



**DEVELOPMENT, ASSESSMENT AND VALIDATION
OF SOCIAL COMPETENCES IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

COUNTRY REPORT – Czech Republic

Intellectual Output 2

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1. Preface

The European policies concerning higher education bring our attention to the less (then knowledge and skills) recognized competences the HE graduates. These are competences devoted to social and civic engagement, to playing role of a leader in social environment, recognizing and solving social problems, being able to initiate and conduct a dialogue or debate with other people in autonomous and responsible way. The HE graduate's competences achieved at universities are now frequently limited to knowledge and skills useful from cognitive and professional (labour marked oriented) point of view. The social competences and engagement of students promoting intercultural approach to social issues and educating leaders for civic society being less an intentional element of the programmes.

The DASCHE Erasmus+ project: "Development, assessment and validation of social competences in higher education" [<http://dasche.eu/>] underlines the need for such HEIs activities understanding it as a realization of the mission of responsible universities and answering the idea of responsible teaching and learning. DASCHE is also aiming to get better personal developments of students including the axiological context of education which results with graduates being able to support professional ethos. The context of the DASCHE project is created mostly by the Bologna Process indicating that preparation for life as active citizens in a democratic society is one of the main purposes of higher education. Also other relevant European strategies requesting for social competences of the HE graduates are elements of the context as well as implementation of European Qualifications Framework containing the pillar "competences: autonomy and responsibility".

Developing social competences by HEIs is difficult, because they are difficult to teach, to support and even to name. They encompass a variety of learning outcomes linked to ethical, cultural, civic oriented attitudes of learners; they are often meta-competences, which cannot be seen independently from knowledge and skills. The systems of internal and external quality evaluation and assurance face the same difficulty, the ES&G for QA in EHEA do not provide sufficient guidance. The DASCHE project on the basis of about 30 case studies of various HEIs provided by 6 countries is collecting and summing up the good practices of the social competences development. In Czech Republic 5 higher education institutions took part in the research. They differ each other by the mission, size, location, profile – but all of them provided examples of good practice in shaping social competences of their students.

Associated partners of Dasche projects are as follows:

- The Council of Higher Education of Latvia
- University of Cologne, Germany
- The Czech Rectors Conference
- The National Representation of the Ph.D. Candidates - Poland
- The European Council of Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers
- The Polish Accreditation Committee
- The National Council for Science and Higher Education - Poland
- The Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland
- The Students' Parliament of the Republic of Poland
- The National Unions of Students in Europe.



The good practices are the basis for proposing a model solution concerning shaping students social competences as well as formulating some recommendations which are to be addressed to the decision makers on institutional, national and EU level for enhancing this aspect of the responsible teaching and learning.

2. National abbreviations and acronyms

ABB - Accreditation Bureau Board
AC - Accreditation Commission
CHES – Centre for Higher Education Studies
CU – Charles University
FHS – Faculty of Humanites, Charles University
IEB – Internal evaluation board
ICT – Internet Communication Technologies
MEYS - Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport (MEYS)
NAB - The National Accreditation Bureau
UEM - University of Economy and Management

3. Methods applied

The country report was prepared on the basis of the methodology report of DASCHE project elaborated as the intellectual output number 1 (IO1). The methodology report was prepared and consulted with all partners of the DASCHE project and all partners countries will adopt generally the same methods of research relevant for case studies approach.

The main elements of adopted methodology are as follows:

- Making choice of HE institutions and their units for case studies
- Desk research of strategic national and institutional documents
- Field research - individual in depth interviews with senior management staff at the HEIs
- Field research – focus group Interviews or interviews with teachers
- Field research – focus group Interviews with students
- Consultations of findings and recommendations with external stakeholders (seminars)

The detailed explanation – see the methodology report and the section 3.2. below.



3.1. Making choice of the HEIs for case study

Based on personal knowledge, the team considered around 8 HEIs to be an object for the study. Finally, the team selected 5 HEIs of different type, mission, size, location and profile. If the HEI was bigger, we focused just on selected faculty. It was also taken into consideration whether we could expect an interesting approach to the social competences approach issue (good practice).

The first decisions were approved during and by interviews with management of selected HEIs. This interviews also gave the first suggestions what kind of social competences the researchers can find at the HEI activity which can be interesting from the DASCHE project objectives.

Looking for diversity of HEIs the team took under consideration whether the social competences are developed at selected HEI as a side-effect of regular program or they are an effect of the intentional reflection and curriculum design.

Reasons for selecting specific HEIs were as follows:

Case no 1: Faculty of Humanities of Charles University

Considering the experience and focus of Faculty of Humanities of Charles University (FHS CU) in this field Centre for Higher Education Studies (CHES) selected FHS CU as the case HEI for pilot study. This choice has two main reasons:

- Content or subject-related. The faculty has developed liberal arts study and learning approach. The organization of study at this faculty develops autonomy, responsibility of their students.
- Methodological and practical CHES has had strong experienced with this faculty based on personal and also institutional cooperation ties. It means also relatively easy access to information.

Last reason the faculty belongs to the biggest and oldest Czech university – Charles University. However, FHS is its youngest faculty.

Case no 2: Pedagogical Faculty of West Bohemia University

We selected Pedagogical Faculty of West Bohemia University, because teachers play crucial role in all education system. We cannot imagine that teachers could without having social competences successfully teaching. We also have cooperated with teachers from Pilsen on organizing international conference DisCo, which is focused on using ICT in education. The third and not last reason was that West Bohemia University is middle-size university (it has about 10500 students, pedagogical faculty about 1800) and regional university.

Case no 3: University of Economy and Management, Prague (UEM)

We selected this higher education institution because it is small private non-university school. It is focused on teaching in the field of economy and management. UEM also try to use active learning methods and it strongly supports Corporate Social Responsibility.

Case no 4: Medical College of Nursing

We selected this college because similiary as social competence are very crucial for teachers, we can apply similar fact for nurse and medical staff. Important fact is also that the



rector of the Medical College of Nursing, doc. PhDr. Jitka Němcová, Ph.D. is the Vice-president of Czech Rectors Conference, which are projected associated partners. The Medical College of Nursing is small private non-university higher education institution which is focused higher professional education in the area of medical non-doctorial studies.

Case no 5: Faculty of Arts, University of Ostrava

When we were thinking about 5th case. We had considered firstly Technical University of Ostrava. However, later we spoke with one teacher from University of Ostrava and she presented us their unique cross faculties concept called HR modul, which we found as very interesting case. Another reason is that Ostrava is settled in East part of the Czech Republic and 2 historical “countries” Moravia and Silesia is touching there. Ostrava “was previously known as the country's "steel heart" thanks to its status as a coal-mining and metallurgical centre, but since the [Velvet Revolution](#) (the fall of communism in 1989) it has undergone radical and far-reaching changes to its economic base.”¹ City Ostrava is transforming to modern multi-cultural city. The developing social competences in previously ideological communist city is very interesting and important.

The following research questions were defined:

How is the concept of social competences understood in HEI?

How is the development of social competences in study process ensured by HEIs?

Focus group questions for students:

- 1) Why did you choose to study at university?
- 2) What were your expectations?
- 3) Why do you study this subject at this faculty/HEIs? Did you know about this faculty before?
- 4) What did you already learn?
- 5) What should the learning outcomes be?
- 6) What do you imagine under social competencies?
- 7) Have you been taught.... (effective communication, cooperation, flexibility, independence, life long learning, responsibility for future, work under stress, critical thinking, independence, leadership, active live approach)

Interview structure – broad questions/topics for teachers:

- 1) What do you imagine under social competencies?
- 2) How social competences are developed at the faculty/programme level?
- 3) How are social competences are developed at the level of courses?
- 4) What would be possible ways for developing social competences in courses?

¹ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ostrava>



The research was carried out (collecting data) from May 2018 to May 2019.

Methods applied The pilot study in FHS CU was conducted in the period from April to December 2018.

The aim of the pilot study: To explore what is the understanding of the concept of social competences and how its acquisition is integrated into the study process of the FHS CU (learning outcomes, teaching and learning methods, quality assessment system).

The following research questions were defined:

- How is the concept of social competences conceptualized at FHS CU?
- How does FHS CU implement the acquisition of social competences in the study process?

In order to achieve the set goal, the succeeding tasks were formulated:

- 1) To study literature and sources on understanding of the concept of social competences and implementation of its acquisition in higher education.
- 2) To explore the internal and external regulatory acts that conceptually mention the need for acquisition of social competences.
- 3) To explore the views of students regarding the acquisition of social competences in the study process.
- 4) To explore the views of teachers regarding the acquisition of social competences in the study process.

The research methods used:

- focus group discussion;
- semi-structured interviews.
- desk-top research of relevant documents

Study base: The pilot study focused on Bachelor's Programme in Liberal Arts and Humanities. FHS CU academic staff (3), undergraduate students (6). We had 3 face to face interviews with teachers and 2 focus groups with the second year students of this programme. We also used as a support source interviews with one teacher and vice-dean of education published on the faculty website, the texts published by teachers of this faculty. These interviews were closely connected the issue of social competences as well as with focus and mission of faculty.

From January we have started research on Faculty of Pedagogy of University of West Bohemia. We did interview with one teacher and focus group with 4 students. We also have started research on University of Economy and Management, Prague. We did interviews with vice-rector for education and with 3 teachers.



4. Czech Higher Education System²

4.1 Short intro

Tertiary education is composed of two sectors. The first relatively small sector comprises tertiary professional schools that offer professionally oriented courses (ISCED 655). Studies generally last three years, and graduates are awarded a diploma (not comparable with a bachelor's degree). Higher education is provided by higher education institutions, which form the main part of the tertiary education system. They offer all levels of higher education degree programs (ISCED 645, ISCED 655, ISCED 740, ISCED 746, ISCED 747, ISCED 844).

4.2 Historical development

The roots of the development of higher education in the present-day CR go back to medieval times, when Charles University, the first university in Central Europe, was founded in Prague in 1348 by the Czech King and Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV. It became the first Studium generale north of the Alps and east of Paris.

The development of higher engineering education started with the foundation of the Engineering School in 1707, which became the Prague Polytechnic in 1806. After 1879 the Polytechnic used the name Higher Technical Institute. The statute and the name of this institution were changed to the Czech Technical University after the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1918. The roots of the Academy of Fine Arts reach back to 1799. Since 1898 it has existed in the form that we know today. The Czech-German Technical Institute, the precursor of the Technical University in Brno, was established in 1849. In the same century, the Higher Education Institute of Mining in Příbram and the Academy of Applied Arts, Architecture and Design in Prague were also founded.

In the first year of existence of the independent Czechoslovak Republic (1918-1939) three new universities were established in Brno: The Masaryk University, the University of Veterinary Medicine and the University of Agriculture. The Czechoslovakia belonged among the most developed countries in the world, with a dense network of schools at all levels. The high quality of secondary professional schools and technical universities should be also mentioned.

The development of Czech tertiary education in the second half of the twentieth century has been characterized by many profound and rapid changes caused by the dramatic and discontinuous sociopolitical development. During the German occupation (1939 - 1945), all higher education institutions were closed and many teachers and students were persecuted. After the communist takeover in 1948, a new wave of persecutions hit the Czech universities: many teachers and students were put in prison or expelled; many of them emigrated. The communist regime retained almost complete control over all areas of life, including higher education. The Soviet invasion in August 1968 was also followed by expulsions and a wave

² The entire part is based on publication "Higher education in the Czech Republic in 2018" which was prepared by Centre for Higher Education Studies and Czech team members of DASCHE are among authors of this publication.



of emigration. In the period (1948-1989) several new HEIs, mostly technically oriented, were established.

From „centralized“ higher education system to broad academic freedoms and independency

In 1990, very soon after what was known as the “Velvet Revolution” in which students and HEIs played an important role, a new Higher Education Law was passed (Act No. 172/1990). This act in particular reduced to a minimum the influence and control of the state over higher education, confirmed broad academic freedom and academic rights, and constituted institutional self-government. It further included matters regarding study and academic degrees, introduced the Bachelor’s degree, established a basis for student participation in higher education governance and introduced the principle of accreditation. An important issue was that this act brought research back to HEIs after the communist period.

Since 1990 the tertiary education system has changed rapidly. Extensive international contacts, exchange of students and teachers, as well as the process of transforming research and teaching were immediately started up. New disciplines and new study plans came into being. New departments and new faculties were established. In 1991 five new HEIs were formed and a number of existing institutions were restructured.

Rapid development of higher education, changes in economic conditions and overall changes in society, development of the international situation, and new demands on harmonisation of higher education studies within Europe, and other considerable circumstances, led to the need for a new higher education act – Act No.111/1998 Coll., on Higher Education Institutions (further only Act). This Act retained the positive provisions of the previous Act No. 172/1990, while incorporating new and necessary changes to eliminate the shortcomings of the earlier Act. The Act transformed the state HEIs (with the exception of military and police HEIs) into the new type of legal entity – public HEIs and also allowed the establishment of private HEIs.

One of the most significant changes was that all property of the state used by public HEIs was transferred to the ownership of the public HEIs. All these institutions established Boards of Trustees (the members must be from outside the respective HEIs). The main role of the Board is to give written agreement for managing the property in prescribed cases, prior to the rector’s decision

Public and state HEIs are established by the act, whereas private ones must obtain state permission from the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. The Act legalized the three-level structure of degree programmes: Bachelor’s, Master’s and Doctoral. In some fields of study, however (e.g. medicine, stomatology, pharmacy, law), the previous long master programmes (4-6 years) have been preserved. New rules for accreditation of degree programmes have been introduced. The Act distinguished HEIs of university type (with all types of degree programmes accredited) and nonuniversity type (with mostly bachelor programmes and no doctoral ones). Non-university HEIs are not divided into faculties. Both types of HEI are expected to provide relevant basic and/or applied research, development and other creative activities.

The Act is valid until the present time, but with many amendments. In 2001, the structure of study programmes was brought more strictly into line with the Bologna scheme, and some amendments concerning the organisation of lifelong learning courses were introduced. In 2006, the most important changes gave greater freedom to HEIs when using public funds, and introduced state guaranteed social scholarships for economically underprivileged students. There was also a change in the provisions dealing with Diploma Supplements, which are to be issued automatically and free of charge to all graduates. The 2006 amendment also supported the award of a foreign degree, and clarified and specified the award of joint degrees, which had, however, already been possible under previous legislation. Graduates of degree study programmes offered in cooperation with foreign HEIs



are awarded Czech academic titles and, in addition, under certain circumstances, an academic title of the foreign HEIs pursuant to current legislation in the relevant country.

Very important changes have been made by the amendment in 2016 (Act No.137/2016 Coll.). It has enacted the rules for the internal quality assurance system at all HEIs and has newly modified the accreditation system. In addition to the existing accreditation of study programmes, it introduced the institutional accreditation. Accreditation is no longer granted by the Ministry of Education but by a newly established National Accreditation Bureau for Higher Education. These issues are detailed in the chapter on quality assurance. Following these changes, two government regulations were also issued. One contains standards for programme and institutional accreditation (Government Regulation No. 274/2016 Coll., on standards for accreditation in higher education), the other one describes in more detail the 37 areas of education that introduced the amendment (Government Regulation No. 275/2016 Coll., on fields of study in higher education).

In connection with these changes, the amendment also specifies the competencies of academic officers and academic bodies. As a further characteristic of Bachelor's and Master's study programmes their profile was introduced, which may be academic or professional.

4.3 Classification of Czech higher education system

According to the way in which HEIs have been established, they are classified in Higher Education Law as public, state (military and police HEIs), or private HEIs. Public HEIs are established by law, and are legal entities. State HEIs are also established by law; they are subordinated to the Ministry of Defence (the University of Defence) or the Ministry of the Interior (the Police Academy of the Czech Republic), which govern these HEIs like other state institutions. Private HEIs are a relatively new part of Czech higher education. Applicants who are legal entities of different types may establish a private HEI after receiving state permission granted by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.

Another typology of HEIs stipulated by the Act refers to the prevailing level of degree programmes that they offer (at Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral levels). HEIs offering all three types of degree programmes are considered to be university-type institutions. Such HEIs are, according to the Act, required to foster "scientific, research, development, artistic, or other creative activities". A nonuniversitytype of HEI offers mostly Bachelor's degree programmes; it can provide Master's degree programmes, but it is not allowed to offer Doctoral degree programmes. HEIs of non-university type are obliged to carry out research related to the level of the programmes that they offer – in practice this is usually applied research – and other developmental, artistic or creative activities.

In the 2017/18 academic year there were 26 public, 2 state and 37 private HEIs in the Czech Republic.

The difference between state and public is in the level of independency. The state HEIs are found by state and they do not have legal personality. They are managed directly by the relevant ministries (Police Academy by Ministry of Interior and University of Defense by Ministry of Defense.). Public HEIs have a big autonomy in self-management and self-regulations.

HEIs can offer accredited Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral degree programmes, in the three modes of study: on-site, distance or a combination of these (combined studies). They



can also offer degree programmes in foreign languages. The mode of studies, as well as the language of instruction, is part of the accreditation decision.

The Czech higher education system is not a binary system that distinguishes between professionally and academically oriented HEIs, as in some European countries. But as it was mentioned, the Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes can have academic or professional profile. This is applied on all higher education sector.

The Bachelor's degree programmes have a standard length of studies of 3-4 years, with a work-load of 180 – 240 ECTS credits, and lead to the degree of “bakalář” (Bc.), in the area of the fine arts the degree “bakalář umění” (BcA.).

After graduating at Bachelor's level, students can continue their studies in Master's degree programmes. The standard length of studies of a Master's degree programme is a minimum of one year (60 ECTS credits) and a maximum of three years (180 ECTS credits). In parallel there are still traditional non-structured (long) Master's degree programmes, which do not follow on from a Bachelor's programme. Traditional long Master's degree programmes have a standard length ranging from a minimum of four years (240 ECTS credits) to a maximum of six years (360 ECTS credits).

Long Master's degree programmes are still offered in several study fields, e.g. medicine, veterinary medicine, pharmacy, law and in some other exceptions. Both long and short Master's degree programmes lead to a same degree. Graduates of Master's degree programmes are awarded the following academic degrees:

- “inženýr” (Ing.) in the fields of economics, technical sciences and technologies, agriculture and forestry and in military fields of study;
- “inženýr architekt” (Ing. arch.) in the field of architecture;
- “doktor medicíny” (MUDr.) in the field of general medicine;
- “doktor zubního lékařství” (MDDr.) in the field of dental medicine;
- “doktor veterinární medicíny” (MVDr.) in the field of veterinary medicine and veterinary hygiene;
- “magistr umění” (MgA) in the area of the fine arts;

Doctoral degree programmes have a standard length of studies of 3-4 years. Admission to a Doctoral programme is conditional on completion of a Master's degree programme. Doctoral programmes are aimed at scientific research and independent creative activities in the area of research or development, or independent theoretical and creative activities in the area of the fine arts. The studies are completed by the state Doctoral examination, which includes the presentation and defence of a Doctoral thesis. The thesis must contain original and published results, or results accepted for publication. Doctoral candidates have the status of students, irrespective of the mode of study. Graduates of Doctoral degree programmes are awarded the degree of “doktor” (i.e. “doctor”, abbreviated as “Ph.D.”, used after the name). Doctoral degree programmes are delivered by all HEIs of university type. Some universities express the work load in terms of ECTS credits, but most do not.

To complete the picture of the Czech system, mention should be made here of the tertiary professional schools. These institutions provide professional-oriented post-secondary education, mostly of 3 years duration (in health programmes, the education lasts 3.5 years). These institutions have stable number of about 30 000 students. They cooperate closely with employers, and a practical placement is part of the studies. The graduates are awarded the “Diploma Specialist” (DiS). This diploma is recognized as a tertiary degree, academically lower than the Bachelor's degree. Professionally, some of these degrees are given equal



recognition to a Bachelor's degree, e.g. in health professions covered by the EU directive. There are numerous professional schools (about 170 institutions), but most have a relatively low number of students. Some cooperate closely with HEIs and provide Bachelor's degree programmes under the auspices of an HEI.

4.4 Students in the Czech higher education

The total number of students in higher education in 2017 reflects important demographic trend which is typical for last few years in the Czech HE system. All HEIs struggle with significant decrease of students because of smaller relevant age cohort, i.e. the smaller number of potential students who finish secondary schools. While in 2011, i.e. the year with the highest number of students in HE, i.e. almost 400 thousand students, in 2017 the number of students was about 100 thousand lower.

Nevertheless, the proportion of graduates at secondary schools who applied to higher education institution is still very high, about 80 % (years 2014/2015 to 2017/2018) (Vojtěch, Kleňha, 2018). But at the same time structural inequalities in access to higher education from different types of secondary schools preserve.

Both, public and private higher education institutions face the trend, but it has radically different intensity. Comparing years 2010 and 2017 public HEIs faced decrease of first entrance students almost 25 % while private almost 54 %. The proportion of students at private HEIs in the Czech environment stays approximately same in the period 2005 – 2017. The ratio of students who study at private HE institutions is about 10 % (+/- 2 %) in/among all HE students. There was just a short-term exception, after 10 years of their legal existence (academic year 2010/2011) when the proportion of students at private HEIs has reached more than 14 %.

There were 1,3 million of higher education graduates in the Czech Republic. The highest, about 40% share of university educated people is in Prague.³ That is over 130% more than 20 years ago. More than half of graduates are women.

5. The national context of social competences

The National Qualifications System represents the qualifications system in the Czech Republic; it is controlled by the government under the Act on the Recognition of Further Education Results (Act No. 179/2006 Coll.). The National Qualifications System includes all bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree programmes under the Higher Education Act, as well as accredited education programmes at tertiary vocational schools in compliance with the Education Act.

Although the concept of qualification is one of the commonly used terms in tertiary education, no clear legal definition of this term has been introduced to date. There are very few references to this term in the applicable Higher Education Act (Act No. 111/1998 Coll.); moreover, it is mentioned in various contexts, without providing a precise definition.

³ <https://www.czso.cz/csu/czso/vysokoskolaku-rapidne-pribyva>



The National Qualifications Framework for Tertiary Education deals with the concept of qualification as it is common internationally, i.e. in terms of proven and formally validated learning outcomes. The existing legislation distinguishes qualifications by the type of study programme, the awarded degree and the specifications resulting from the specific title of a study programme and the field of study completed by a graduate who gained the qualification. A qualifications system is formed by qualifications existing in compliance with the aforementioned criteria.

The National Qualifications System of the Czech Republic ranks the tertiary vocational education level among undergraduate degree programmes; however, the predominant perception in society is that the hierarchical position of a bachelor's degree programme is higher than that of tertiary vocational education.

The National Qualifications Framework for Tertiary Education must take into account the two European qualifications frameworks (the EQF and the QF EHEA) as well as the relevant legal regulations corresponding to tertiary education. The Czech Qualifications Framework is to carry out these two functions of qualifications frameworks in equilibrium:

1) Communication

- Provides students with better information on study opportunities, making their choice of university or tertiary vocational school easier;
- - Ensures comparability of studies, as well as permeability among schools, international mobility and employability of students and graduates;
- Informs employers and generally the tertiary education environment of the expectable knowledge, skills and general competencies of graduates, allowing for a better assessment of their opportunities when entering the labour market.

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2) Regulatory Function

- - Defines the national standard regarding the level of knowledge, skills and general competencies of graduates of study programmes in tertiary education;
- - Designs the structure of tertiary education in the sense of types of programmes of study in relation to the ongoing reform of tertiary education;
- - Determines the credit scope for various types of study programmes of Czech tertiary education in relation to the ECTS;
- - Provides criteria for assessing accredited educational activities in tertiary education;
- - Formulates criteria for the recognition of foreign education (or a part thereof) in tertiary education in the Czech Republic.

Czech National Qualifications Framework adopted the breakdown into specialist knowledge and skills, which are expected to be further specified in descriptors of individual subject areas as well as descriptors of general competence representing the expected degree of independence and responsibility of graduates at a given qualification level, which is common for all subject areas. Descriptors of general competencies include the ability to make judgements, communicate and continue with further education; however, the lines between these sub-categories are less clear-cut.

The meaning of education must not be narrowed to preparation of the workforce for the job market, or more specifically for the needs of employers which are evident at the time. The objective of education in the 21st century must be to develop competences for the whole active civil, professional and personal life (such as, for example, civic participation, initiative, creativity, communication, cooperation during conflict resolution, behaviour in a crisis and other "soft" skills). Education must focus on the development of life-long competences



necessary for taking the path of sustainable development. The content of education must emphasise the aspect of transdisciplinarity, i.e. the interconnection of various fields and areas of human activity—understanding the mutual interconnectedness of processes both social and natural, local and global, past and future, with the objective of accepting responsibility for creating the world we live in. In order to achieve that, we need to cultivate diversity of active and participative educational approaches and methods. On the contrary, it is necessary to reduce the large amount of facts which we learn but which prevent creativity and deeper knowledge of topics taught. That is the only way to achieve the lifestyle transformation towards preference of sustainable consumption which is crucial for environmental sustainability and transformation of the economic system towards lower material demand; it is the only way to support environmental protection and social cohesion³⁵ so that we are all able to be involved and live with dignity. (Karnikova, 2017: 137)

Universities should continue to fulfil their irreplaceable role in society by developing their four basic and equally significant functions. Firstly, their importance as autonomous and independent centres of new knowledge and innovations that bring benefits to the whole of society in the form of new information, products and services. Secondly, their importance as centres of education where knowledge, wisdom and type of thinking are passed on to people and enable personal development. Thirdly, as institutions preparing highly qualified experts for the world of work. And finally, they are important as spaces for the development of active citizenship considered necessary for the further functioning of democratic society. The role of university education continues to expand by society becoming increasingly complex and interwoven and by the growing role of modern technologies as well as the necessity to manage very complex learning. Universities must be able to respond to major changes in society; however, they must not do so at the expense of autonomy and academic freedom. It is utterly crucial that universities are accessible to anyone, regardless of their social or economic position, and remain a public asset and public responsibility, including the corresponding level of financing. (Karnikova, 2017: 139)

The students who participated in the mobility do not see problems to work abroad, they have good language skills and other so called soft skills (communication, reliability, independence), they have better relation to the EU but they feel themselves as Czech citizens at the same time, they are tolerant - they would accept a foreigner as a friend or partner (Centre for International Cooperation in Education, 2017).

6. Evaluation of social competences in internal and external QA systems

6.1 The root of Czech QA systems

The main reasons for emphasizing quality in Czech higher education are the gradually increasing numbers of higher education students (including adult students), the diversity of study programme offered by HEIs with different profiles, and the increasing demands of the state on the responsibility of HEIs due to their traditional autonomy and claims for public funding. Other factors have contributed to the need for quality assurance in higher education: the decentralization of decisionmaking processes, the internationalization of higher education (including the recognition of qualifications/parts of studies), and the need for higher education to be relevant to the current situation on the labour market (including cooperation with industry). Another important factor involves the needs and motivations of HEI employees: academic workers and HEI managers desire to work under stable, transparent conditions with defined goals and competencies and to gain satisfaction from their work and their interactions with colleagues (Šebková, Munsterová, 2005; Santiago et al., 2008).



In the Czech Republic, quality assurance was implemented as an obligatory tool administered by state-established accreditation agencies (Šebková, 2009).

The accreditation of degree programmes was introduced by the – Act No.111/1998 Coll., on Higher Education Institutions (hereinafter the “Act”) after the formative, postrevolutionary period of the 1990s. This act also established the competencies and powers of the Accreditation Commission (AC), the agency responsible for quality assurance. HEIs could offer degree programmes and award academic titles only if the programmes were accredited by the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport (MEYS). MEYS was bound to the expert opinion of the AC; if the AC’s opinion was negative, accreditation should not be awarded. The accreditation process also applied equally to habilitation procedures and procedures for the appointment of professors. In addition to its accreditation work, the AC also evaluated activities that had been accredited and expressed its views on proposals for the establishment of private HEIs (which was linked to the accreditation of at least one degree programme) and on the establishment, merger, and division of HEI faculties. According to available analyses, between 1999 and 2009 the success rate for getting a degree programme accredited was 93 % (this figure includes the reaccreditation of programmes whose original accreditation had expired; Kohoutek, 2011). The AC’s annual reports summarized the overall number of expert opinions related to all types of applications for accreditation and described the results of its other work (opinions on granting state approval to private HEIs, opinions on applications for the establishment of faculties, etc.). The number of expert opinions on all types of applications for accreditation issued annually ranged from about 1,000 to almost 2,500. It is clear that the workload of the AC and its working commissions was enormous, and it was complemented by the workload of the MEYS.

The mentioned act required HEIs to carry out periodic internal evaluations of their activities and to publish the results. This simply formulated duty left HEIs a great deal of freedom in how to create internal evaluation systems and in how to use the evaluation results. The obligation to disclose evaluation results differed from common international practice, in which the results of internal evaluations are the property of HEIs, which, at their own discretion, may or may not publish them (Santiago, 2008).

6.2 A new quality assurance system

Ensuring the quality of all activities conducted by Czech HEIs is one of the basic priorities of strategic and conceptual materials produced both at the national level and within HEIs themselves. Such documents include the Strategic Plan for the Scholarly, Scientific, Research, Development and Innovation, Artistic and Other Creative Activities of Higher Education Institutions for 2016–2020, elaborated and updated yearly by MEYS. This document reflects national as well as international experience with quality assurance and higher education development, and among other things, emphasizes the quality of higher education as a crucial and permanent priority (as expressed in the Bologna Process, European Commission documents such as the Europe 2020 strategy, the Education and Training 2020 framework, OECD documents and publications including the “Country Note for the Czech Republic” produced by OECD experts for the Czech government in 2006, findings and recommendations of national individual projects supported by Structural Funds, etc.). We can quote from the strategic plan’s first priority related to quality assurance: „HE institutions will play a crucial role in ensuring the quality of their activities... They will set and adhere to high quality standards in all their activities, including the requirements for the quality of creative outputs and for **knowledge, skills and competencies of the graduates of study programmes**“ (MEYS, 2015, bold by authors).



The relatively large amendment to the Act came into force in September 2016 after a long-lasting debate between the academic community, the government, and other stakeholders.

The explanatory memorandum to the amendment states that the quality assurance model based on the accreditation of individual degree programs caused unreasonable administrative burdens for all participating institutions – HEIs, the AC, and MEYS (Návrh zákona [včetně důvodové zprávy], 2015). Thus, the amendment specified two objectives:

- (a) to modify the rules for the accreditation of degree programmes and to introduce institutional accreditation that makes the system more efficient,
- (b) to adjust the status and competencies of the National Accreditation Bureau and to define its relationship to the government and MEYS. The amendment also aimed to modify internal quality assurance systems, because well-functioning systems were a condition for being granted institutional accreditation. As a result, the amendment of 2016 (hereinafter the “Amended Act”) retained some provisions of the earlier act that had a positive effect but also introduced substantive changes as explained further.

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The National Accreditation Bureau (NAB) was established by the Amended Act. The executive body of the NAB is the Accreditation Bureau Board (ABB) consisting of fifteen government-appointed members, drawn from educational and research institutions, professional associations, central state administration offices, and other important entities; it also includes students. The Amended Act stipulates in detail the procedures for appointing and dismissing ABB members.

The NAB has some important powers and responsibilities that its predecessor, the AC, did not. They can be summarized as follows:

The NAB has the right to decide on the granting (or not) of accreditation related to institutional accreditation and on the accreditation of degree programmes (In the past, the former AC issued an expert opinion, but MEYS had the right to decide on granting accreditation.)

In addition to applying for accreditation of degree programmes, which was the procedure established by previous legislation (according to which degree programmes had to be accredited), an HEI can apply for institutional accreditation valid for one or more fields of study. Institutional accreditation authorizes an HEI to create and implement certain types of degree programmes (bachelor’s, master’s, doctoral) in the relevant field of study (Government Regulation No. 274/2016, Coll.). The institutional accreditation procedure is very demanding. An HEI should demonstrate the ability to meet all required conditions stipulated by the Amended Act and detailed in standards for accreditation established in Government Regulation No. 274/2016 Coll. Institutional accreditation is granted for a period of ten years (although as stipulated by Section 81b of the Amended Act a shorter accreditation period may be granted if any shortcomings are determined); while accreditation is still valid, an HEI can apply for an extension. Solutions to potential problems and resolutions for specific situations are also prescribed by the Amended Act.



The Amended Act newly establishes two profiles for degree programmes: academic- and professional-track programmes. The accreditation standards for each of the two profiles differ. As mentioned above the general standards applicable to both profiles are described by the Amended Act, whereas details are set by the Government Regulation.

A completely new situation has arisen in the area of internal quality assurance, which is primarily a result of the introduction of institutional accreditation. The intention is to encourage HEIs to build well-functioning internal quality assurance systems that will ensure the quality of all activities offered and the quality of the degree programmes to be created and implemented by HEIs after being granted institutional accreditation. The Amended Act requires an HEI to establish and maintain an internal quality assurance system, but, unlike in the past, this system must be complemented by a mission and strategy clearly defined by the HEI; by defined responsibilities of staff and internal authorities involved in the system's operation; by financial, personal, and information resources for educational activities and other related activities; and by cooperation with external partners. It also requires an HEI to develop standards and procedures for internal evaluation, corrective and preventive measures, and improvement measures, and to process and store internal documents and records related to quality assurance. In the framework of internal quality evaluation, it is necessary, in accordance with the Amended Act, to apply the established standards and procedures, and to regularly (at least once every five years) produce a report on the internal evaluation describing achieved outputs and measures implemented to limit and remove potential deficiencies. This report should be updated annually and made available to the bodies of the HEI and its components, the NAB, and MEYS. As a part of the application for both programme and institutional accreditation, an HEI is required to submit a self-evaluation report that describes and evaluates the fulfilment of the requirements arising from the relevant standards. In the case of an application for institutional accreditation, an HEI must also present evidence that the financial and material support of all activities, including HEI development, will be ensured.

In connection with the changes related to internal quality assurance, the Amended Act introduces a new type of official academic body, the internal evaluation board (IEB). The IEB's authority can be executed by the scientific board of an HEI that does not have institutional accreditation. IEB members are appointed by the rector based on the procedure laid out in the Amended Act. The Amended Act also establishes the IEB's rights and responsibilities as follows:

- Approving draft rules for the internal quality assurance system;
- Managing the internal quality evaluation of all HEI activities;
- Writing a report on the internal quality evaluation (see above);
- Keeping records related to the internal quality evaluation of all the HEI activities;
- Performing other activities to the extent stipulated by the HEI's Statute.

In private HEIs, the role of the IEB is filled by a body that is established in accordance with the HEI's legal form, or a body whose competencies correspond with the scientific boards of public HEIs.

In contrast with the permanent working groups of the former AC, the NAB's evaluation committees are set up ad hoc to prepare the background documents for individual accreditation applications and for individual external evaluations of HEIs; one committee member must be a student. The NAB's statute describes in detail the composition of evaluation committees and their work.



Another new change is the introduction of evaluator training. Training is organized by the NAB (a PowerPoint presentation is available on the NAB website), including special training focused on student evaluators, supplemented by publicly available guidelines and conceptual materials.

The obligation to produce a report on the internal evaluation process (at least once every five years with annual updates), even if it is not made public (see above), will improve information about the quality of higher education.

7.1 Introduction to Pilot Study – the case of Faculty of Humanities, Charles University

Within the framework of the Erasmus+ Programme project “Development, assessment and validation of social competences in higher education (DASCHE)” a pilot study was carried out on the formation and assessment of social competences in one higher education institution to evaluate the situation in the member states and to develop methodology for the study. Considering the experience and focus of Faculty of Humanities of Charles University (FHS CU) in this field Centre for Higher Education Studies (CHES) selected FHS CU as the case HEI for pilot study. This choice has two main reasons:

- 1) Content or subject-related The faculty has developed liberal arts study and learning approach. The organization of study at this faculty develops autonomy, responsibility of their students.
- 2) Methodological and practical CHES has had strong experienced with this faculty based on personal and also institutional cooperation ties. It means also relatively easy access to information.

Description of Faculty of Humanities

Originally founded as the Institute for Liberal Education of Charles University in 1994, **the Faculty of Humanities Charles University gained full academic autonomy in 2000 and it is in fact the youngest faculty at Charles University.** FHS was established to provide study programmes at the Bachelor’s, Master’s and Ph.D. levels previously not available at the University. Its main research and academic focus is within Humanities, and Social and Cultural Anthropology. Located in a new, award-winning campus-like facility of Charles University in the Prague district of Jinonice, the school has 200 faculty members and approximately 2, 600 students⁴. Generally is possible said that the formation of social competences is providing by the style of education at the faculty.

A pioneer since its inception, the Faculty was among the first at Charles University to adopt the Bologna Accords. In addition, it utilizes advances in e-learning and academic tracking technologies to allow distance learning for both traditional and non-traditional students, increased student-teacher communication, through web courses⁵.

Under the leadership of Dean *Professor Jan Sokol, Ph.D.*, the former education minister and nominated candidate for the presidency of the Czech Republic in 2003, the school has developed several progressive programs answering important faculty developmental needs. The foundation of its developments is the Bachelor’s Programme in Liberal Arts and Humanities, which offers students unprecedented individual choice in course selection, in both the theoretical and applied arts of philosophy, history, the social sciences, and

⁴ <https://fhs.cuni.cz/FHSENG-311.html>

⁵ <https://fhs.cuni.cz/FHSENG-311.html>

languages⁶. This programme learns students to be responsible for freedom and it is inspired by Western approach toward education of Liberal arts which encompasses mainly humanities social sciences and languages.

Description of Bachelor stud programm with regards to “social competences”

Zdroj: <https://bakalar.fhs.cuni.cz/SHV-15.html> včetně rozhovorů....

Findings

Findings from strategic/official documents and other presentation materials

The faculty offers to bachelor as well as master students multi-disciplinary approach of study.

The social competences as term are not explicitly named in the official faculty's documents. However, we can find in the long term strategy some hints about social competences.

One of the faculty priorities is: Ensure that graduates of the study programs, along with a deep theoretical basis, acquire other *knowledge and competences that will not only benefit them in their professional career but also benefit their lives.*⁷

We can find in the profile of bachelor graduate great emphasis on developing **self-sufficiency, responsibility and creative work** that will enable graduates effective further education and flexible adaptation to changing labor market demands. Even there is primary focus on labor market we can find out from interviews with teachers and students that they see learning process at the faculty in the broader perspective, i.e. not just as preparation for labor market, but also for future lives and needs of democratic society. The study programme prepares graduates with broad cross-disciplinary knowledge and competences. These seem to be rather a solid base or for future work specialization or/and better it would enable searching of students individual direction in life,

Findings from interviews with teachers or management

Many teachers of FHS CU see the role of university as multi-directional. They do not see the university as primarily the environment for the production of science, but as a semi-public space that serves education, for young girls and boys. One of the senior teachers Libor Prudký⁸ speaks about so called 4th role of universities, which he means developing the values of students and he also emphasize the role of teacher as examples for students.

He said : *University students of the present studies are in the so-called sensitized phase of socialization development, when their value structures are shaped, especially those that concern their future functioning as citizens and full-fledged personalities. Given that this role of higher education institutions – i.e. their importance for the personality development of students, in fact their educational role - is nowhere represented in the current documents on universities, the question is whether higher education institutions act as supporters or, conversely, the barriers to the development of quality of life in this company(society).*⁹

In other words speaks about that Ivan Rynda: *“However, the primary, and nowadays often (besides the personal career path), the ultimate goal must not be lonely writing meaningful texts. On the contrary! The first task of the teacher is to create an environment, a*

⁶ Inspiration for the Faculty original focus was from anglosaxon HE environment which has no tradition in the Czech Republic at all.

⁷ The Faculty Strategy 2015-2020

⁸ <https://www.csvs.cz/blog/2018/07/uloha-vs/>

⁹ <https://www.csvs.cz/blog/2018/07/uloha-vs/>



communication environment. "Communicating" does not mean talking together: Latin communication means **"to share something together, to do something in common."**¹⁰

Rynda continues in the interview: "It's not about paying attention - the aim is to learn to pay attention to the other. By listening carefully to another, in repeated and repeated evaluations of information, knowledge, opinions, and attitudes, what is (what, often without any thought of substance) we call **critical thinking.**"¹¹

Vice-dean for education Richard Zika sees as the main benefit of Liberal Arts, "that students learn to notice what is important in the world around them and to think about it properly."¹² We see again that critical thinking is mentioned as important learning outcomes of faculty graduates.

Karel Müller, who belongs also to the senior teachers: "We teach humanities here, this education should be a tool **that enables a person to orient himself in society to gain the competence of a ...)modern person, that is, to be able to face the various interpretations, pressures, the information noise that surrounds him, he could process it to understand these things and use them as the source of their intent. I think this is an important segment of education.**"¹³

Teachers also see as autonomy, time management and responsibility as strong competences which students learn during their studies at FHS CU, not because of the content but how the study process is designed. However, these outcomes are not touching each student and there is a risk that some students can be untouched by these competences. They also think emphasis on autonomy, responsibility and time management is also connected with the lowest unemployment rate of students from all Charles University s faculties.

Teachers see as **barrier** accreditation process and scientific trend to narrow specialization which limited development of interdisciplinary approach. However, faculty prepares new multidisciplinary approach as Introduction to Social Science and Introduction to Humanities. These subjects should show to student connection of different social science/humanities disciplines. They think that development of social competences depends on personality of teacher or as well as it can be a part of specific courses (e.g. management, psychology, sociology). However, even that faculty prepares new multidisciplinary subject Introduction to humanities. They see as a problem that labor market accreditation approach forgets on broader and deeper role of education, that education should not be just a preparation for labor market, but also for live in democratic society. They see as hard to measuring these so called soft-skills.

FHS also supports the non-school activities of students as faculty ball and different kinds of summer schools or seminars, which also develops social competences from teacher's perspective.

Findings from focus groups with students

Students see as very strong positive that FHS CU learns them to be flexible, responsible and to know time management. The structure of study helps them to part-time work and to develop also the competence necessary for labor market through work experience. They also very appreciated multi-disciplinary approach, they seen it as challenge and as supporting for the development of the critical thinking, ability to reading text. They think that study at FHS CU helps them to be able work under stress and ability to communicate their ideas and see things from different perspective. They also learn how to understand other people, how to be emphatic). Students also named as example of development of effective

¹⁰ <https://fhs.cuni.cz/FHS-1968.html>

¹¹ <https://fhs.cuni.cz/FHS-1968.html>

¹² <https://fhs.cuni.cz/FHS-1846.html>),

¹³ <https://fhs.cuni.cz/FHS-1346.html>



communication – testing by group exam in discussion – colloquium). They also see that study at FHS CU learn them to work with information and they see it very beneficial in personal and also work life. They see themselves as self-reflective.

7.2. Pedagogical Faculty of West Bohemia University

We chose this faculty because teachers should be developed social competences on lower levels of educational system. We thought that would be possible to find good examples of praxis of development of social competences at this faculty.

The Faculty of Education provides courses in bachelor, follow-up master, master and doctoral programmes of various types, most of them aimed at acquiring a teaching qualification. It offers a wide choice of programmes in Lifelong Learning focusing mainly on further education of teachers. It prepares young people for their profession, supports them in their positive attitudes, and fosters cooperation with outside institutions and with Faculty graduates. It encourages research and development work, as well as international cooperation among students and teachers, especially within the EU.

The curriculum of pedagogical programmes should be strongly connect with National Frameworks for primary and secondary education.

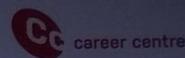
Students see as way of development of social competences participation in association of clubs (e.g. AISEC, Opened)

They suggest to obtain some credits from the group of voluntary subjects for active participation in these association or clubs. (50% min of curricula is obligatory, 25% min could be voluntary obligatory and 25 max could be voluntary by order of Czech National accreditation bureaue).

Course of Personal and Social Development

Vejvodova (2016) shows how students developed team work in LMS Moodle.

Students have also possibility to participate in life long learning lectures which develop social competences. Below you can see poster which invites student to the workshop of critical thinking.



UVAŽUJ JAKO IRON MAN!

Kritické myšlení podle Tonyho Starka

Jan Mojžíš



Na workshopu kritického myšlení se naučíš, jak vyhodnocovat kvalitu informací. Z jakých zdrojů je dobré čerpat. Jak nepodlehnout fakenews. Jak zkvalitňovat své názory a opouštět ty zastaralé. A v neposlední řadě, jak se rozhodovat správně a rychle jako Iron man.

5. 3. 2019 | 15:00 – 18:00 | ~~UK617~~ UL 601



EVROPSKÁ UNIE
Evropské strukturální a investiční fondy
OP Výzkum, vývoj a vzdělávání



MINISTERSTVO ŠKOLSTVÍ,
MLÁDEŽE A TĚLOVÝCHOVY

7.3. University of Economy and Management, Prague (UEM)

We choose this university as an example of Czech private HEI, which use very modern teaching strategies.



University of Economy and Management realizes study programs in economic and social areas for nearly 2,500 students since 1996. HEIs provides interactive teaching and examination applications (videolearning, online videoforum, educational texts in electronic form, electronic knowledge testing).

Findings from strategic/official documents and other presentation materials

UEM offers application of knowledge and its practical applicability in the form of exercises and individual work. UEM focuses on development of the skills and abilities of students in communication, presentation, argumentation, analysis, negotiation and teamwork. UEM supports the non-profit sector in the context of social responsibility and adherence to a Code of Ethics.

Findings from interviews with teachers or management

We can see that UEM has a strategic vision for development of social competences. This is confirm also by teachers.

Each year rector introduces Code of Ethics to new students.

There is a strong focus on Social Corporate Responsibility and cooperation with NGOs (e.g. People in Needs, local community in Prague 13).

Nanodegrees – Communication and Society, Management and Leadership, Self Development

UEM has own kindergaten and also supports Quiet Café, where were deaf waiter, which helps students to develop tolerance to difference.



Quiet café with deaf waiters.



UEM boxes for interactive discussion about quality of life and sustainable development and corporate social responsibility.



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