

THE LABOUR MARKET RELEVANCE AND OUTCOMES OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS: AN OVERVIEW ON THE HUNGARIAN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Abstract

The paper aims to provide a better understanding on the major challenges of Hungarian Public Administration (PA) education focusing on the potential gap between the market need and the service provided by the higher institution.

At the moment one of the main challenges for Hungarian PA Education system to preserve some diversity regarding the type of PA educational programs because it seems that the different university programs meet different market needs either from the employer/ labour market perspective or from the customer 'student' perspective. The different PA programs offered by the three higher education institutions prepare their graduates to different position and to different organizations / various sector of the public sphere by offering different course portfolio and developing highly different skills and competencies of their graduates.

Another key challenge is the decreasing number of student application to the PA programs in general. Although from 2011 there has been a clear government intention and action to increase the prestige of the profession of the civil servants and giving outstanding attention and resources to the education and training of civil servants , at the same time - especially from 2016- contradictory NPM -types measures were implemented aiming to implement "debureaucratization" in the public sector. Those measures including ordering mandatory downsizing ratio for every government agency, shifting from the more carrier based civil servants model towards more position based model, which undermines the stability and life-long image of civil servant profession. We assume that that there is significant connection between the disruption of stability of civil servant career path and the attractiveness of PA program in higher education.

In order to get a deeper inside on the content and targeted competencies of the existing PA study programmes in Hungary and its convergence with the market needs (especially the expectation of potential employers) this analysis address the following research questions:

(RQ1) From the viewpoint of the content of the programme curricula, to what extent are different academic disciplines are represented in the different PA programmes in Hungary? The available literature on PA education in CEE (cf. Staroňová and Gajduschek 2016, Hajnal 1999, Hajnal and Jenei 2007) typically emphasizes the dominant role of legal approaches, even if this pattern may be gradually declining in most countries in the region. The classification and the appearance of the above mentioned disciplines in the PA programmes is examined by clustering the courses listed in the study programme curricula. The research ambition of the study focuses on mapping the competences acquired through the PA study programmes and to finding out the extent to which these competences seem to be useful in daily work, especially in a job related to public administration.

In this context, the following additional research questions were formulated:

RQ2: Which skills and competences have the students developed during to the study programme, and to what extent?

RQ3: To what extent did the acquired competences match competencies needed in graduates' daily work?