants a higher quota, at the level of higher education per student receiving education in Hungarian, for multicultural and multilingual universities. The number of which is currently 3.

Furthermore, the second most numerous national minority, the Roma do not speak their original language, but they speak Romanian, and to a smaller proportion Hungarian. Therefore, in their case the issue is more to increase their chances of continuing education and to eliminate segregation. In this respect the Romanian government grants
separate places for Roma students at the level of university education, which are distributed among different universities from the country. Thus, Roma students do not compete with majority students for admission to these places.

Data and methodology

The empirical foundation of our research is the Romanian census data from the years 2002 and 2011, and other educational statistics from TEMPO online database of the National Institute of Statistics from Bucharest, which have been published, as well as the data of the Ministry of Education. Moreover, we used, to a small extent, a representative online survey among students in Cluj-Napoca, carried out during the summer of 2015 by the Sociology and Social Work Faculty of Babes-Bolyai University and Mathias Corvinus Collegium. The sample is made up of approximately 10% of the students, following a representative distribution according to the faculties and nationality. In our research, we applied online data registration, based on the internal registries and mailing lists of the Faculties, so more than 90% of the students received a request via e-mail to fill out the 10-minute online questionnaire. Our sample contains 3732 valid cases and the representative, weighted, and analyzed sample is of 3237 persons.

We have performed the empirical analysis by means of the following methods:

In the first part, where we analyzed the question of the expansion of higher education in Romania, we used the following indicator: the ratio of students enrolled in tertiary education, per 10.000 inhabitants, during the period from 1995 – 2013 and based on the TEMPO online database of the National Institute of Statistics from Bucharest. Then, based on the same database, we analyzed – by means of correlation with two variables – the distribution of the population enrolled in some form of education and the total population according to gender, locality type, and ethno-nationality.

In the second part of our study, we analyzed the chances of primary, general and high-school pupils of being admitted to university in Romania by means of odds ratios. Then we compared the calculated indicators according to gender, type of locality, and ethno-nationality.

After that, based on the sociological survey data we analyzed the social background of pupils in 2015 by means of two-variable analyses (Crosstabs, t-test) and the Chi-squared test, especially adhering to the variables used before, such as gender, locality type, the father’s educational level, and ethno-nationality.

The empirical analysis of the study contains bivariate and multivariate associations, indicators, and odds-ratios for comparisons between gender, type of residence and ethnicity, and their impact on access to higher education, from different levels (elementary, gymnasium, high school).
Main results

The expansion of higher education in Romania

In Romania, the expansion of education has triggered significant changes in the composition of the population according to educational levels and in relation to the emergence of the principle of equity. We analyze this phenomenon according to three aspects: age, status of residence and gender. We analyze these aspects by comparing the total population and the Hungarian population in Romania, also comparing with other minority populations from Romania.

The expansion of education influences the degree of employment among young people. Thus, it plays a crucial role in transforming the structure of the entire society. Already at the beginning of the 1990s, graduating high school had become a reality for most young people completing compulsory general education, which was 8 classes back then. Consequently, beginning with the educational reform from 2000, a significant part of those graduating high school could continue their education in higher education institutions. In part, this forecasts the conditions of the process to the formation of the middle class based on the experience of Hungary (Kolosi, 2000, Gabor 1993).

Kozma Tamás (2010) shows that both the Hungarian or international expansion processes are continuous in higher education, as other research points out too (Craig 1981; Meyer et al 1992, Clancy et al 2007).

However, by the end of 2000, the expansion of higher education had slowed down in Romania, according to the flow data of Ministry of Education (INS 2016). The number of students per 10 000 inhabitants increased from 150 to 442 between 1995 and 2007, and decreased in few years later to 303 in 2011. A similar phenomenon was noticed in Hungary by Kozma, a few years earlier when the number of the students per 10 000 inhabitants increased from 100 to 420 between 1990 and 2006. Following this, it started to decrease annually, mostly because of a decrease of students in distance education and “evening”-education programs, yet the number of regular students did not decrease. (Kozma 2010) In the Romanian case, the decrease of the student population after 2008 also happened because of a decrease in the number of students enrolled in private, non-performant universities (Spiru Haret U. phenomenon).
According to the census data, compared to the earlier ten-year period (1992-2001) when the expansion of higher education was 127% at the national level and 114% for the Hungarian population, between 2002 and 2011 the expansion of the number of university students enrolled was only 15%, both among the total population of the country and the Hungarian population. One of the main reasons was the decrease in the school-aged population, which also gradually affected the universities. The number of high school students had increased among the age group population and the number of high school graduates had also significantly increased.

Based on the analysis of chances to continue education, it may be demonstrated that the principle of equity did not prevail in all respects by 2011. Ethnic inequalities in higher education from a Hungarian-Romanian perspective (and especially from a Roma-Romanian perspective) have subsisted. Even by 2011 ethnic Hungarians had smaller chances of attending universities according to both gender and locality type, this is also shown by Papp (2008.217) and Csata et al. (2010) for 2002. Men (boys) from urban areas are the most disadvantaged. This may be related to the fact that higher education in technical and agrarian fields – which is mostly chosen by men – is not available in Hungarian within the state education system of Romania (except for a few technical specialties, which function in Hungarian at Sapientia University and Babes-Bolyai University).

Analyzing the ethno-national composition of the population enrolled in some form of education between 1992 and 2011, we noticed that the total proportion of 6.28% of Hungarian students had exceeded the 5.8% age group proportion (6-20 years old), but there is a great difference between the situation at different educational levels. By 2002, young ethnic Hungarian people who were 2 to 6 years old in 1992, were the general school age to be attending university by 2011 and their proportion was around 5.5-5.7% at the national level. (see Veres 2015.83). In 1992, the proportion of ethnic Hungarian
students studying at higher educational institutions was 5.2%, which was below the 6.1% proportion of young Hungarian people among the 20-24-year-old age group. Yet, if in 2002 we also take into consideration students from Transylvania studying at higher education institutions from Hungary, the Hungarian students are then closer to the national age group proportion. Moreover, while the proportion of Roma children enrolled in elementary schools increased from 2.2% to 6.8% between 1992 and 2011, at the level of higher education their proportion remained insignificant (0.11 and 0.2, see table 1).

**Table 1. The proportion of enrolled students by educational level and ethnicity, Romania, 1992-2011**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Enrolled total</th>
<th>University</th>
<th>Post-secondary</th>
<th>High school</th>
<th>Vocational</th>
<th>8 classes</th>
<th>Elementary (4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Romanian</td>
<td>Hungarian</td>
<td>Roma</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>91.09</td>
<td>6.28</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Romanian</td>
<td>Hungarian</td>
<td>Roma and other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>90.9</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Romanian</td>
<td>Hungarian</td>
<td>Roma</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Unknown (no data)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>89.1</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Corrected data with the official number of 3090 students studying in Hungary**
**Rates are tailored to the population enrolled in education of known ethnic origin.**

As we observed, the proportion of Hungarians, on different educational levels, within the population enrolled in some form of education is more or less the same as the age group proportion of Hungarians. The state higher education in the Hungarian language is only granted at science universities, in the field of arts and medical education, but not in the field of technical or agronomical education. Private higher educational institutions (Sapientia University, Partium Christian University) have only initiated instruction in Hungarian in a limited number of technical fields, while they offer instruction in Hungarian in several scientific fields which have already been covered by state higher
education. Irrespective of these peculiarities, in 2011 the proportion of those studying in Hungarian had increased as compared to 2002. (see table 2)

Table 2. The number and the proportion of ethnic Hungarian enrolled population from Romania by teaching language, in higher education 2002, 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Teaching language</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Out of national level (%)</th>
<th>2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Post-secondary</td>
<td>Hungarian</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Romanian</td>
<td>3082</td>
<td>60.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>Hungarian</td>
<td>9268</td>
<td>33.7</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Romanian</td>
<td>18254</td>
<td>59.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hungary2</td>
<td>3090</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>(+0.5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>89764</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-secondary</td>
<td>Hungarian</td>
<td>1382</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Romanian</td>
<td>4240</td>
<td>75.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>Hungarian</td>
<td>12195</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Romanian</td>
<td>19535</td>
<td>61.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hungary2</td>
<td>3005</td>
<td>(+0.4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>173496</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


*Romanian citizens who learn in Hungary.

Obs. 1 The figures of the students who learnt in Romanian languages was obtained from comparing the date of censuses with Ministry registries. (See Murvai, 2002)


**The differential increase of higher education level according social structure**

While the population with higher education increased significantly in Romania, the percentage of ethnic Hungarian young people, studying at universities also increased. Their percentage among university students enrolled in Romania has risen from 4.9% in 2002 to 5.2% in 2011. However, this is still lower than the percentage of the 20-24-years-old population, which is approximately 6%. In case of the Roma minority, the percentage of the persons with a university degree remained under 1%.

Slightly generalizing, Papp stated that in the case of ethnic Hungarians in 2002, the educational level of the 10-year-old and older Hungarian population from Romania, as a rule, the proportion of Hungarians was lower at lower educational levels than at the level of higher education (Papp 2008: 217). This statement generally kept its validity even in 2011, when the proportion of higher education graduates among the 10-year-old or older Hungarian population was only 10.2%, therefore more than 4% lower than the total population of the country.
Table 3. The highest level of education of the population over 10 years old, according to residence type and ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>University</th>
<th>Post-secondary</th>
<th>High school</th>
<th>Vocational</th>
<th>8 classes</th>
<th>Elementary (4 classes)</th>
<th>No school</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romanian</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarian</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roma</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romanian</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>30.9</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarian</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roma</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romanian</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarian</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roma</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Veres (2015 and INS: 2013b)

According to the 2011 census, 3.2% of the Romanian population holds post-secondary and foremen’s vocational educational degrees, 3.3% of both Romanians and Hungarians. Almost one-third of the total population holds a high-school degree. This proportion is similar for Romanians (24.7%), while the proportion of those holding a high-school degree is 2.5% higher among Hungarians (27%).

We can notice that the educational level of the Roma population is far worse than that of Romanians or Hungarians. Only 0.7% hold higher educational degrees, 4.9% a high-school diploma and 34% are only primary school graduates, while 20.2% have not attended school and they are functionally or actually illiterate (see table 2).

There are certain peculiarities according to genders: firstly, as compared to the situation from 2002, the situation had changed by 2011 – by then, women had higher educational levels. Therefore, at the national level the proportion of university graduates among women was 15%, while this proportion was 14.4% among men. This was also reflected in the case of Hungarians from Romania: the proportion of university graduates was 9.8% among men and 10.6% among women. As for post-secondary and high-school graduates the proportion of men and women was similar, while the proportion of vocational school graduates typically remained predominant among men (see table 2).
The opportunities on accessing to higher education

Based on odds ratios about the opportunities to accessing higher education in Romania, the Hungarian male population from urban areas is lagging as far as continuing education is concerned.

Table 4. Odds ratios for the accession in higher education from different levels of education, according to ethnicity and gender, 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>High school</th>
<th>8 classes</th>
<th>4 classes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romanian</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarian</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roma</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romanian</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarian</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>0.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roma</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>1.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romanian</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarian</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roma</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Therefore, the expansion of education was only successful to a small extent in decreasing structural inequalities between the ethnic-Hungarian and the ethnic-Romanian population in the field of higher education between 2002-2011. Yet, by the end of this period, the disadvantages of Hungarians did not cumulate as compared to those of rural Romanians who were otherwise at a great disadvantage as far as opportunities are concerned. However, analyses from 2015 concerning university students shows that the expansion also reached young people from rural areas. Consequently, a significant percentage of these young people have been admitted to universities from Cluj-Napoca. In this respect, the trend is similar for young Hungarians (Veres & Papp 2015).
Table 5. Odds ratios for the accession in higher education from different levels of education according to ethnicity, gender and type of residence, 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Urban</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High school</td>
<td>8 classes</td>
<td>4 classes</td>
<td></td>
<td>High school</td>
<td>8 classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Romanian</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hungarian</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Roma</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Romanian</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hungarian</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Roma</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Romanian</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hungarian</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Roma</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In our research, we tried to answer the following question: how does the expansion of education prevail in the completion of social justice and in decreasing/eliminating inequalities?

Based on the analysis of odds ratios for accession in higher education between 2002 and 2011, it may be demonstrated that the principle of equity did not prevail in all respects in 2002 nor in 2011. Ethnic inequalities in higher education from a Hungarian-Romanian perspective, and especially from a Roma-Romanian perspective have subsisted. Furthermore, Hungarians have smaller chances of attending universities in comparison to the Romanian majority, a disadvantage that even in 2011 was also influenced by gender and residence type, and as shown by Papp (2008:217) and Csata et al. (2010) was also the case for 2002. Moreover, we tried to identify the main factors of inequality in the context of Roma and Hungarian minorities from Romania. Finally, we attempted to identify the structural factors impeding the “catching-up” of minorities with the Romanian majority.

In the case of the Roma minority, the main problem regarding the chances to access in higher education is the historically cumulated disadvantages. Therefore, Roma children are disadvantaged in a social structure perspective, especially because of the parents’ educational level, which is much lower than the average population’s. Since most of the Roma minority are in an underclass social position (see Sandu 2005), the structural disadvantages, for which the majority of this community are in serious deprivation, include the following aspects: housing, employment status/unemployed, material/financial situation, they are sometimes segregated from majority population, and thus, they cannot access public services (see Rat, Tobias & Veres 2015). The other
aspect that influences the school attendance of the Roma children in a negative way is a low educational aspiration. In a recent research, carried out in local Roma communities from Transylvania\textsuperscript{38}, we found that only 17\% of the adult Roma parents would like that their children attend university in the future, while in the average Romanian population this percentage is more than 50\%.

In the case of Hungarians, we can identify historical disadvantages in access to education. During the Communist period, especially after 1975, the access to high school and university level education in the mother tongue was gradually restricted (see Bugajski 1995: 200; Gallagher 1999). Consequently, now we can observe a structural disadvantage in the highest level of education among the adult population, those who are the nowadays parents of school aged children. Based on odds ratios (table 5), we can see that Hungarian ethnic men (boys) from urban areas are the most disadvantaged compared to the Romanian majority. This may be related to the fact that higher education in technical and agrarian fields – which is mostly chosen by men – is not available in Hungarian within the state education system of Romania (except for a few exceptions). Importantly, the rural population is very disadvantaged in access to higher education, disrespect of ethnicity, with an odds ratio of around 0.20-0.25, while for the urban population the values are over 1.

Through trying to identify the structural factors impeding the “catching-up” of the Hungarian minority with the Romanian majority, we can say that the percentage of young Hungarian people studying at universities has also increased. Their percentage among university students enrolled in Romania has risen from 4.9\% in 2002 to 5.2\% in 2011. Yet, this is still lower than the percentage of the 20-24 years-old population of approximately 6\%. Based on the odds ratios, we can conclude that, especially the Hungarian male population from urban areas, is lagging as far as continuing education is concerned. Besides the existing social-demographic reasons and the reasons related to the type and the size of the residence/ locality, this could also be explained by the fact that in Transylvania the biggest deficiencies are in relation to continuing education in technical fields that are rather preferred by men. As for the chances of admission to higher education institutions, on average Hungarians from Romania are at a 10-15\% disadvantage as compared to the majority population, differentiated by the gender and the type of residence.

**Special characteristics of university students’ social background**

Based on the questionnaire survey carried out among university students, we analyzed the social background of students attending university in Cluj-Napoca, especially at

\textsuperscript{38} The project entitled: *United Networks: Integrated initiatives for the social inclusion of marginalized communities*, code PEH 100, contract 05/H/SEE/30.04.2015, a joint project of the Caritas Alba Iulia – Social Services non-governmental organization, the Babeș-Bolyai University and the County Offices for Child Protection and Social Services from Mureș, Harghita and Covasna.
Babes-Bolyai University (BBU), the university with the highest number of students in the country. Our analysis was particularly attentive to gender, the type of locality of origin, and the two most important nationalities. Almost one third of the students, 31.3% come from villages (according to the question they spent their childhood – until they were 6-5 years old – in a village). A bigger part of students coming from urban areas (42.4%) come from small towns and the rest come from municipalities (26.3%). This composition differs to a great extent from the distribution according to type of locality of the 19-24 years-old population. At the national level, based on census data, the chances of young people living in rural areas of being admitted to a university are surprisingly low compared to the data recorded by universities from Cluj-Napoca. In 2011, only 16% of university students came from rural areas, which was way behind the 41% of the 20-24 years-old population living in rural areas (Veres 2015: 77).

There is an approximately 2/3 majority of women at the universities from Cluj-Napoca. Almost 3/4 of students study at the undergraduate level, and 1/4 at the master’s level. The proportion of Hungarian students studying at a master’s level is slightly lower as compared to the Romanian students, at least at the same university (Table 6).

There is a significant correlation between the nationality of students and the type of locality: 36.2% of Hungarian students and only 29.6% of Romanian students come from rural areas. This difference does not come from the composition of the peer group anymore, but it may be attributed to the fact that they can study at smaller universities from the country in most areas (Alba Iulia, Sibiu, Brasov, Oradea). A smaller percentage of Romanian students get to study in Cluj-Napoca as compared to Hungarian students who have a unique offer, primarily from BBU, from the point of view of studying in their mother tongue. The offer of universities with Hungarian language education also includes a number of smaller universities in other cities (Sapientia Hungarian University from Transylvania, Partium Christian University in Oradea). However, many basic degree courses may still be attended only at Cluj-Napoca, and at BBU (natural sciences and exact sciences, except information technology)39 (see Table 1). We have already noticed this special characteristic in a student survey carried out in 2006. (Veres 2007a, b).

39 The fact that the majority of basic degree courses are sufficient in one location for the Hungarian community, is another question. The majority of specializations offered in several locations are confronted with a small number of students within the offer of Hungarian language university education.
Table 6. The composition of students according to ethno-nationality and locality type (N=3157)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnonationality*</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Romanian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>33.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>35.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>34.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>66.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>64.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>65.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Residence type</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>29.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>36.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Towns</td>
<td>43.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>38.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>42.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cities (county capitals)</td>
<td>26.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>26.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level of studies</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA</td>
<td>73.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>77.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>74.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA</td>
<td>26.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The association is significant (Chi-square) on p<0.05 level.
Source: Students survey form Cluj-Napoca, 2015 (BBU-Faculty of Sociology and SW, Matthias Corvinus Collegium and HAS-MTA TK).

Analyzing the educational level of the students' parents, we observe that the phenomenon of school reproduction significantly prevails. While the proportion of university graduates within the total population is about 15%, 31-34% of students’ parents are university graduates, and 39% of their mothers and 33.5% of their fathers are high-school graduates. The proportion of parents with a general school education is only 3.6-4% according to our study, while more than 40% of the adult population from Romania has only graduated general school or a lower level school (see Veres 2015, 73, INS 2013). Thus, by analyzing the education level of students’ parents, we may observe that the proportion of university graduates is about 30% for both ethno-nationalities, but it is almost 4% higher for Romanian mothers, while the proportion of high-school graduate Hungarian mothers is 13% higher than that of Romanian mothers (see table 7).

Table 7. The distribution of students according to the parents' level of education and ethno-nationality (% , N=3157)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highest level of education</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>4 classes</th>
<th>8 classes</th>
<th>Vocational</th>
<th>High school</th>
<th>Baccalaureate</th>
<th>Higher education</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>Romanian</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
<td>36.1%</td>
<td>35.6%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hungarian</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>49.1%</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>39.3%</td>
<td>34.6%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>Romanian</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td>24.7%</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>32.3%</td>
<td>31.8%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hungarian</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>37.1%</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>24.6%</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>33.5%</td>
<td>31.2%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The association is significant (Chi-square) on p<0.01 level.
Source: Students survey form Cluj-Napoca, 2015 (BBU-Faculty of Sociology and SW, Matthias Corvinus Collegium and HAS-MTA TK).

Furthermore, by analyzing the distribution according to the father's occupation, we may observe that the proportion of children of occupational groups from the so-called middle and upper class is significantly higher as compared to their distribution according to the total population. For example, the proportion of leaders/managers is 9.8%, while according to the 2011 census data their proportion within the economically active population is 2.6% and less within ethnic Hungarians, at only 2% (Veres 2015,120). The
children of entrepreneurs and individual entrepreneurs are also overrepresented, but the children of intellectual non-physical workers and physical workers are proportionately represented among students as compared to the total population. The children of individual farmers, unemployed persons and other deprived categories, who make up a significant part of the adult population above 40 years of age, are significantly underrepresented, while they are hardly represented by a few percent among the students’ parents (see table 8).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Romanian</th>
<th>Hungarian</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leaders, managers</td>
<td>9,8%</td>
<td>9,8%</td>
<td>9,8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurs</td>
<td>4,0%</td>
<td>5,8%</td>
<td>4,4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual occupations</td>
<td>3,2%</td>
<td>6,9%</td>
<td>4,2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>small entrepreneurs</td>
<td>7,6%</td>
<td>8,0%</td>
<td>7,7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerks, office workers</td>
<td>8,0%</td>
<td>5,6%</td>
<td>7,4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-manual workers (commercial or insurance agents, salesmen)</td>
<td>14,7%</td>
<td>7,2%</td>
<td>12,8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manual workers</td>
<td>21,8%</td>
<td>32,6%</td>
<td>24,5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers</td>
<td>3,3%</td>
<td>6,1%</td>
<td>4,0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pensioners</td>
<td>13,3%</td>
<td>8,3%</td>
<td>12,1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>1,9%</td>
<td>1,6%</td>
<td>1,8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House workers /housewives</td>
<td>0,8%</td>
<td>0,1%</td>
<td>0,6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1,3%</td>
<td>0,3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dead</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5,3%</td>
<td>1,3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answers</td>
<td>11,6%</td>
<td>1,4%</td>
<td>9,1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The association is significant (Chi-square) at p<0,01 level.**

Source: Students survey form Cluj-Napoca, 2015 (BPU-Faculty of Sociology and SW, Matthias Corvinus Collegium and HAS-MTA TK)

Conclusions

The decrease in inequalities is explained by the expansion of education as a structural levelling off. As a result, the chances of children with less educated parents of being admitted to higher education institutions are primarily those that may increase. This is due to the fact that the earlier stage of the expansion offered the opportunity of admission to higher education institutions to all the children whose parents’ educational level was higher, and a further expansion of higher education, for demographic reasons, could only be reached by admitting young people with lower educational backgrounds (Shavit-Blossfeld 1993, Shavit et al.2007).

Besides the existing social-demographic reasons and the reasons related to the structure of localities, the disadvantages could also be explained by the fact that in Transylvania the biggest deficiencies are those related to continuing education in the technical fields preferred by men. As for the chances of admission to higher education institutions, on average Hungarians from Romania are at a 10-15% disadvantage as compared to the majority population, as according to genders and the type of residence. Among the provincial/rural population, Hungarians do not significantly lag among higher education
graduates, but generally a very small part of the rural population, only 5% are university graduates. This does not even reach one third of the percentage of university graduates among the urban population.

Therefore, between 2002 and 2011, the expansion of education has only been able to decrease the structural inequalities between the Hungarian population and the Romanian population to a small degree at the level of higher education. However, by the end of this period the disadvantages characteristic to Hungarians among the rural population, otherwise at a great disadvantage, are not cumulated as compared to those of the Roma population. Research from 2015 concerning university students indicates that this expansion has also reached young people from rural areas who have been accepted to universities from Cluj-Napoca to a significant proportion and this trend has also become characteristic among young Hungarian people (Veres – Papp 2015).

In the case of the Roma minority, since 2000, but at a national level only after 2011 when the new Law of Education was adopted, Romania experienced a “transition to idea of equality”. Consequently, it resulted in two important national programs for education: The After schools, where the school integration of Roma and non-Roma children can be improved, and Second Chance program, which gives the opportunity for adults to finish their basic schooling, and to continue with vocational or high school education. The results are not yet visible, but it is an important start. This can be an opportunity to increase the number of young Roma in higher education, in a long-term perspective, now the high school level can be a target. As for the chances of members of the Roma community to be admitted to universities, we could assert that despite many incentive measures, equality of chances in education has only slightly improved after 2002. However, the percentage of university graduates among Roma is still below 1%, which is 15 times lower than the national average.

The present research can be developed in the future, with a similar structure, and related to the intentions and chances of advancement between the different levels of higher education (BA/BSc – MA/MSc – PhD).

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New chapter of knowledge management in Hungary: steps toward open science and tertiary collaborative work

Gyongyi Karacsony* & Edit Gorogh†

Abstract

The beginning of the 21st century has brought a paradigm change in higher education. The technological improvements in research and knowledge discovery and the strengthening discourse of open access have introduced new methods and tools of teaching and learning. The free online availability of teaching materials and the easy access to research results and data facilitate the development of research and student collaborative networks on a global level. Through the cooperation and works of such scientific networks, the core principles of open science - transparency, reusability, and collaboration - can be realised. A gradual shift towards the open scientific discourse can be detected in Hungary, as well. A growing number of higher education institutions adopt open access guidelines in their research and publication policies. The strengthening national open science advocacy and the EU funding requirements, requesting more transparent and freely accessible research processes, encourage a more standardized national vision on research and teaching methodologies. Collaborations with research communities and higher education administrations could ensure a more solid position for us in the global scientific circulation.

Keywords: open access, open science, scholarly networks

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**Introduction**

The beginning of the 21st century has brought a paradigm change in higher education. The technological improvements in research and knowledge discovery and the strengthening discourse of open access have introduced new methods and tools of teaching and learning. The free online availability of teaching materials and the easy access to research results and data facilitate the development of research and student collaborative networks on a global level. Through the cooperation and works of such scientific networks, the core principles of open science – transparency, reusability, and collaboration – can be realised. A gradual shift towards the open scientific discourse can be detected in Hungary, as well. A growing number of higher education institutions adopt open access guidelines in their research and publication policies. The strengthening national open science advocacy and the EU funding requirements, requesting more transparent and freely accessible research processes, encourage a more standardized national vision on research and teaching methodologies. Collaborations with research communities and higher education administrations could ensure a more solid position for us in the global scientific circulation.

**Background**

*Transforming tertiary education*

The present performance of research and teaching communities is greatly affected by two major factors on a global level. The driving forces behind the transforming tertiary educational landscape are the changing knowledge acquisition methods and processes, and as an overarching discourse of research and education, the strengthening presence of open access.

An extensive study funded by the European Commission examines the impact of open science on tertiary education systems from the perspective of new forms of knowledge acquisition and production. The report provides an overview of the primary reasons knowledge discovery has fundamentally changed in the past decades. Knowledge is power: it has indeed become the most important factor in economic development, it contributes to economic analysis and related decision-making processes. The global primacy of information and knowledge has been marked by the increasing use of the internet. The wide spread of computing technology and skills and the decreasing costs of communication have contributed to really fast information exchange and data storage. The products of the communication revolution have altered the learning processes at higher education institutions, as well. Technological innovations have made way to interactive and peer-based learning, mass online open courses link students all over the world. Furthermore, new assessment measurements such as the global rankings allow to measure and compare the performance of universities across all continents, and student engagement surveys measure the degree of student satisfaction with the quality
of teaching and learning. (Salmi) All these innovative tools and teaching methods bring institutions closer together forming a global classroom.

**Open science**

The other major factor which has to be taken into account in the transforming higher education environment is open access. Although the discourse on open access has been evolving only for a couple decades now, it has grown into a major driving force in research. The European Commission is moving beyond open access towards the more inclusive area of open science. Elements of open science will gradually feed into the shaping of national and EU policies for research and innovation and eventually contribute to the realisation of the European Research Area and the Innovation Union, the two main flagship initiatives of the EU (Donelly 2015).

Open science is defined broadly as “a systemic change in the modus operandi of doing research and organizing science” (EC). Although the unified definition of open science has not been pinpointed, the major goals of open research can be inevitably identified. These imperatives include the

- transparency in experimental methodology, observation, and collection of data,
- public availability and reusability of scientific data,
- public accessibility and transparency of scientific communication,
- using web-based tools to facilitate scientific collaboration (Gezelter 2009).

In his vision of open science, Peter Kraker (et al.) sees four basic instruments at play:

1. open access as a way to make research results available,
2. open data as a way to publish the raw data,
3. open source as a way to give access to research prototypes,
4. open methodology standing for sharing the methodological details of the study provided, and the tools used for data collection and analysis.

OpenScienceASAP has stepped further and added two more aspects of Kraker’s research processes which contribute to open science: open peer review introducing new assessment methods and tools, and open educational resources reaching for free and open educational materials in higher education.

The Open Science movement is challenging conventional approaches in order to promote research and development activities in an effective manner. It offers a new look at scientific development, using networks of research communities and advanced technologies to enhance collaborative work. Rather than restricting the “ownership” of discoveries and knowledge acquisition Open Science encourages research and education based on openness and sharing.
Universities are gradually recognizing the need for shifting and transforming established structures and practices in research, teaching, and operations in order to meet current EU funding and policy recommendations.

**Open research and open data**

In light of knowledge exchange and innovation, the EC mandates providing open access to research results in all scientific fields. This strategy supports the requirements of the present funding program, Horizon2020. From 2014 all projects, funded within the H2020 framework, are required to provide open access to their research outputs either publishing in an open access journal (Gold OA) or providing access to an institutional repository (Green OA). In the European scholarly communication special attention is drawn to enhanced publication which is a research publication supplemented by further documentation, such as research data, information about the author, etc.

The current EU research program supports the open exchange, accessibility, and reusability of research data. In the frame of H2020, the EU has launched the Research Data Pilot which is an initiative to provide open access to research data from publicly funded projects with regard to sensitive or protected data. The primary goals of the pilot are to develop secure data exchange work processes, to ensure the quality of data and to prepare data management policies on institutional and national levels, as well. Although from the beginning of 2017 all research fields are obliged to comply with H2020 requirements, the option is given to all projects to opt out if their data collection procedures and the nature of the data do not allow data sharing.

Thus, the words of former Vice-President of the European Commission responsible for the Digital Agenda, Neele Kroes has been validated by the current actions and recommendations of the EC:

"In the digital age, data takes on a whole new value, and with new technology we can do great things with it. Opening it up is not just good for transparency; it also stimulates great web content, and provides the fuel for a future economy. That's why I say that data is the new oil for the digital age."

**Open educational resources**

The term was firstly coined at UNESCO's 2002 Forum on Open Courseware and designates "teaching, learning and research materials in any medium, digital or otherwise, that reside in the public domain or have been released under an open license that permits no-cost access, use, adaptation and redistribution by others with no or limited restrictions". Often cited is the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation term which defines OER as: "teaching, learning, and research resources that reside in the public domain or have been released under an intellectual property license that permits their free use and re-purposing by others. Open educational resources include full courses, course materials, modules, textbooks, streaming videos, tests, software, and any other tools, materials, or techniques used to support access to knowledge".
The strengthening presence of open educational resources is ignited by globalisation, the competition between higher educational institutions and the rapid technological developments. These movements are accompanied by the increasing presence of the open access discourse in academia which contributes to the sharing and collective development of learning resources.

Using open source materials and open resources has several benefits for tertiary institutions:

- the main principle of academic institutions is to share knowledge,
- publicly funded higher education institutions should allow share and reuse of resources by the public,
- sharing and reusing can contribute to quality improvement and reduction of costs,
- open access resources can be used as a showcase for potential students,
- sharing will speed up the development of new learning resources, stimulate internal improvement and innovation (OECD 2007).

According to OECD in 2007, there are materials from more than 3000 open access courses (open courseware) currently available from over 300 universities worldwide.

Collaboration in research and teaching: rise of networks

As open science is gaining momentum in global scholarly communication, a realignment of priorities, relations, and processes can be observed. Through the rapid development of interactive and collaborative modes of knowledge acquisition, generation and dissemination, which are facilitated by modern information and communication tools, collaborations and the rise of research networks have come to characterize research on a global level. These network-based programs and projects entail numerous benefits not just for the individual researchers involved, but also for the affiliated institutions.

There are an increasing number of international projects working with researchers not only from different countries but also from different disciplines producing multi-authored papers and reports. These collaborative works receive more visibility since due to their multidisciplinary inputs, they carry relevance to multiple fields, and have a higher impact since they get cited more often.

Research networks have the opportunity to work with a variety of resources. Researchers contribute to these collaborative works with the facilities they have access to and with the funding their institutions provide. Furthermore, in the current EU funding scheme collaborative projects and consortium-based applications are more preferred since they encourage a rapid and wide spread of knowledge.

According to Adams (2012), research networks are also a tool of international diplomacy. Germany exports excellent research equipment within its partnerships.
China expands its cultural influence through the regional programmes it funds. Thus, they definitely play a role not only in the scholarly environment, but they expand their effect to the social and economic realms of life.

In the Study on Open Science, Salmi points out the role collaborative work has in the transforming tertiary education systems. The rise of multidisciplinarity and the emergence of collaborative modes of knowledge transmission and generation reshape higher education. Traditional disciplines and methods, which are characterized by over-specialization and segmentation, are increasingly challenged by developments in new scientific and technological fields. Therefore, a shift toward a problem-based mode of production of knowledge can be detected, which results in the blurring of the distinction between basic and applied research (e.g., biology and biotechnology, nanotechnology, genomics and proteomics, advanced materials science, microelectronics, information systems, robotics, intelligent systems and neuroscience, and environmental science and technology). Considering the increasingly multidisciplinary nature of these research fields, education in these fields requires the integration of a number of disciplines that were previously regarded as separate and distinct. The result is the multiplication of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary programs that cut across traditional disciplinary barriers.

Open access in Hungary

The Hungarian open access landscape shows a rather diverse picture. In lack of a unified national open access vision, research and tertiary institutions initiate their own open access programs without collaborations or efforts to cooperate. Based on the participations in international projects in which open access issues are quite often included in the research flow, and on the available resources, some institutions are more willing to incorporate open access guidelines in their operational and development strategies than others. Therefore, a huge gap can be detected both in awareness and in implementations of open access related innovations between regions and institutions.

Hungarian Academy of Science

One of the active players in the Hungarian open access field is the Hungarian Academy of Science (MTA). The institution has an OA mandate effective from January 1, 2013 requiring researchers and employees of the MTA to make their scientific publications open access either through self-archiving in institutional or discipline-based repositories or by publishing them in OA journals or in hybrid journals offering paid open access. MTA operates several open access repositories for various collections (REAL-d/EOD/MS/Ph.D./J/R) in order to support researchers to comply with funding and governmental requirements, such as the Law of Higher Education of 2013 on providing open access to Ph.D. dissertations. Furthermore, a centralised publication database –Magyar Tudomanyos Muvek Tara (MTMT)- is developed aiming at collecting publication metadata from all Hungarian research and higher education institutions. The
repositories connected to MTMT provide the opportunity for those researchers whose institution does not operate an institutional repository to upload their research outputs.

**University repositories**

Several higher education institutions operate their own institutional repository. They are joined together in an association of Hungarian Open Access Repositories (HUNOR), coordinated by the University Debrecen University and National Library. Through this network, information is disseminated about the current international and national developments in research management and scholarly communication. Institutions are informed about the international standards of repository and data management and they are urged to comply all new developments and already operating data archives with these standards.

In the open access discourse, institutional repositories play a significant role: they foster the Green OA strategy. The self-archiving process can further be facilitated by institutional open access mandates which usually require the researchers of the institutions to deposit their research outputs to the repository and provide access to them as copyright and publisher provisions allow. A Pasteur4OA briefing paper on open access mandate support, prepared recently by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, reviews the basic supporting actions that are necessary for a successful OA mandate with a high compliance rate (Holl 2014). One of the key supporting mechanisms involves the integration of repositories into the research flow and their connection to internal and external systems, such as research information systems (CRIS). The reluctance of researchers derives from the multiple logins to the various systems and separate deposits they require. The interconnectedness and interoperability of these systems, allowing for easy transfer of data once deposited, would definitely decrease the researchers’ administrative burden and would promote a more willing compliance with depositing requirements.

The Hungarian repository landscape is definitely showing a move along open access guidelines. There is a growing number of higher education institutions which consider a repository important in their research management, and which direct repository developments in accordance with the international open access standards. The main directions for these improvements and developments are basically given by the requirements of the EU funding scheme and open access recommendations of EC guidelines. Furthermore, EU-funded programs, such as OpenAIRE with the research data pilot and the Gold OA initiative, or Dart-Europe disclose concrete specifications an institutional repository has to comply with in order to participate in them. As pioneers in the Hungarian open access discourse, the University of Debrecen and the University of Szeged were among the firsts to incorporate open access goals and recommendation in their institutional publication policies. But there are several other repository developments are ongoing in higher education (11 institutional repositories operated by 8 universities).
Open access guidelines are present in the Hungarian scholarly discourse, and they direct technological and administrative decision-making processes. Related initiatives are recorded in various databases showcasing a growing interest in open access issues:

- 28 publishers with 120 journals are registered in the Sherpa/Romeo database with references to their open access policies,
- 27 open access journals are registered in DOAJ,
- 32 repositories are recorded in the OPENDOAR database,
- 3 mandates are included in the ROARMAP registry.

There are also good examples of innovative initiatives in Hungarian scholarly communication. The NextGeneration project of the Institute for Computer Science and Control of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences has developed a platform for active publications. The primary aim of the initiative is to change the passive article reading process into an active, discovery and social activity. This new type of publication is enhanced by scientific research data, annotations and metadata. This way it supports the browsing of related research results and data leading to an interrelated network of scientific outputs (Turbucz et al. 2014).

Such programs could find a wider application and testing ground if repository developments were aligned with each other. Through a network-based approach and collaborations among existing repositories and data archives in planning, technological improvements could be harmonized to avoid parallel developments and to consider budget issues.

**Conclusion**

Open access is slowly but surely seeping into the scientific discourse in Hungary. It shapes communication among institutions, administration, and other stakeholders. Due to the international research activities of our scientists and teachers, and participation of universities in global programs, EU publishing and data management guidelines are influencing decision making processes on technological, research and teaching developments. However, openness does not merely and necessarily imply immediate and free access to all results. It means:

- transparent research processes (for partners involved),
- opening up communication among stakeholders,
- harmonizing developments in terms of interoperability,
- sharing experiences.

The new chapter in knowledge management, both in research and teaching, should be defined by collaborative work among higher education and research institutions. Adapting the main principles of open access will just help this process on the way.
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References


Opportunities for Elementary Level Music Education in the Partium Region

Timea Szucs

Abstract

The aim of our research is to compare the music schools in the area of Partium (Beregszasz, Nagyvarad, Szatmarnemeti, Nyiregyhaza, Debrecen) based on their function and opportunities for development. In all three countries effective music teaching of high quality is done. During the research we wanted to know whether the different functional conditions may influence the primary level of music education, and if yes, how it is influenced. We wish to compare the music schools of all three countries according to identical viewpoints in the course of the research. It is important to examine the position of the music schools in the system of education and to map the spatial network of the music schools, their maintaining and institutional background. The comparison of the teaching staff number, their preparedness, their faculty proportions, the student number and their faculty proportions may seem to be interesting. The comparison of the curricula, the course books and the examination system of the music schools is also worthy of the research. After the analysis of the documents of the music schools we would like to prepare unique case studies with the music schools of the above mentioned towns. In these studies we would examine the teachers, students and parents’ motivations to find the reason why they undertake the plus burdens and activities related to music learning.

Keywords: music school, Partium, comparison, case study

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About the study

We conducted a series of researches in 2013 in the elementary level music education art institutions of the Northern Great Plain region in the framework of the research “Learning regions in Hungary: from theory to reality” managed by Tamás Kozma and supported by OTKA (K-101867). We are looking into and examining the connection between learning potentials of the regions and the state of socio-economic development. There are six teams working in the research delegated to each area. The effects of informal and non-formal learning in elementary art institutions were conducted by the Personal Learning team. We intended to extend our empirical investigations based on the experiences gathered, so we launched our new research in the Partium region. The main aim of this research is to present the institution system of music education of the three countries belonging to the historical Partium region through finding both the similarities and the differences. We considered it important to map the basic principles of musician education, since these are the factors that define the structure of music education institutions. As music education is effective and of high quality in all three countries, during the course of the research we were curious whether the different operational conditions have any influence on elementary level music education and if they do, how they exert it.

While analyzing the data we deemed it essential to compare elementary music education in the three countries based on identical aspects, so we used the same half-structured interview outline during the interviews. We chose a qualitative method for our investigations (interview), because we thought we could gather more information if we do not limit the options for answers, thus it could yield deeper and broader findings. This is why we conducted half-structured interviews, and we looked at themes such as the structure of music education, the place of music schools within the education system, spatial network of music schools, maintainer background, proportion of departments, statistical data supply, programs, etc. (The interview outline is attached to the appendix to the study.)

Since the geographical definition of Partium has had different meanings throughout history (Suli-Zakar 2006), it is important to define which public administration regions we included in this denomination during our investigation. “When we say ‘Partium,’ we always put it within quotation marks. The reason for this lies in the fact that the name we use to describe the region under investigation is, so to speak, a simple made-up name” (Kozma 2006: 21). The region we call “Partium” is situated on the premises of three countries – Ukraine, Romania and Hungary. In Hungary Hajdú-Bihar and Szabolcs-Szatmar-Bereg counties, in Ukraine Sub-Carpathia and in Romania Bihar, Szatmar,

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43 The six teams are the Theoretical team, the Cartographer team, the Formal Learning team, the Vocational Education team, the Personal Learning team, and the Social Learning team. On the first findings see Juhász (ed.) 2014.
Szilagy, and Maramaros counties belong to the examined geographical units (Suli-Zakar 2006).

Thus the name Partium indicates a geographical and historical area, whose scope and political content has changed during the history of the Carpathian Basin, but its latent spiritual and cultural unity can be traced in several social phenomena (Pusztai–Torkos 2001). The social situation of this area is determined by the Trianon Treaty after which the previously unified area was divided into several secluded parts. This decree influenced the rate of economic development of the area as well. So, the areas lying on both sides of the border are characterized by the so-called dual peripheral situation (Baranyi 2004). Beyond this a natural depopulation can also be detected in the region. The trend has been present in Hungary since 1981, since 1991 in Romania, and since 1999 in Sub-Carpathia (Teperics 2006).

The towns of the region are connected through various transport, economic cultural, and educational relations, this is why Partium may serve as a bridge in the future connecting the countries of the region and may contribute to the socio-economic rise of Hungary, Romania, and Ukraine.

Map 1: Partium

Source: Suli-Zakar 2006
Some of the major findings of the research

As part of the research we took a look at the public schooling system in all three countries as a first step: elementary education, secondary education, and music education. The first two are only partly mentioned based on relevant professional literature, while music education is to be described in more detail via the interviews.

Even at the level of elementary education differences appear between Hungary, Romania, and Ukraine. In Hungary elementary schooling is divided into a lower and a higher section. The lower section covers the first 4 years and the higher one starts with year five and ends with year eight. Pupils can apply for an 8- or a 6-form secondary school after the 4th or 6th year. Elementary schooling in Romania and Ukraine can also be divided into two sections. The lower section lasts from form 1 to form 4, the second part of elementary education, however, starts with year five and ends with year 9. That is, elementary education covers nine years (European Commission 2014, Educational system in Ukraine 2014).

The system of secondary education yields bigger differences. There is a threefold division in Hungary: secondary school, vocational school, and technical school. The Romanian schooling system is also divided into three sections, only the names are different. Lyceum functions the same way secondary schools do in Hungary, the notion of vocational school corresponds to the Hungarian counterpart, and technical schools are called industrial schools in Romania. The biggest difference can be seen in Ukraine: the Hungarian type of secondary school is identical to the general secondary school offering a maturity certificate (school-leaving certificate); however, as regards vocational training, there are different special areas and not levels of education. The general secondary schools teach classical subjects, lyceums deal with natural science and technology, and in boarding schools (kollegium) students mainly learn humanities subjects (Luko, ed. 2010).

The music education structure of the countries was examined through the interviews, as no unified professional literature had been published on the subject, so the rest of the paper will cover the results of the interviews in a thematic and country breakdown. Studying music education it turned out that the education structures of Hungary and Ukraine are similar, but there is a totally different structure in Romania.

In Hungary it is possible to start music education at a very early age: although it is not institutionalized, music for babies is an existing branch. External professionals teach small children in several kindergartens. In elementary art schools children may start their music education on a shorter or longer course after a preparatory period of one or two years (solfege and instruments). The short course means 4+4 years of training period, the long one (piano, violin, cello) means 6+4 years of further education. The further education course is based on a requirement of an elementary exam in both solfege and the chosen instrument. The age limit is 22 years in these institutions. In the
3rd year on the basis of the student’s performance a decision is made whether they should continue their studies on course A or B. The preparation of course B students for a musical career starts here (out of 1300 students approximately 300 are on course B). In the elementary art institutions not only music studies can be pursued, but also dance, theatre art, and puppet art as well as applied and fine arts. In this research, however, we only dealt with music education. At secondary level there are 23 vocational music schools operative in the country. In the morning there are general education lessons, just like in a traditional secondary school, while the afternoon is for musical: the instrument 2 times a week, solfege 2 times a week, harmonics 1 lesson, chamber music, 1 obligatory piano lesson, 2 lessons of music history, 1 lesson of folk music. Orchestra and choir are obligatory. After the fifth year students can take an OKJ (nationally accredited) exam in the music subjects. In higher education, students can learn in divided and undivided courses. The divided course based on the Bologna System remained, where students can attend to an artist master course after they have finished their performer or musical creative arts and musicology studies at bachelor level. Students can gain teacher degree as a musician teacher during 2 semesters. They can continue their studies in the artistic doctoral program (DLA) after they got their master’s degree. The undivided training program restarted in 2013, which 4+1 year length, 5+1 for theoretical majors. In the undivided program students can obtain theoretical, instrumental and teacher education. This teacher major authorizes students to get a job in basic arts education. With this degree they can start their PhD studies. From 2017 they get the chance to obtain music teacher degree at different majors in a 2-year short-cycle training based on their teacher qualifications.

In Ukraine we see a system of institutions in music education similar to Hungary. There are art schools on the elementary level, vocational schools on the secondary level, and conservatories on the tertiary (only the names differ from those in Hungary). Art schools (elementary level) teach not only music, but drawing and choreography, too.

In Romania the music schools within the system of public education are similar to other schools, with musical training added. More specifically they are not music schools, but art schools, which along with general mandatory education provide training in music and fine art. The greater art schools operate from first year up to maturity exam, but in smaller towns only up to 8th form. In these art lyceums children are trained for a musical career from the first day on. Thus at the beginning of their studies they must decide upon the kind of career. Naturally there is mobility among the institutions, so if the student has changed their mind or cannot meet the requirements (level exams), then they may enroll in another course. A reverse case is also possible, after taking the level exams children can enter their music training who could not previously decide if they wanted to become professional musicians. This institution provides a music school maturity certificate. While this form of training is an integral part of public education, it is supervised by the Ministry of Education. Apart from this there are five-year art schools (successors of people’s art schools), which may be enrolled without respect to
age or the level of education. These are of course tuition-based (there are yearly fees) and are not maintained by the Ministry of Education but the Ministry of Culture.

In the case of all three countries we may observe that on the elementary level the institutions do not perform pure musical training, but in these art schools, as per the name, children may choose from several fields of the arts.

The spatial network of music schools is the densest in Hungary out of the three countries. The home page of the Association of Hungarian Music Schools and Art Schools (MZMSZ 2017) lists all the elementary institutions of art education in Hungary, which total 695. Of these in our region of investigation, in Hajdu-Bihar County there are 42, in Szabolcs-Szatmar-Bereg County 50. In Sub-Carpathia there are 62 music schools, and in Romania there is at least one music school in all county seats with forms 1-12. In addition there are music schools in other towns with forms 1-8. Altogether there are about 50 some schools in the country.

In Hungary elementary institutions of art education are state-owned, but there exist private schools owned by foundations, such as MEA – Music-playing Health Foundation, Rocksuli (Rock School), etc. In Ukraine with the exception of one or two institutions music schools are state-owned, in Romania they are all state owned.

In Hungary in elementary institutions of art education students pay a tuition fee, which is defined for a year. In addition, students using the school’s instruments have to pay a rental fee. In private schools the fee is higher, approximately 1 month’s worth of tuition fee equals a term’s fee in the state schools. In Ukraine they have a fee, too. In Romania art lyceums are a part of public education, so they are free (professional training), while art schools are tuition-based schools with an annual fee.

The management of institutions is structured in a similar way in all three countries, with a principal and deputy principal on top. The middle managers have similar tasks but their names vary from team manager in Hungary to department manager in Ukraine to chairman in Romania.

In Hungarian cities all kinds of instruments can be learnt, but a smaller number of them in smaller communities. The smaller settlements have instruments that are on demand. The most popular are the piano, the guitar, and percussion instruments. Apart from this there another trend in Hungarian elementary institutions of art education: institutions in smaller towns offer a wider choice of art fields than in cities, as in small communities the same institution has to meet all demands, while in the bigger cities there are several of these institutions so there can be some with clearly musical profiles.44 In Ukraine we mostly find departments teaching the piano, brass and wind instruments, string instruments, and folk instruments. In Romania the existence of departments depends on

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44 Based on an earlier study entitled “Learning functions in music schools of the Northern Great Plain Region” (Szűcs 2014).
the qualification of teachers. On a national level we find all instruments (piano, strings, bass strings, wind and brass, percussion, private singing, and folk instruments in some places), but not all schools teach, for instance, the bassoon or the harp. The organ is only taught in some towns, too, for example, in Kolozsvar, Szekelyudvarhely, Temesvar and Csikszereda.

The proportion of departments is different in the three countries, but the piano is high in the first place in all three areas. In Hungary the distribution of students by departments is the following: 1/3 learn the piano; another 1/3 the violin, the cello, and the guitar; and the final third learn wood and brass instruments and percussion instruments. In Ukraine ¼ of children learn the piano, the rest is broken down proportionally between folk, brass and wind, string, and singing departments. In Romania the violin and the piano are in a majority, followed closely by wind and brass and singing.

In all three countries statistical data supply is obligatory but only Hungary has a unified national system. In Hungary data is to be supplied within the deadline of 1 October, just like from other public education institutions. KIR (Public Education Information System) contains the data received. The majority of data can only be reached with a master password, but there are public parts, too. Here we may find data necessary for identification (name, address, phone number, head of institution, etc.), qualifications, training branches, etc. (Office of Education 2012). In Ukraine the data are sent to the county management, in Romania the county school inspectorate.

In the countries investigated there are entrance exams to music education institutions and students wishing to learn music may only start their studies after a successful exam. In Hungary the entrance exam consists of singing, rhythm echo, even walking, imitating the instrument’s sound, and improvising. In Ukraine entrance exams assess rhythmic skills, hearing, and vocal skills. In Romania the requirements include tests of hearing, singing, and rhythm tap.

Music studies provide the students with lessons several times per week. In Hungary students go to lessons two to three times a week, in Ukraine three to five times, in Romania three times a week. These subjects in Hungary mean 2 lessons of solfege, 2 lessons of instruments, and 2 lessons of orchestra. After the basic exam they may choose from music history, choir, chamber music and solfege in 2 lessons a week in addition to instrument and orchestra lessons. In Ukraine mandatory subjects include instrument lessons, solfege, and music history. In Romania the requirement is instrument, solfege and music theory, and orchestra.

In Hungary the number of obligatory programs varies according to the choice of courses (A or B). Course A students have a concert at the term’s end, and a concert and mandatory exam at the end of the year. Course B students have three hearings a year. We find a treasury of optional programs in elementary institutions of art education, such as, for instance, teachers’ concerts which can be visited with season tickets, foundation
concerts, orchestra concerts, opera visits, concerts introducing instruments in elementary schools, on festive occasions the students have concerts in kindergartens and old age retirement homes, in summer they have ethnography camps, and so on. In Ukraine instrumental and solfege exams are obligatory. Extra instruments, four-handed play, and reading music notes are not obligatory. In Romania optional programs vary from institution to institution such as choir, orchestra, drama club. Another interesting difference is that in the neighboring countries extra lessons are allotted for optional programs, while in Hungary such events are connected to leisure programs and national holidays.

Studying the social stratification of music students we found that in Hungary those children enter elementary institutions of art education whose parents have also learnt music. There is an outstanding number of medical students and children of doctors. In Ukraine no such tendency is observable, there the composition is rather mixed. In Romania music is studied by mainly children of middle-class and graduate parents.

Summary

On the bases of the interviews similarities and differences in the elementary music education of Partium become conspicuous. Romanian music training is special, as education for a professional musical career starts in the first form of elementary school, and teachers can follow and guide a student’s development for 12 years. This is extremely important for talent development, as when starting secondary and tertiary studies children may experience a serious break with the change of tutors and the long preparation phase before their entrance exam.

In Hungary and Ukraine the goal of elementary art schools is different. Professional training is not an objective, but of course there is a possibility to do this in elementary institutions of art education. Unfolding the students’ personality, utilizing the transfer effects of music education, creating a good community spirit and social life are extremely important aspects of the Hungarian music education.

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Resilience and Disadvantage in Education - A Sociological View

Katalin R. Forray

Abstract

This study examines the question of how the breaking of an individual from the unfavourable socio-cultural and socio-economic conditions can be explained. The concept of resilience, its ecological and psychological use is reviewed through international scientific literature and examines its possible use in the sociology of education. Finally, it introduces Hungarian studies that can help clarify this process by understanding resilience.

Keywords: disadvantage, resilience, ecology, success

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Introduction

If a researcher deals with disadvantaged people, they will inevitably face the question why a member of the group cannot break out. Since it is not about the advancement of a group but the individual, the well-known, general examination factors of sociology are of little help. Over time, from the viewpoint of sociology, a particular social group will necessarily remain at the same low or same high level; the children of such groups can only advance to a higher level of their own in very small steps, sometimes over a generation.

If a child leaves a birth or education group, they might establish a different career path in comparison with what may have been expected by the situation of the family or the level of education. Based on an analysis made earlier with young people that were raised in state institutes (Forray, 2003) I came to a conclusion that as a result of an outstanding individual performance merged with pure luck, some might gain a significantly higher education and qualification compared to the average standards. They can escape from their own social environment and, according to my former idea, start a successful career. This might occur due to a “Janissary training”-type education, however, it is unpredictable and the personal costs are also very high. These young adults feel that emotionally and, consequently, sociologically they do not belong anywhere because they do not have family ties. The simile that has been used as a historical parallel also indicates a feeling that in their case they were “disposable” after being used for literally any purpose. In these situations, we can think of an educational environment in which deeper personal relationships or inherited styles played a minor role (Forray, 2003). However, even then I sensed that this explanation is only applicable to a case of a juvenile with a similar fate, and even so, it is not quite satisfactory, as specific educational effects and specific personal endowments or ambitions also play a role.

In what follows we examine the question of what general regularities can be found in those cases when an individual or a community becomes capable of achieving a higher level of development than one might expect from sociologically disadvantageous conditions. It may apply not only to the career of an individual but also a community such as a settlement and its inhabitants. In this overview I apply a less frequently used academic approach to examine similar topics: resilience. I believe that such an approach can be really useful in the field of educational sociology. I reviewed the relevant literature and urge the readers to interpret their questions and consequences.

The concept of resilience

Resilience has become the subject of intense research in many fields of science in the past decades, its role being greatest in ecology and psychology. To a superficial observer it might appear that there is hardly a common ground between the two disciplines: one observes the living environment, the other observes the internal processes of an individual. At a second glance, we can find similarities between them, I will explain it
below. We can conclude that the turn of the decade the number of publications about resilience has been increasing dramatically, as can be proven by any search engine (I did some research using Google). The same approach has been used in educational sociology recently, albeit not necessarily specified by the authors.

Resilience in general means the capability of flexible resistance, i.e. the capacity of an individual, group or community, ecosystem or material to adapt successfully to extreme or shocking conditions. In psychology, where the term has already been in use before educational sociology, it is defined as an individual’s ability to regain their well-being in the face of stress, disturbance and trauma. Educational sociology adds the interpretation of spontaneous and purposeful educational tools, in particular the impact of the school, teachers, fellow students and supporting organizations.

Resilience is a key to survival and long-term viability; in other words, success despite difficulties. This approach is emphasised in the definition of the International Resilience Project: ‘a universal capacity which allows a person, group or community to prevent, minimize or overcome the damaging effects of adversity’ (Grotberg, 1999). According to another definition, resilience is ‘the ability of a system to absorb disturbance and still retain its basic function and structure’ (Walker-Salt, 2006). If approached in this way, it is easy to see that resilience is a form of behaviour that can be interpreted in a wide-ranging fashion.

Nowadays we can meet the term “resilience” in more and more disciplines, which is promising in terms of the innovative approach to this important phenomenon in education and developmental psychology, family therapy and in particular, ecology. Perhaps there is some truth in the statement that the definition, originally used in physics, has grown viral and now belongs to a top-talk category. The ability of flexible resistance, that is to say, the capacity of renewal of a system – an individual, group or community, an ecosystem or a type of material – means that it could successfully adapt to drastic or even shocking disturbance. C. S. Holling (1986), the initiator of resilience research was the first to point out some paradoxes between

- efficiency and persistence,
- stability and changing, and
- predictability or unpredictability of a system.

“Stable” systems are also capable of renewal if facing unforeseen challenges. Resilience is a new framework, a paradigm, with a focus on how complex systems can maintain themselves and their function in the event of a serious malfunction. It is easy to understand that this framework can be successfully used in several fields.

The examined systems may be of many kinds within the framework of nature, society, the individual, a group or a community and a large social system.
In recent years research has outlined the main features of resilient social-ecological systems. Some of the most important of these features are diversity (variety, interaction), redundancy (cross-border mechanisms that guarantee the safety of operation) and fluctuation (the natural possibility of changing). It is clear that these features can refer to both the individual and the societal groups.

The prevalent concept in resilience psychology assumes that person inextricably interacts with their natural and social environment (Szokolszky et al, 2015). Hupersonsocieties are an integral part of the ecosphere and the complex natural and social systems evolve and cope with the effects. The individual is embedded into the system, the limits and possibilities of their activities are represented by them.

When this concept is considered at the individual’s level, e.g. you want to check for a successful adaptation psychology, social psychology or educational sociology sense, it should be emphasized that it is not some "mentally strong" individual’s abilities, but also a significant human and social phenomenon (Masten, 2001). Studies have pointed out a number of features in addition to the individual, especially the importance of the contact-type factor. These factors include the following aspects:

a. Parental and relationship characteristics: strong relationship with one or more parents, effective socialization by the parents, relationship with other supportive adults or mentors, contacts with supportive partners. These conditions include the determining actors in the social network of a growing child or young person. So when a child/young person is examined, this should also include those persons that play or are supposed to play a supporting role.

b. Individual differences: intelligence, self-regulation skills, positive attitudes and life goals, abilities, and other characteristics. All these attributes taken into account can show on the one hand what individual properties or characteristics can be expected from a successfully integrating person, and on the other hand, also emphasize the direction of use of the educational and support assets.

c. Community relations: an effective school, opportunities to unfolding personality values, safe and well-organized living environment, contact with social organizations and groups, adequate socio-economic situation. These conditions go beyond the school; the residential environment stresses the importance of the available social and cultural opportunities. (Masten, 1999).

Researchers of the topic consider two fundamental criteria to define resilience when starting out from the social-psychological interpretation:

- the person is doing well in life in spite of difficulties
- he/she is/was exposed to a significant risk or difficulty now or earlier.

These two criteria accurately summarize which individual fates indicate resilience when we interpret the results of any research.
In this context we cannot talk about resilience if the person is not exposed to risk or if they are not able to effectively adapt and thrive. Resilience has no permanence in time: most likely no one has any need or possibility to perform well at every moment of their lives, despite the difficulties. In this way, resilience cannot serve to fully describe a person or group, but in certain situations or at times it can be the most important characteristic. That is, in situations where difficulties should be overcome.

In fact, similar ecological situations can also be studied. Here a basic unit means an entity that not only includes a single organism, but a medium which maintains a system or a network of organisms. The reductionist version of an ecological approach chooses an organic system that serves as a basic unit and considers it's environment with which the unit maintains communication — an external object that can (or should) be exempted from examination during the research. The basic unit is therefore, in this respect, homogeneous, and we do not examine its internal composition. The more powerful version is more radical: the basic unit of the ecological research forms a “cohabiting pattern” with its environment that responds to the impacts on a system by rearranging its internal relationships. The basic unit is therefore an “ecotope” or even an “ecotope field”. In this context, only in principle, and from the purpose of the examination can the system and the effect be isolated, so the examination can be carried out as a complex whole. I think the latter interpretation — which examines the environment together with the effects of the development — suits towards becoming a framework of interpretation also in social education research.

Ecosystems and social systems, in general functions, structures and preservation of information may be called such systems. Which systems can be considered resilient and which cannot? Ecology gives us the following guidelines (Lanyi, 2013).

a. The smaller independently functioning units the system is made of, the more resilient it is. Resilience is strengthening, if the material flow cycles form closed-loop processes within a smaller space and time. This could be the ability to self-sufficiency, own waste processing and similar other processes. The thing we can learn about the ongoing climate change is birds that migrate to a greater distance or trees of a longer life cycle are more vulnerable than their fellows in a smaller space or on a smaller time scale.

b. The generalist survives great changes more easily because excessive specialization makes vulnerable. This rule is called the principle or "risk-sharing" or "diversification".

c. In periods of great changes, complexity reduces and, in fact minimizes; over-specialized players and institutions are eliminated, the number of the potential roles and relationships decrease, the accumulated information will be lost.

But how can this former approach, directed to the individual’s behaviour, be connected with the latter one? The resilience of an individual in an ecological aspect does not arise from the individual alone. It is a relative concept in which the combination of the inherited biological and psychological conditions and environmental factors (such as
family structure, language, socio-cultural determinism and environmental conditions) trigger the adaptive response and determine the current extent of the resilience, the ability of coping with the “mandatory drama”. In such an approach, the person or the group can be described only in conjunction with its environment, and there are no two identical cases. The “unpredictability” just means that it is about the events of a system whose conditions may vary in relation to one another or together to the environment, so the expected reaction – at least from the observer’s point of view – cannot be calculated.

If we have a look at the main characteristics of the ecosystem, we can place the individual’s behaviour in it. We conclude that the individual and collective behaviours, within their ability to cope with the difficulties, can be interpreted within different schemes, depending on what aspect is chosen. Success can mean social integration of the individual in spite of the difficulties; it can mean a greater or lesser social medium’s ability to hold grounds against threats. All in all, whether individual or community behaviour is examined, resilience basically means the same thing: successfully coping with difficulties. Empirical research in educational sociology explores the threatening or serious adverse circumstances in the lives of children or young people, or from other aspects of educational organizations, and how the individual or the organization can cope with them.

**Researching resilience in educational sociology**

It should also be noted, however, that in educational sociology the use of the term is not very common. It can be concluded that - as indicated in the introduction of the chapter - we can mainly encounter this concept in the geographical society (ecology) and psychological researches. Its educational sociological aspects, the above cited Transylvanian Society Journal – issue no. 3, 2015 – deals with. It is remarkable that we can encounter the concept in the scientific publications of University of Debrecen doctoral school of pedagogy, as I refer to their publications. The reasons may be explained with a close contact to the Transylvanian society, especially to the scientific society.

Some resilience experts consider schools as the developers of the adaptation mechanisms (Masten et al., 2008). It is explained that school is a place where not only support but also risk factors are present. Disadvantaged or at risk school children constitute a supportive environment in which coping strategies to comply with the difficulties can be developed (Ceglédi, 2012). This interpretation can be an explanation to the question, not yet answered by educational sociology, why certain disadvantaged children and young people with unusual success in school and career motivations, decisions cannot be foreseen, at least from the point of view of an observer.

Earlier, in our own research (Forray 1988; Forray, Kozma, 2011) we tried to understand a successful careers of young people from disadvantaged families with a geo-sociologically underprivileged background by relying on an ecological approach that had
not yet been applied in educational sociology at the time. We observed that if a disadvantaged young person finds someone in their own environment – i.e. a teacher, a porter or the doctor in the village – whose example or their caring can help develop a significantly higher level of motivation in the young person’s career choices. The environment in these cases was examined as a combination of organizations including the participants. Not knowing other explanation we reasoned the existence of influence could only be regarded as a coincidence. Although essentially this explanation can still be considered valid, we did not interpret it from the perspective of the young person involved. We considered the links to be the most unpredictable factors of the ecological environment that had an impact on life courses, and we did not apply the concept of resilience.

In recent years, research in educational sociology in the Hungarian language area has embraced the concept of resilience. The Transylvanian Society dedicated an entire edition to a similar research. Mate (2015) wrote about Gypsy youngsters, examining how the rise of some young people from an environment of multiple disadvantages can be explained.

An empirical research project published in Review of Sociology (Ceglédi, 2012) analysed successful school careers achieved despite the disadvantages by using the resilience concept. Homoki (2014) wrote his thesis about special needs children's groups and child protection. Mention should be made of the study by Rayman and Varga (2015), which compared the courses of life in higher education of disadvantaged Roma and non-Roma students and interpreted the successful lives in the light of resilience. The reason why resilience requires special attention is because it is put into context with inclusion, and it examines the personal characteristics together with the behaviour of the responsible institute. We also analysed the pathways of Gypsy youths in higher education in the same theoretical context (Forray 2015).

The above examples examine the outbreak from the disadvantaged situation based on the theory of resilience. Another angle of research is to explore the theoretical context in which we can evaluate the significantly diverse course of towns with similar capabilities in socially disadvantaged areas can also be examined (Forray, Kozma, 2013; Forray, Kozma, 2014; Kozma, Forray 2015). We wondered whether there were any resilient settlements among those examined. We found that in some cases, a resilient attitude was there among the leaders of the village that gave a boost to appropriate development and investment. Elsewhere, the leaders of the secondary school encouraged the ever spreading changes. It has also been observed that where resilient behaviours only appear sporadically instead of a coordinated way, the community is characterized by stagnation. It seems that a complex system – a community, for example – will only be able to start developing if its leaders can face the adverse potentials in an innovative fashion and try to move forward by finding adequate pathways. For this route, at least in a small village, the teachers of the schools can provide the most help.
Summary

The aim of the study was to demonstrate resilience in (Hungarian) educational sociology, a concept still relatively rarely used these days. I believe that this offers an opportunity to interpret this concept still relatively few researchers have adopted. Rayman and Varga (2015) presented an exciting possibility of this interpretation completed from a psychological point of view. Attention should be paid to the initial starting point of two lines of educational research well suited for this concept: the regional characteristics, advantages and disadvantages in the description, and the interpretation of familial determinations or the ways to overcome them. In the presentation I attempted to give an overview of the psychological interpretation, since this aspect is often effective and can be combined with other approaches of educational sociology.

Finally, I want to emphasize a single, nevertheless important aspect. Social research, and in general research with a sociological approach, seems focus on failure or imperfection. Not asking how to solve a serious problem, but how severe the problem is. I think it is high time to give emphasis to the question how to solve the problem. What do other people do, and what should I do to solve the problem? This is perhaps the most important output of the research on resilience.

References


Reviewed by Gergely Kovats47, Liviu Matei48 & Marvin Lazerson49

Sturdier than myths: the re-thinking higher education in the 21th century by a fearless humanist

Sometimes long books make simple points that have large consequences. Jonathan Cole’s Toward a More Perfect University is that kind of book. The title is quintessentially American, reflecting continuing themes in the history of the United States, building “a more perfect Union”, a phrase from the preamble to the American Constitution in 1787, reiterated by Barack Obama in 2008. It is hard to imagine a European reaching for such phrase.

Jonathan R. Cole is, not surprisingly, an American, who was a keynote speaker at the second Central European Higher Education Cooperation (CEHEC) Conference in June 2016. One of the outstanding sociologists of our times, he has also written much celebrated and always respectably thick books about higher education. Professor of sociology at Columbia University in New York, for fourteen years he served in several high-level administrative positions at Columbia (provost, dean of faculties, vice president for arts and sciences). His scholarly work has focused on the sociology of science, but recently he has turned to the search for a better understanding of universities.

Like many Americans, Cole had rarely travelled to and had never written about Central Europe. His higher education books are all strictly and exclusively (even painfully) about the United States. Why then invite him to a conference about the Distinctiveness of Central European Higher Education? The answer is simple: Toward a More Perfect University is an extraordinary piece of scholarship, displaying a uniquely fecund

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approach to understanding higher education in our times globally. The book puts forward surprising, daring, but also perfectly feasible solutions for the university to better, or even fully, fulfil its potential.

Cole raises the question of how the true potential of American research universities can be realized. How can a good institution be made better, even perfect, or more perfect? He explains, first, why the American research university is a great institution. And he does this by going beyond what many scholars, politicians and the general public believe: he explains what is beyond the “myths” of the great American research university. Having clarified greatness, he then identifies and analyses the challenges, both external and internal, and imperfections of this model.

Unlike most writers on American universities, Cole avoids both simple celebrations of accomplishments and lamentations about failures. He is an engaged, even fearless scholar, writing in a by now long-forgotten humanistic tradition, at a time when ideological or technical specialization dominates higher education scholarship. What makes his book quite unique (a word he rightly despises) is that he identifies essential, sometimes unseen, problems but, at the same time, puts new ideas that are disarmingly commonsensical, making them, at least apparently, feasible. These are ideas and solutions covering a wide array of “heavy” topics, from admissions principles and policies to governance, from the content of undergraduate education to the core values of research universities, and from redesigning spaces suitable for collaboration to the funding of higher education. The discussion is neither arid nor abstract. Both the problems and the solutions are abundantly illustrated with examples, real life examples, sometimes personal stories, adding to the humanistic feel of the book. In this way, the book becomes about real humans, real people, rather than being about ideas or institutions.

One might wonder whether the book is relevant for a Hungarian or Central European reader interested in higher education. After all, European and American higher education differ in several ways, and often severely so. For example, the continental European higher education is more fragmented and less stratified than the U.S. The elite European universities are for the most part a strange mixture of the research university model and heavy state-infused bureaucracy. Although the book is explicitly about the great American university – this is exactly the title of Jonathan Cole’s earlier book – it is still very relevant for Central Europe. That is because the book discusses a model, or “the” model of university, applicable in reality beyond any American parochialism. Moreover, all our debates regarding trends, challenges and possible solutions in Central Europe’s higher education, almost always refer back to the American experience, even when not explicitly acknowledged. As such, it is quite illuminating to examine some key issues potentially relevant for Central European readers.

Take, for example, Cole’s discussion of admissions and enrolment. American research universities are highly selective, sorting through over 30,000 applicants for 2,000 places.
The procedure to admit them requires students to achieve high test scores in all fields. This practice places extraordinarily talented and dedicated students, but who are not narrowly focused on getting good test scores, at a disadvantage. There is no way this process can be fair. Therefore, Cole suggests as an alternative method, surprisingly and bravely, a lottery among those who have the best, roughly equal results, leading to a more diversified student body. He also urges to interview candidates and involve academics in the final round of selection, rather than leaving the selection to the admission staff.

This whole admission process will look foreign to Europeans. European institutions are generally less selective than their American counterparts, because higher education systems are less hierarchical. Nonetheless, there is strong pressure on European higher education systems to become more differentiated vertically (i.e. diverse excellence initiatives). Cole effectively challenges Europe's whole taken-for-granted admissions process of depending upon grades achieved or single tests, a system which discriminates against those highly talented students who are not consumed with grades, terribly narrowing the spectrum of those who would make excellent university graduates.

Cole's discussion of undergraduate education and the role of humanities will seem more familiar. Cole stresses, against other authoritative voices and dominant trends on campuses today, that “the curriculum should be unsettling” for students, challenging their biases, assumptions and beliefs (no “safe space”). It should encourage students to be active (co-)creators of their own knowledge rather than mere passive recipients. It should allow students to follow their own pace and decrease the temptation of premature overspecialization. He adds, against other dominant narratives, that “it would be a great mistake if we allowed politicians and a few outspoken businessmen to dictate educational policy and restructure our curricula so that it conforms to their ill-advised premature professionalism” (p.87). Cole talks about the on-going debate on the usefulness of social sciences and humanities (a debate that is widely known in Hungary, Central Europe, and the larger Europe). He criticizes elected officials for not understanding what humanities offer to students, that is, to develop more acute critical learning and analytic skills, and forcing us to question our own biases.

These issues are certainly not strange in the recent evolution of European universities. Questions about what knowledge is valuable in the 21st century and how might teaching be improved are increasingly being raised. While these debates will likely intensify as technology and the rapid transfer of information increases, Europeans will still be left with the difficult problem of viability, when new approaches require interested students with strong internal motivation, which might be taken for granted in highly selective institutions, but not in all institutions, especially those that are less selective.

The question of whether the proliferation of professional schools (law, medicine and business) undermines the centrality of the core arts and sciences disciplines resonates well in our part of the world. In most universities (even in Hungary), resource
constraints result in decentralized budgeting, meant to create incentives to increase revenues. Professional schools have much higher potential for that, compared to arts and humanities, leading to increasing inequality among faculties. The problem is also apparent in the United States, leading Cole to argue that professional schools must collaborate more extensively with humanities and sciences.

American higher education debates are overwhelmingly dominated by funding. By European standards, U.S. research universities are incredibly wealthy. So, why do tuition fees increase faster than the overall rate of inflation from year to year? According to Cole, this phenomenon “is as complex as interpreting American tax code”, and yet he provides several explanations: the economic value of higher education is not truly acknowledged in society, resulting in less than desired public funding. Cole cites the example of the University of Michigan, which received 78% of its budget from the state in 1960, while in 2012 the state funded only 17%. We can see how universities move “from state-supported to state-assisted to state-located seats of higher learning”. By comparing tuition fees to the cost of military bombers and drones, Cole remarks that these are “questions of values as much as finances”. Cole mentions several other problems as well: the lack of incentives and the inability of institutions to reorganize and abolish not-performing and outdated units; the budgeting processes in institutions and finally the effect of cost disease\(^{50}\) in education. Many of these phenomena are similar in most universities around the world.

One mechanism to counterbalance rising costs is an expansion of MOOCs. Cole acknowledges that MOOCs have a lot of merits, but he is sceptical regarding the extent to which they will transform universities, because students need community exposure for conversion and for network-building. “If nothing else will save residential college, sex will”, he adds. On the other hand, several insightful examples are cited on how technology can involve students in learning and research, but this will not override the traditional paradigm of face-to-face interaction of teachers and students. On the whole, this could be good news for European institutions, which generally lag behind the American MOOC providers, although European universities may find us left behind by entrepreneurial efforts to reach large numbers of students in effective ways.

Universities, Cole believes, have to find new ways to work together and simultaneously retain their commitments to academic values, which perhaps more than anything else distinguishes universities. No one really gains from the intense competition and rivalry that dominate U.S. research institutions. By creating “academic leagues”, that is, international networks of institutions in particular teaching and research programs, it is possible to share the best teachers, the best courses (on a formal or informal basis) and,

\(^{50}\) The theory of cost disease states that the advancement of technology affects labour intensive (stagnant) sectors (such as education, health care) differently than capital intensive (progressive) sectors (i.e. industry) because technology cannot replace human labour as efficiently in stagnant sectors. In progressive sectors wage increase is in line with productivity. In order to remain competitive, wages in stagnant sectors also increase leading to increased costs (and higher tuition fees) but without increased productivity.
of course, continue with the increasing amount of research now being undertaken cooperatively across national borders. Increasing cooperation between institutions would be beneficial in Hungary as well, but it is easier said than done. In fact, there is very little as yet. For example, since the introduction of the two-cycle (and later on three-cycle) system in Hungarian higher education, there has been a considerable increase in international mobility, but national mobility (studying a semester at another Hungarian institution) has remained on a very marginally low level, simply close to zero.

At a time when academic values are being threatened around the world, Cole is forthright in both calling for their defence and placing them in a hierarchy. The most fundamental values are academic freedom and trust on which other essential values, like integrity in research and the peer review system are built. Others, like diversity and intellectual progeny, are desirable but nevertheless are less important.

In Cole’s opinion, the other fundamental value, trust (confidence in individuals or institutions that they will fulfil their obligations) is a sine qua non of research universities because without that even freedom of inquiry would be jeopardized. He also mentions that “from time to time … the United States has witnessed (in varying degrees) a breakdown of trust. In most developing nations, of course, the protection and autonomy of universities from state powers simply doesn’t exist. Today, we are at a time when trust between the two partners has eroded significantly.”

The breakdown of trust is manifested in the overregulation of institutions “in the name of accountability”. Increased bureaucracy and compliance prevent institutions from fulfilling their mission. Cole admits that institutions are partly responsible for this situation because they do not regulate themselves when they meet inappropriate behaviour by one of their staff or students. Moreover, state and federal governments often create regulations and burdens for every institution based on one single incident.

Trust is an essential question not just in the U.S., but in all higher education systems and it is especially important in Central European countries, which suffer from the legacy of mistrust in the state and in public institutions. In Central Europe, the state is traditionally the main source and enforcer of regulations. The issue of university autonomy is important, and realities on the ground in this area are increasingly depressing. Would self-regulating be a solution? Another matter to think about in this part of the world.

For Cole, this rethinking requires a new compact between the government and institutions, warning at the same time, that “distrust is difficult to overcome and virtually impossible if one of the two partners is not interested to change policy and restore the partnership that once existed”. The concept of this compact could be very productive for research in higher education in Central Europe, giving both the strong role of the state and the drastic evolution (not to say alteration) of this compact in the last several years. While Cole identifies the important, but understudied problem of
trust, much research has to be carried out in this field so that other alternatives to rebuild trust can be suggested.

The final chapter of Cole's book is dedicated to institutional reforms, more explicitly on how the composition of boards and governance mechanisms should be changed, how a more centralized resource allocation could facilitate collaborations among faculties, how we should restore the balance between teaching and research and what the conditions of evolutionary and revolutionary changes are (illustrated by several examples). While his suggestions may seem too American for Central Europe, the issues themselves have come to the fore over more than two decades of reform efforts.

Toward a More Perfect University does three main things: first it provides new knowledge, information, and analysis on universities in America; second, it proposes concepts and heuristics on how to understand and how to interpret the issues it discusses (like “compact” or “trust”); and third, it puts forward extremely appealing suggestions and recommendations. When providing new knowledge, the author does it through a constructive “deconstruction of myths”. He mentions, for instance, that it was public funding that made American private research universities great (we in Europe usually think research in private universities in the US thrives on private money, which is false). Another myth it deconstructs is the belief that there is clear ranking of students at admissions; in reality the admission process at many large universities is more random and less equitable than one would assume.

In terms of heuristic tools, Cole talks about the “compact” of universities and governments. There was a sort of similar compact between national authorities, governments and universities in Central and Eastern Europe after the collapse of the communist regime: universities were considered part of the national project, they were invited to discuss directions in specific countries - Hungary, Romania, Poland – should evolve. That is changing recently, with governments formulating the national project, while universities either not having a role or having the subordinate role of implementing the national project.

To sum up, Jonathan Cole provides a comprehensive view and a brave criticism of American research universities. His suggestions are sometimes personal and therefore debatable (e.g. the value system) or underdeveloped (rebuilding trust, cooperation between institutions). At first look, some of them may appear even as naïve, because they are simple and brave. They all refer to valid problems and therefore they are able to generate genuine debates. This is, in fact, what the author hopes to achieve: generate a new debate on the role, functions and activities of universities. And by drawing our attention to the whole, rather than losing ourselves in the details, the book can revitalize the fading discussion on the role and mission of higher education even in Central Europe because major problems identified in the book are valid not just for American research universities, but for all developed higher education systems and research universities all over the world.
Book Review


Reviewed by Fruzsina Szabo

One of the most prolific times in the course of foreign language pedagogical researches can be dated to the 1990’s as well as to the beginning of the 21st century. One of the theoretical leaders and thinkers was at the time Zoltan Dornyei along with his colleagues and students at the University of Nottingham. The latest book by the authors Dornyei et al approaches the motivation of foreign language education from a different point of view: the foreign language classroom and the student become the primary subject of the theory. The authors of the book Motivating Currents in Language Learning Frameworks for Focused Interventions look upon theory and reasoning from the practice of teaching and second language acquisition. This pragmatic attitude characterises the book, which also displays outstanding didactic features.

At the beginning of the book the authors precisely establish the framework, which define the purpose, the relation and the forms of language teaching through the book. It is composed of 9 chapters, which display a linear and maintained logic, yet the chapters focus separately on the notion and various features of Directed Motivational Current (DMC). The first chapter, the Introduction highlights the authors’ intention of characterising the phenomenon of DMC as a motivational construct to be observed in classroom environment, in the practice of teaching and learning as well as in various stages of language acquisition. The authors believe that DMC can and has to be differentiated from the phenomenon of flow coined by Csikszentmihalyi. This comparison is one of the most important features and one of the most intriguing statements: it facilitates the understanding of DMC for the reader by explaining what this phenomenon does not involve. One of the most essential features of this theory is that it places language pedagogical motivation in the framework of time progress and sustainability: the key component of DMC is its relation to and appearance in the course of time.

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According to the authors of the book it is characteristic of the notion of flow that it seems to be an intrinsic motivation that drives it, where the sole source of achievement and happiness is the activity itself as well as the energy that establishes the act. However, the phenomenon of DMC does not only include engagement, but the network of tasks to be carried out as well, since it is the quintessence of DMC that the learner/participant reaches his/her goals and aims by accomplishing the set tasks and duties. The notion of DMC synthesises all the parts and pieces: the source of motivation, the set tasks, short-term/partial aims, vision, long-term goals. It also depicts the motivational flows as positive psychological dynamisms and as process of learning. It can be seen as indispensable features, which help the motivational flow become capable of supporting and initiating long-term learning aims, which can be accomplished in strongly motivating and sometimes in less motivating tasks.

The second chapter of the book is of crucial importance regarding the comprehension of the notion of DMC. It touches upon the question of how and when DMC appeared in the foreign language pedagogy research. The book by Dornyei and Kubanyiova (see a review in Iskolakultura) emphasised and explained the role of vision in foreign language education and motivation, thus it served as the cradle for the notion of DMC. This chapter provides various explanations for clarifying how DMC evolved from vision and goal-theory, furthermore how this concept unites activity and goal-setting, thus it does not utilises and employs the resources of the student, but – according to the authors- it amplifies them. The secret and the power of DMC lies in this unity: it is a motivational construct, which integrates the starting point of motivation, the motivational force and the relating learning styles. The authors of the book provided an explanation for why they believe that there are serious limits and boundaries to the notion of learning autonomy, and how DMC moves beyond it: separating motivation and motivated behaviour has enabled the examination of a more narrow motivation spectrum and learning features.

Chapter 3 and 4 are focusing on the details and the components of the concept itself. The feature of ‘directed’ is the centre of these chapter. One of the most important elements of the motivational flow is to formulate a clear-cut and straightforward goal. DMC is always and in every case a motivational construct of directed kind. One of the most important aspects of goal-setting is that it is identical with the interest, the belief-system and the values of the participant, since these are the most efficient and crucial points of linkage and relationship which can establish engagement in the long-term. The notion of DMC presupposes the idea that tasks, goals as well as sub-tasks and sub-goals can initiate the achievement and realisation of one’s aims: to maintain motivational energy and learning for a longer period.

There are several requirements and conditions which presuppose the phenomenon of DMC. A participant or a learner will experience DMC only in that case if the process and the result is his or her ownership. The authors believe that it cannot be accomplished
without engagement, or without a conscious goal-setting and a future vision of the
outcome.

Chapter 5 focuses on the various motivational properties of DMC. It emphasizes the
characteristic that DMCs are part of everyday life, they are “recurring behavioural
routines” and thus they became autopiloted. The authors point out that it is of uttermost
importance that the goal pursuit is based on “automatized behavioural routines”. This
term leads to the psychological notion of non-conscious self-regulation, which is defined
by the authors as “human behaviours that is influenced by processes that are not fully
under conscious volitional control”. Why is it crucial? This statement refers to the goal
pursuit of the learner, which signals such a high level of involvement and dedication that
the behaviours become habitualized and routine-like. The authors claim that in the
framework of DMC, setting and progressing along the sub-goals is a more important
element than the long-term aim itself. Sub-goals serve as checkpoints, as well as the
velocity of goal achievement. DMC admittedly contributes to the positive well-being of
the participant and the learner. The authors of the theory believe that DMC is a highly
self-concordant, accessible and regularly activated action, which allow the sense of
enjoyment and involvement of the learner. It is a motivational construct underlying the
activity and the process of learning.

However, we have to conclude that the book’s most outstanding feature is that it does
not stop at the theoretical explanation: Chapter 9 provides a pragmatical approach to
the DMC. It examines and presents ideas for observing and generating DMCs in the
language classroom. The authors claim that one of the most effective educational tools in
language pedagogy is teaching through projects. Employing projects does admittedly
requires new skills and mindset from the teacher, however, it can result in
tremendously enhanced engagement and enjoyment for the learners. Chapter 9
profoundly approaches and highlights the most significant aspects of project-based
methodology, reflecting upon the relationship between student and teacher, the
professional role, collaboration and eventual failure as well. This Chapter offers 7
frameworks for group projects, with clear-cut goals and sub-goals, as well as detailed
description. For those interested in the practical issues of motivational theories, this
final chapter is a must-read.

Overall, it can be concluded that the concept of DMC is a new and an old construct at the
same time: it brings on new aspects and vision, it integrates elements of previous
motivational constructs, however, it coordinates already existing notions and details.
The most important and refreshing aspect of the book is that it establishes a relationship
between motivation, engagement and goal-setting. The authors share the viewpoint that
the elements of this notion cannot be examined separately, it has to be looked upon from
a holistic point of view. DMC thus becomes a directed, highly cognitive, conscious and
rather controlled unit integrating various elements of previous motivational theories
and constructs.
The two authors, Benn and Downs, give a cutting edge analysis of the British education system: how comprehensive schools have tended to lose their leading role, while free schools, and academies have gained more strength in the past few years. It is evident from the very first page, and the authors do not wish to hide their opinion by all means when speaking about the changes that have taken place in education, that they are enthusiastic supporters of comprehensive education.

The authors point out at the beginning of the book that despite those arguments which say that public education is in crisis due to the rising inequality, still comprehensive schools may have the potential to provide equal access to education for all children regardless of class or ethnic background. So the main feature of comprehensives is its non-selectivity which makes possible for every single child “to walk through the same gates to school.”

We may conclude that the authors’ main purpose was to make education experts and politicians realize that it is time to stop double speaking about education and everyone should face what reality is in educational issues.

One merit of the volume is that it gives a thorough cross section of the British education system, although the reader can always be aware of the fact that Benn and Downs are passionate and committed advocates of the comprehensive school system.

The volume contains 8 chapters, each of which attempts to challenge and explore the eight myths of the British education system: comprehensive education has failed; local authorities control and hold back schools; choice, competition and markets are the route to educational success; choice will improve education in England: the free school model;

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academies raise standards; teachers don’t need qualifications; private schools have the magic DNA and progressive education lowers standards.

When arguing for comprehensive schools the authors underline the fact that the current school system is extremely divided and hierarchical, which may be one reason for the deepening inequality and this takes the authors to the conclusion that the comprehensive reforms should be completed because all in all it was comprehensive schools that helped working-class people get into higher education and not academies.

To prove this statement, the authors bring several data and examples from other successful education systems, like Canada, Finland, Hong Kong etc.

However, some of the examples mentioned seem to contradict the authors’ far too positive picture of comprehensives. Several countries’ state education has been transformed to better match a more business-like model, which the authors do not consider as a real solution to the challenges education faces in Britain. By drawing a parallel between British free schools and American charter school, in Myths Three and Four exposed: Choice, competition and markets are the route to education success/Choice will improve education in England, the authors point out that private schools do not achieve better results in PISA tests than comprehensive schools, according to OECD surveys. However, at this point maybe we should refer to another book written by Charles Murray, who also tried to explore some myths regarding the American education system and stated that the in the past few years one merit of the liberal education policy was the right of free choice of schools as a result of which charter and private schools became quite popular in the USA. Murray underlines the fact that the importance of private and charter schools cannot be measured simply by the improvement of math and reading scores, rather by the fact that they offer „safe and orderly environment“ as well as „supportive intellectual environment for hardworking students.” What Murray wants to point out is that educational experts forget about the simple fact that each child is different and the main advantage of charter and home schools is that they can help children develop their own potential. And this is the aspect that Benn and Downs fail to consider in their analysis.

When Benn and Downs argue that every child should have access to exactly the same educational opportunities and education should be free and uniformly excellent, they seem to vote exclusively for comprehensive education and do not think that the option

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of free choice provides a more vivid, colourful and varied education system but rather it makes the system more fragmented and selective.

They also point out that one major principle of the comprehensive system was to introduce the concept of a common curriculum which was supposed to open access for huge proportions of young people to education.\(^5^8\) And the authors may conclude with satisfaction that mission accomplished, as according to the data they bring the number of those getting a degree rose from 68,000 in 1981 to 331,000 in 2010.\(^5^9\)

Interestingly enough, when these two authors welcome these changes and tendencies in their education system, another author overseas, once again Charles Murray tried to point out that in the past 70 - 80 years opening up secondary and higher education to a large proportion of students has become a tendency not only in America but worldwide as well, which may have its drawbacks, too. He states that by letting a large scale of students into higher education, these institutes will not be able to provide academically talented students with what they really need, while students with lower skills will have difficulty meeting the requirements needed.\(^6^0\)

This may be another aspect of opening up higher education to the crowds of students that would be worth considering, but we may not find answer to this question in Benn and Downs’ book.

Even if the authors leave some questions open or may occasionally give a one-sided picture of a complex issue, still it is an undeniable merit of the book that it provides an overall review of the structure of the British education system. Recent education reform in England has resulted in a dramatic shift towards academies (funded directly by central government, instead of a local authority) and free schools (called ‘charter schools’ in the USA). Over half of state secondary schools in England are now academies\(^6^1\) and, a fifth of its secondary schools are faith-based.\(^6^2\)

In Chapter 5 the authors deal with Myth Five that is academies raise standards. Academies appeared in a large number in the education system in 2002 with the aim of turning round underperforming schools in more disadvantaged areas and with the help of the Academies Bill schools could be judged „Good” or „Outstanding” to become academies\(^6^3\) and by this getting more financial support. However, the authors bring

\(^{58}\) ibid

\(^{59}\) ibid


\(^{61}\) p56

\(^{62}\) p68

\(^{63}\) p80
several data which prove that for all the investment these academies got, they did not perform much better than other non-sponsored state-run schools.\textsuperscript{64}

They disagree with those who claim academy status is the best way of improving schools. They admit that some academies are Outstanding; but so are non-academies and some schools have improved after becoming academies but some others have not. So all in all, changing a school’s status from non-academy to academy has not had the promised effect.

In the last chapter the authors want to do away with one more myth which says that progressive education lowers standards.

The authors give a precise description of progressing education when describing it as ‘child-centred’ education or as ‘child-led’ education which includes class discussion, pupils sitting round tables instead of in rows, group work, skills, worksheets. As they highlight: “problem-solving and critical thinking are more important than subject knowledge... education should be more child-centred rather than didactic or teacher-led... group work and independent learning are superior to direct instruction.”\textsuperscript{65}

These ideas are extremely crucial as in the past, the teacher stood at the front of the room and held the undivided attention of their students and the teacher was the focal point. These days, however, students should be the centre of the classroom. The goal is to make teaching-learning more community oriented rather than teacher oriented. That is progressive education that the authors present accurately.

This chapter definitely proves that the authors do have a complex understanding and vision of in what direction the teaching-learning process of the 21st century should go, independently of the issue whether we are speaking of comprehensive, state, denominational or private schools.

As a conclusion we can say that the whole volume is a thought-provoking and informative reading. Consequently, this book is a perfect reading not only for experienced researchers and those who are experts of educational issues but also for beginner researchers.

And why could this book be an instructive and useful reading for Hungarian researchers, teacher educators and policymakers? The volume gives a detailed picture of the British education system and the main challenges it has to face these days. Although the two authors put a special focus on the comprehensive system, still they manage to show some pros and cons of the different types of schools in public education (comprehensive, academies, free schools). They also try to show the controversies of the British
education system, which is—according to the authors—far too fragmented and selective. In the past decades the Hungarian public education system has been undergoing several significant and so to say controversial changes and reforms: one of the most radical steps was the deprivatisation of schools which resulted in the disappearance of private or charter schools from the palette. This tendency definitely leads to a less varied education system, but selectivity and fragmentation still remains. Maybe this book helps the experts find the way to a better education.
Book Review


Ida Somolanji Tokic

Regulating Private Tutoring for Public Good: Policy Options for Supplementary Education in Asia is the 10th book in the series of books called CERC Monograph Series in Comparative and International Education and Development. It is authored and edited by Mark Bray and Ora Kwo, teachers at the University of Hong Kong; Mark Bray as UNESCO Chair Professor in Comparative Education and Director of the Comparative Education Research Centre, and Ora Kwo as an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Education.

The main thesis of the book is that private supplementary tutoring alongside regular schooling has great implications on the system of values of new generations, on their social development, and on the development of educational systems. The authors felt the need to address the problem of private supplementary tutoring as it is growing into a problematic educational area especially in the recent years. Private supplementary tutoring is in an educational area that is not regulated or controlled which gives space for growing social inequalities and raises a large number of questions about quality of mainstream educational. Authors’ goal is not to put private supplementary tutoring under the spotlight as a negative phenomenon, but to make it easier to monitor and regulate.

The book is comprised of 6 chapters roughly the same size (around 10 pages per chapter). The remaining pages are Appendix, References and Notes on the Authors.

The first chapter introduces the reader with the main differences between formal (mainstream) and private tutoring, also referred as shadow schooling. It also shows differences between private tutoring as it has different tutor organization. For example, some tutoring is provided as one-to-one tutoring, small groups, and some are large scale classes. There are also different curricular interests in private tutoring. This book is

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mainly centered on subjects that are covered by mainstream school and it is focused on academics like mathematics, languages and science. It raises questions about educational quality and overwhelming need for private tutoring in the last few years. The authors stated that private supplementary tutoring is on rise because it is driven by the increase of examinations in the educational system. From pedagogical perspective, there are also issues concerning pedagogical approach. In search for regulatory frame, the authors suggest that more comparative analysis is needed to identify good and bad aspects of private supplementary tutoring. From policy analysis, it can be seen that private supplementary tutoring is well recognized as a potential problem if not regulated and different authors are mentioned as scientific authorities in Asia. The book puts private supplementary tutoring in Asia in a specific regulatory context due to differences in size of an individual country (centralized and decentralized countries), public attitudes towards private supplementary tutoring and its providers, cultural context, and corporate structures (tutoring provided by companies, students, or teachers).

The second chapter elaborates the scale and spread of private supplementary tutoring as it varies between different countries, rural and urban centers. Variations are found mainly in intensity of private tutoring and ways of examination. Authors present table of cross-national indicators of private supplementary tutoring for 32 countries in Asia. It shows the percentage of students receiving tutoring during primary schooling. It is also presented that private tutoring is mainly focused on core examination subjects and that gives more opportunities for families that can afford private supplementary tutoring to choose the type, duration and its intensity (which is not available in mainstream schooling).

In the third chapter, the authors explain why private supplementary tutoring should be regulated. First and foremost, they state that lack of regulation promotes social inequalities that have further social implication (socio-economic, gender, racial/ethnic, rural/urban inequalities). The second reason why regulation is necessary is the fact that private supplementary tutoring is focusing its attention on primary school children as their final consumer. The state needs to protect the child’s best interest. Furthermore, ethical questions are also important as it is possible that teacher providing lessons in mainstream school at the same time is being a private tutor to the same students. Overall acknowledgement of existence of private supplementary tutoring also has implication on educational quality. It has been known that teachers intentionally dismiss certain curricular lessons because of the high rate of private tutoring of the same lesson. Authors state that it is not only quality issue, but a form of corruption – teacher deliberately reducing effectiveness to stimulate private tutoring. That affects, in long-term, students and their sense of value. The last reason is taxation. Private supplementary tutoring is mainly non-registered commercial activity. As it is considered a category of non-formal education, taxes are usually limited on selling books and other
material services, excluding intellectual services. That leaves open space for inadequate educational tutoring with no consequences.

Authors suggest different regulation for different actors in private supplementary tutoring system which is discussed in the fourth chapter. Focus is on tutoring companies, but teachers providing tutoring, internet tutoring and students and other self-employed persons providing tutoring are also briefly mentioned. They state that companies providing tutoring (in some countries even called franchise operations) that have more than 8 students per lesion and less than 20 students per day (depending on the state; i.e. Macao has threshold from 7 to 21 students, India has threshold of 10 students and so on) need to obtain certain licenses to operate in private supplementary tutoring sector. The authors presented series of registration requirements (everything from tutors, class size, basic information for clients, management, financial framework, fees, building and facilities to curriculum) as well as monitoring requirements.

Implementation of mentioned regulatory frame is discussed in fifth chapter. Authors suggest a form of partnership between private supplementary tutoring actors and mainstream schools, teachers’ unions, other government offices and public bodies of various kinds. Main objective is to improve practice through evaluation, self-evaluation and sharing of information. Certified personnel that manages registration and supervision already do exist in some countries (i.e. Republic of Korea). Still, implementation of regulatory framework must include different stakeholders as it is not solely the task of ministries of education. Recommendations are that the above mentioned implementation of the regulatory framework include registration of enterprises and tutors, inspecting premises, advising entrepreneurs, parents and general public, maintaining websites and other means of advertisement, maintaining records, responding to complaints and following up on infractions and breaches.

In sixth chapter the authors present their conclusions through future directions for Asia and other countries and regions. They call upon the efforts under UNESCO coordination regarding Education for All (EFA) movement and guidelines on main aims of education. Those efforts are seen as the reasons why shadow education (private supplementary tutoring) was not timely recognized. On one side focus was on providing education for all children and prolonging their education to secondary school and further, and on the other side the focus was on educational system that promotes almost exclusively learning to know educational pillar and examination of core subjects. That resulted in expansion of private supplementary tutoring in the last decade and deepened the social inequalities. Regulating rather than prohibiting private tutoring sector might give certain balance in the overall educational system (mainstream and shadow schooling). Authors state that further comparative studies need to be done keeping in mind the context as an important variable.

As an interesting reading material, this title makes fairly easy reading. Writing style is simple and accessible to wide audience. Due to specific topics of interest, I recommend
this book to a large number of readers – from students of various educational profiles, educational experts, headmasters of educational organizations and to all educational policy makers. The book is also available online which makes it very accessible to readers worldwide.