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UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON
FACULTY OF LAW, ARTS & SOCIAL SCIENCES
School of Management

**The role of student services in enhancing the student experience:
cases of transformation in Central and Eastern Europe**

by

Rositsa Bateson

Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

November 2008

ABSTRACT

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

ABSTRACT

FACULTY OF LAW, ARTS & SOCIAL SCIENCES

SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

Doctor of Philosophy

THE ROLE OF STUDENT SERVICES IN ENHANCING THE STUDENT
EXPERIENCE: CASES OF TRANSFORMATION IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN
EUROPE

by Rositsa Bateson

This research project examines the role of student services in universities in Central and Eastern Europe at a time of rapid transformation of the higher education sector, following from the collapse of the socialist period in 1989 and the implementation of the Bologna process after 1999. Conducted in the period 2004-2006, the research process aimed to identify the major factors of institutional change, and to what extent are students, and services for students, considered a driving force for organisational restructuring.

Based upon a comparative qualitative study of four public universities in Hungary, Romania, Croatia and Serbia, this project found ample evidence of institutional change and introspection, innovation, achievement, as well as awareness and critical analysis of weaknesses. However, the main expectation to find students as active agents in institutional change and in the improvement of the old and the provision of new services for students was not supported by the findings in this study. Although the four universities in this project share the characteristics of an all-encompassing change process, students, and services for students, still play a marginal part in determining institutional priorities and in influencing the service provision and culture.

Having anticipated the lack of awareness of the role of student services in organisational management, this project examines the reasons for this from a historical perspective, using a comparative approach to development trends in the United States, continental Europe, and Central and Eastern Europe. It further suggests a model of integrated student services, based upon the actual experience of the Central European University, but defined and analysed against the context of the region.

This research project coincides with a growing awareness in public policy debates in continental Europe of the importance of institutional student support services. As the first study of institutional practices with regard to student services in Central and Eastern Europe, it anticipates the reform in this area and the integration of student services as part of the university core.

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DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I, ROSITSA BATESON, declare that the thesis entitled:

The role of student services in enhancing the student experience: cases of transformation in Central and Eastern Europe

and the work presented in the thesis are both my own, and have been generated by me as the result of my own original research. I confirm that:

- this work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;
- where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;
- where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;
- where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;
- I have acknowledged all main sources of help;
- where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;
- initial parts of this work have been published as:

Bateson, R. and Taylor, J. (2004). Student Involvement in University Life - Beyond Political Activism and University Governance: a view from Central and Eastern Europe. *European Journal of Education*, Vol. 39, No. 4, pp. 471-483

Signed: Rositsa Bateson

Date: October 2008

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This journey would not have been possible without the loving support of my husband, Gerald, and my daughter, Vivien.

ABBREVIATIONS AND DEFINITIONS

AACRAO	American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers
ACA	Academic Cooperation Association
ACPA	American College Personnel Association
BBU	Babes-Bolyai University
CEE	Central and Eastern Europe
CEU	Central European University
CHEMPaS	Centre for Higher Education Management and Policy at Southampton
DAAD	German Academic Exchange Service
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
EAIE	European Association for International Education
EAIR	European Association for Institutional Research
EHEA	European Higher Education Area
ESIB	European Students' Union
EUA	European University Association
HE	Higher Education
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
MSACS	Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools
MSCHE	Middle States Commission on Higher Education
NASPA	National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education)
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency
SEM	Strategic Enrolment Management
UNESCO-CEPES	The European Centre for Higher Education (<i>Centre Européen pour l'Enseignement Supérieur</i>)
UNS	University of Novi Sad
Ministry of Education	Is used as a general name for the relevant ministries of the countries included in this study. The ministries' full names may include culture, sport, and other terms.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

1.2. Why an interest in student services?

1.3. Research problem

1.4. Hypotheses and research questions

1.5. Scope and limitations

1.6. The case of the Central European
University: a point of reference

1.7. Definitions

1.8. Multiple roles of student services

1.9. Conclusion

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

The topic of the role of student services in enhancing the student experience is new in higher education in continental Europe, and particularly in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). While student services, student affairs and other institutional support services have received much attention and undergone substantive development in countries where the Anglo-American tradition underpins the higher education systems, for continental Europe student services are currently an under-explored and largely undefined area of institutional support. Although existing in a variety of forms and functions, student-related administration still remains a ‘back office’ operation rather than an essential service for the students and the academic community.

This study of student services practices in four large public universities in Central and Eastern Europe, conducted in the period 2004-2006, coincides with a growing debate in continental Europe on the role of students in higher education management, on the needs of students and on institutional responses. It offers an insight into the current organisation of student support services and examines a model of integration of student-related administration as a comprehensive management strategy. While based on the analysis of four universities—in Hungary, Romania, Croatia and Serbia—the study draws on commonly found features throughout the higher education systems in Central and Eastern Europe. Its conclusions therefore are expected to be of interest to other institutions, both in the region and beyond, and to have a broader impact on the ongoing restructuring of student support services in Europe as a whole.

1.2. Why an interest in student services?

In common with other research in higher education management, this project stems from concrete professional experience and identified needs to analyse and promulgate best practices in a comparative context. The idea to focus on student services as a comprehensive management model comes from my own experience since 2000 as Vice President for Student Services at the Central European University

(CEU), an American-style postgraduate university established in 1991 and located in Budapest, Hungary.

In 2002, at a Rectors' conference¹ convened by the CEU President and Rector, I gave a presentation on the role of student services as an integral part of the university core which provoked vehement discussion and disagreement among the participants—Rectors of higher education institutions in CEE and Russia. Their reactions ranged from general endorsement for student services to a complete rejection of the need to provide 'services' which was seen as unnecessary 'pampering' of students. In a subsequent article written with my research supervisor, based upon reflections on this debate, we concluded that, for the majority of those present, "the university experience was 'a rite of passage', an experience of learning how to live a newly-found personal freedom, that—for many generations of university students in this region—has been a self-guided process. The university is not there to hold hands and wipe tears; it is there for young adults to learn how to get on with their lives independently" (Bateson and Taylor, 2004, p. 475).

These reactions pointed to a series of misunderstandings about the nature and role of a student services unit, and a lack of knowledge, coming both from the predominant higher education traditions in Central and Eastern Europe and from the current—largely decentralised—organisational structures of universities in this region. At the same time, while educational and organisational philosophy and principles were being discussed at national policy levels and Rectors' Conferences, senior administrators from many of the institutions whose Rectors participated in the 2002 conference had approached CEU to share information and provide guidance on the set-up of student services. The beginning of this research project is rooted in the interest expressed by other higher education institutions in the student services programme developed at the Central European University.

Although the research component of this study does not include CEU itself, this university's Student Services programme is used as a point of reference, and will

¹ A conference hosted by CEU in November 2002 for the Rectors of HEIs in CEE and Russia that receive funding from the Higher Education Support Programme, a network programme of the Open Society Institute.

therefore be presented in detail in this chapter. This is due partly to the fact that it is difficult to draw direct comparisons between CEU—a small elite non-state postgraduate international university—and other public institutions in the region, and because CEU was founded as an American-style institution, borrowing directly from well-established practices in governance, institutional management and student services organisation models in the United States.

The second main reason for undertaking this study comes from the comprehensive reform process of higher education institutions in Central and Eastern Europe which commenced with the change of regime in 1989 as part of the broader socio-political transformation. The period since 1990 has brought about rapid changes in higher education legislation. However, despite the numerous reforms in higher education policy and institutional organisational strategy in this region, the awareness of the role of students and of the need to provide or improve services for students is still insufficiently developed. While many shortcomings are openly acknowledged by higher education administrators, teaching staff and students, there is still no vision, model or strategy of how to develop this area of institutional management.

And, finally, the need for reform and innovation in the provision of student support services has, as of 2005, emerged as an important discussion at the level of the Bologna process in Europe (*Trends IV*, 2005; ESIB's *Bologna with Student Eyes*, 2005; the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*, 2005; and EUA's *Quality Culture in European Universities: A Bottom-up Approach*, 2006). Traditionally underrepresented in the majority of higher education systems in continental Europe, until recently student services were neglected as a management area and as an institutional objective for improvement. In the Bologna framework, concerns about adequate student support surfaced initially in the context of international student mobility and recruitment. Although the topic is now coming to the forefront of institutional management and quality assurance, there is relatively little published research on the implementation of a comprehensive student services programme.

To the best of my knowledge, this study is the first comparative research project in Central and Eastern Europe dedicated specifically to the topic of student

services. Its objectives are to analyse the existing structures, based upon four examples of higher education institutions in four CEE countries, and to propose the model of integrated student services provision as a form of advancement of previous recommendations and policy guidelines at institutional, national and international levels.

1.3. Research problem

In an international comparative context, higher education institutions in North America and in the United Kingdom (and throughout other countries that follow the Anglo-American tradition) have developed student services and student affairs as integrated and technologically sophisticated units, guided by accreditation standards of excellence, quality assurance policies, and extensive research in educational psychology, student development and organisational management.

Higher education institutions in continental Europe—and more specifically in Central and Eastern Europe—have been slower to identify and define the role of student services in enhancing the student experience. While all institutions, regardless of the diversity in national higher education systems, perform a number of complex tasks related to student recruitment, admission, enrolment, data management, student support, retention and graduation, career guidance, contacts with alumni, and many other student-related functions, these are not perceived as ‘student services’. Rather, they are internal administrative functions, frequently executed by separate units and divisions, and guided by different senior officers of the institution. In fact, the term ‘student services’ is rarely used, and—in various stages of this research—has caused some confusion in the understanding of its meaning (for example, one representative of a German university thought student services meant services performed by students²). As a result, such operations have remained on the periphery of higher education management reforms, serving a narrowly defined scope of activities.

A comparison with developments in student support services in **North America** (detailed analysis follows in Chapter 2: Literature Review) suggests that this

² Planning meeting of international experts for the ACA study on *Support for International Students in Higher Education*, Brussels, February 2006

field is a priority area for development, both from the perspectives of student learning and institutional management. The acknowledgement of the importance of student support services to the overall outcomes assessment process of higher education in North America has positioned this professional field within the university core, in the framework of a holistic approach to student learning and development.

Similarly, in the **United Kingdom** *The Dearing Report* (1997) renewed the emphasis on student support in the context of the “management of learning” (Summary Report, par. 31). Adopting a student-centred strategy, the report advocated the importance of “wider support and guidance”, including more attention to the time students spend outside the classroom, the acquisition of skills related to career orientation, and the expansion of “non-academic services” in collaboration with the student unions (National Report, Chapter 8). Since then, the UK Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) has adopted guidelines for the assessment of the “institutional management of learning opportunities”, among which are “the academic infrastructure, management information, learning resources, admissions policies, student support, etc.” (QAA *Handbook for Institutional Audit*, 2006, p. 3). Both of these important documents for higher education policy and institutional evaluation in the United Kingdom have placed students, support for the student experience, and student feedback at the centre of institutional activity.

In contrast, referring to **continental Europe**, in his editorial to a special issue of the *European Journal of Education* dedicated to the “Needs and Expectations of Students as University Stakeholders”, Moscati (2004, pp. 379-380) comments on the recent attempts to evaluate university performance in relation to student satisfaction, and to understand the attitude of students towards their universities, as only partly satisfactory, noting that “the role of students inside the university has not been sufficiently analysed”. The articles published in this journal suggest that “student participation in the decision-making structure of the university presents some ambiguities” (p. 380) and that common language between students, teachers and administrative personnel is difficult to find. Lazerson (2007) referred to “the challenge of serving students”, anticipating that growing student numbers and diversity would inevitably lead to greater student demands. At the same time, he

noted that university leaders are not well-acquainted with these areas and are therefore reluctant to develop offices and services performed by non-academic professionals.

While studies of the transition of educational systems in the **CEE region** (for example, Sadlak, 1996; Berryman, 2000; Scott, 2000, 2002; Campbell and Rozsnyai, 2002; Taylor and Miroiu, 2002; Dincă, 2002; Mitter, 2003; Tomusk, 2004a, as well as the research projects of the Higher Education Support Programme and the International Policy Fellowship, both supported by the Open Society Institute³) have focused on educational policy and priorities for developing skills suited to the new market economies, democracy and civil society, on how to strengthen faculties and innovate academic capacity, and on strategic management and financial sustainability in the context of dramatic decreases of state support, there is little published research on the role of student services, and on how higher education institutions in CEE can and should re-organise their internal support structures to enhance the student experience and engage students in the development of the institution.

This research project examines the position and role of student services in higher education institutions in Central and Eastern Europe, drawing primarily upon US theory and practice, and upon their implementation at the Central European University. As a student recruiter myself, since 2000 I have travelled extensively throughout the region, gaining first-hand observations of the state of student support services and answering questions to guide practitioners at various institutions. As a reflective participant in the professional practice, and an observer of practices elsewhere in CEE, I defined the research problem of this study as follows:

Student services have been seriously neglected, both in terms of understanding their role in enhancing the student experience and in supporting institutional effectiveness. In the context of the comprehensive reform process of higher education institutions in the region, this research aims to consider whether and how these

³ <http://www.soros.org/initiatives/hesp>

The International Higher Education Support Programme (HESP) of the Open Society Institute promotes the advancement of higher education within the humanities and social sciences in Central, Eastern and Southeast Europe; the former Soviet Union; and Mongolia. HESP activities include support for institutions and individuals.

objectives could be achieved through the professional upgrade of student services and their integration as part of the university core operations along a functional continuum focused on the students. This approach would ultimately enhance institutional performance in serving the needs of all stakeholders, both inside and outside the university.

1.4. Hypotheses and research questions

To guide my research and elucidate the circumstances leading to this problem, I relied on direct observation and my communications with the emerging ‘community of practice’⁴, self-reflection, discussion and reading, thus formulating the following initial hypotheses:

- 1.4.1. The comprehensive reform process touches on every aspect of institutional management, including the provision of support services for students;
- 1.4.2. Students are considered as partners in this process: their requirements and demands are actively sought and integrated into strategic development objectives; reform is internally-driven, guided by student demand and interest in enhancing the student experience;
- 1.4.3. Changing student characteristics lead to increased student expectations of the quality of the support services they receive from their institution, ranging from a variety of customer-oriented flexible support to a higher degree of student involvement in the governance and decision-making processes within the institution;

⁴ Term defined by Huber, M. and Hutchins, P. (2005). *The Advancement of Learning: Building the Teaching Commons*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, p. 79; and, Tight, M. (2004). Research into higher education: an a-theoretical community of practice? *Higher Education Research and Development*, Vol. 23, No. 4, pp. 395-411

- 1.4.4. The introduction of tuition and fees is changing the student-university relationship: the student-customer influences student services provision;
- 1.4.5. Institutions are aware of evolving student expectations and are making conscious efforts to improve student services provision, including policies and procedures at the level of strategic planning;
- 1.4.6. Most institutions operate with limited resources and hence their efforts to re-organise internal structures to enhance the student experience compete with many other priorities;
- 1.4.7. Scarce resources do not easily reach the level of student support personnel for professional development needs: central or faculty-based student support operations are administrative offices (whose outreach to students depends on the enthusiasm and personal dedication of individuals) with narrowly defined functions which are rarely acknowledged as essential or critical for the university as a whole;
- 1.4.8. The majority of individuals working in the student support areas are frequently job beginners, starting in junior positions, with little or no experience in the profession, learning on the job in an environment of weak institutional support, thus leading either to stagnation of, or high turnover in, personnel.

Following the defined research problem and initial hypotheses, I have sought to answer to the following main research questions:

- i) To what extent do changing student characteristics and expectations of their higher education experience influence the institutional reform processes in Central and Eastern Europe?
- ii) What is the role of students in determining institutional priorities and responses to student support provision?

iii) How is student support provision organised in order to meet student demand?

Drawing upon studies of the changing student characteristics and their impact on institutional organisation and management (Scott, 1992; Duderstadt, 1999; El-Khawas, 2001; Howe and Strauss, 2003; Black, 2003a), embedded in these questions are a number of theoretical assumptions about changing student expectations, the role of the students in governance and management, and evolving institutional responses, which this study set out to test in the particular context of Central and Eastern Europe.

With regard to the first research question, this project aims to analyse the assumption about changing student needs and expectations and their impact on organisational change, through concrete examples from four traditional public universities in CEE undergoing a comprehensive reform process.

The aim of the second question is to examine the role of the students in the assumed context of inclusiveness of all stakeholders and participatory management, and increased institutional emphasis on student-centredness, as elaborated in Chapter 2.

Given the historical differences between higher education traditions, the aim of the third question is to examine the roots of different approaches to 'service' provision in continental Europe, and to define student services in the existing organisational structures. In view of the findings of this research project, the analysis of student support provision elaborates on the need for a re-thinking of the concept of student services and actual provision in the framework of institutional effectiveness, the Bologna process and quality assurance in European higher education today.

On a theoretical level, the objective of this study is to contribute to the understanding and the interpretation of the role of student services in relation to the changing role of the students, the student experience, and institutional management needs. Drawing upon the research findings on the development of four universities in the region, it advocates the idea of professionalisation and integration of student services in response to a complex set of demands, not only on the part of students, but

also with regard to institutional needs and overall effectiveness. As such, student services are presented not merely as a one-way conduit of information and support for students but as a comprehensive management model.

Conducted in the period 2004-2006, this study coincides with a growing awareness in continental Europe that student services have been largely neglected in national and international higher education reform objectives (Kelo, 2006). Even as of September 2006, reporting for the National Union of Students in Europe⁵, Aberg (2006) concludes that the scope of quality assurance reforms does not yet include student services and social support. In this context, this research project and its conclusions represent a timely contribution to the current higher education reform debates at the cross-European level.

1.5. Scope and limitations

1.5.1. Regional focus

The focus of this study is on institutions in Central and Eastern Europe, although the interest expressed on the part of representatives from Northwest European, Italian, Russian, Central Asian and South African universities, and the Academic Cooperation Association based in Brussels, as well as from representatives of the European Commission, suggests that it has broader implications.

1.5.2. Services for all students

Given the scarcity of published research on student support services in continental Europe, this study adopts a definition of student services as an integrated institutional programme for all enrolled students, thereby seeking to create a benchmark description which covers all function-driven activities required as a minimum to support student admission and progression through enrolment and graduation.

⁵ <http://www.eaie.org/basel/pdf/912.pdf>, Aberg, N.G. (2006) "Implementing of the QA Bergen Report", Report of ESIB, the National Union of Students in Europe at the annual conference of the European Association for International Education, September 2006

Indeed, many categorisations of the student body can be made, based upon:

- i. the type and mission of the institution;
- ii. full-time, part-time, or distance-learning enrolment;
- iii. undergraduate vs. post-graduate students, as well as average age;
- iv. types of programmes (degree vs. non-degree) and delivery methods;
- v. special support for international students vs. general support for domestic students
- vi. services for students from disadvantaged backgrounds
- vii. services for students with learning difficulties or physical disabilities.

While each of these categories should influence the provision of student services in any given higher education institution, this study builds upon a list of core services/functions, some of which exist in different organisational forms, regardless of their current name. Particularly with regard to universities in CEE, I believe that at this stage a comprehensive definition of the nature, role and functions of student services, which provides both a theoretical and a practical approach to creating such a programme, would be more helpful for the purposes of strategic management than branching out to define services for the special categories listed above.

A special note should be given to the fact that this study makes no distinction between undergraduate and post-graduate students. In continental Europe, this categorisation is relatively new, as it has been only recently introduced as a result of the Bologna three-tier system (Bachelor's, Master's and doctoral degrees). For many countries of CEE, this distinction implies breaking up the existing five-year higher education diploma programmes into 4+1 or 3+2 Bachelor's and Master's degree cycles, with the majority of students being encouraged to complete the entire 5-year course of study. As *Trends III* (2003, Summary, p. 8) reported, "in countries where first degrees at Bachelor level have not existed in the past, there still appears to be a tendency to see these as a stepping stone or orientation platform, rather than as degrees in their own right". This tendency was also noted in the subsequent *Trends IV* (2005, Executive Summary, point 4).

1.5.3. Choice of institutions as case studies and generalisability

The cases chosen for this study—the University of Novi Sad in Serbia, the University of Zagreb in Croatia, Babes-Bolyai University in Romania and Debrecen University in Hungary—are large comprehensive public institutions which represent the typical development trends of higher education in their respective country and in the region. As a sample, these universities reflect the processes of external influences and internal changes which have dominated the higher education area in the region since 1990, providing a solid background for comparative research. All four institutions have willingly participated in international evaluations and produced a number of materials in English, which made it possible to conduct further comparative research, and welcomed this research project with interest. Further details of the characteristics of the four universities will be presented in Chapter 3, section 3.6. (Choosing the cases for this research project).

While it is possible to draw conclusions and make some generalisations from the findings of this research project, one specific limitation comes from the fact that all four institutions are in a state of continuous change. It is therefore likely that in a period of five-ten years, some of the findings reported here may be considered to be out-of-date. However, the factual information gathered between 2004-2006 will still provide empirical evidence for any longitudinal research of institutional transformation in this region.

1.5.4. A note regarding private universities in CEE

Although it might be expected that the newly-established private universities and business schools in the region have given more attention to “customer service” for their students, the number, size and academic focus of such institutions was not considered large enough to be representative of the overall trends and situation in the development of the higher education sector in the region. For this reason, the experience of private higher education institutions in the region is not used for comparative purposes but rather as a point of reference, specifically through the examples drawn from the Central European University.

1.6. The case of the Central European University: a point of reference

While the Central European University (CEU) is not the only US-style institution of higher learning in Central and Eastern Europe (the American University in Bulgaria was established at the same time as CEU in 1991), for comparative purposes CEU finds itself among very few other institutions in Europe that share its characteristics of a mission-driven, international, competitive elite university which does not follow any particular national agenda. Other such institutions are the European University Institute in Florence, the College of Europe, and the three universities of Vatican City State. However, in terms of academic orientation and density of international student and staff representation, CEU may be compared to the London School of Economics and Political Science or the Institute of Social Studies in The Hague. But for the region of Central and Eastern Europe, CEU has been described as “the most important academic institution created after the regime-change in 1989-90” (Quandt, 2002, p. 126).

Following from its original mission “to contribute to innovative academic research, progressive higher education and the development of dynamic, sustainable open society”⁶ in the countries of CEE and the former Soviet Union, which [in 1991] were all in ‘transition’, this university combines American, European, and regional intellectual and academic traditions. CEU enrolls 1,400 students from 80 countries; the language of communication is English. Its American component can be found in the structure of study programmes and credits, governance and organisational set-up, and especially in the provision of an integrated student services programme.

1.6.1. The CEU student services programme

Initially the result of US accreditation requirements by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, the CEU student services programme was established in 1999. It grew from a compilation of administrative units for direct service provision into an integrated central management division. The goal of CEU Student Services is to enhance institutional ability and capacity to provide an

⁶ [<http://www.ceu.hu/about/missionhistory>] Mission and History of the Central European University

integrated and reflective services programme to CEU students by translating the mission and policies of the university into effective and consistent support programmes. Student services enable knowledge about, and communication with, students that go beyond the classroom to foster individual, cultural and social development. As a central point of interaction between institutional needs and student expectations, the student services programme seeks to contribute to the overall student experience as an integral part of the educational process.⁷

Reflecting on the Rectors' comments from 2002, mentioned earlier in this chapter (section 1.2. - Why an interest in student services?), one might have expected that, if left to its own devices and regional perspectives on student support, CEU might not have developed the kind of programme which it offers to its students today. The influence of US accreditation requirements⁸, subsequent literature reviews and institutional membership in several professional associations⁹ in the United States, have indeed been critical in setting the building blocks of CEU's Student Services. For this reason, direct comparisons with other national public institutions in CEE would be inappropriate.

CEU's adoption and interpretation of US accreditation standards, best practices and recommendations have served an important role in the design of this programme, which has become a leading example of integrated student services in continental Europe. Since my initial paper, "A case for Student Services as an Integral Part of the University Core" (Bateson, 2003), I have presented the CEU model to a number of international audiences, including conferences, expert group meetings, and in-service training programmes. *Appendix I* provides a list of selected papers, presentations, and workshops I have given since 2002. It is because of the interest on

⁷ [<http://www.ceu.hu/studentlife>] Student Services at CEU

⁸ *Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education: Eligibility Requirements and Standards for Accreditation*. (2006). Middle States Commission on Higher Education, [<http://www.msche.org/publications/CHX06060320124919.pdf>]

⁹ American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO)
NAFSA: Association of International Educators
National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA)
Society for College and University Planning (SCUP)
Association for Institutional Research (AIR)
Council of Graduate Schools (CGS)

the part of other institutions in the region (and beyond) that this research project was first conceived.

In retrospect, the creation of an integrated student services programme at CEU happened gradually, based upon experimentation, and learning from experience and student feedback. Not every institution has the flexibility to undertake a similar process of its own accord; therefore, the current reform process of higher education institutions in CEE in the Bologna context provides a natural incentive to examine all practices and look for new solutions.

1.6.2. Integrated student services

Following the 1994 edition of the *Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education*, in 1999 CEU reorganised its existing student service units (Admissions and Alumni Affairs, Student Records, Student Welfare, Career Office, and Educational Advising Office) into one central administrative division, which became known as Student Services. In addition to these, a large number of student-related functions, such as enrolment planning, student research, recruitment and promotional materials, the institutional website, student orientation, policies and procedures, student government and activities, individual counselling, special needs, housing arrangements, liaison with dining and health services, leaving procedures and graduation ceremony, which until then were handled elsewhere, were gradually added to the responsibilities of this division, under the supervision of a Vice President for Student Services.

All these functions are continuously monitored and evaluated. They are currently¹⁰ set-up in the following units:

<u>Student Services:</u>	<u>In cooperation with:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrolment planning • Student Recruitment Office • Admissions Office • Financial Aid Office • Student Records Office (Academic Registrar) • Student Life Office • Student Counselling Service • Career Advising and Alumni Relations • Divisional Research and Reporting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Departments • Academic Support Units (Library, Academic Writing Centre, etc.) • External Relations • IT Department • Finance Office • Facilities Management • Student Residence Centre • Food Services • Student Union • Medical Centre

Appendix II provides the organisational structure of CEU's integrated student services division, as of academic year 2007/2008.

At CEU, student support services are also provided by the Library, the Centre for Academic Writing, the Computer and Statistics Centre, the IT Department, Finance Office, Facilities Management, the Residence Centre, the Student Union, outsourced services such as dining and medical care, and by each academic department. Much communication is exchanged between all these units in regular operations and forward planning, including monthly meetings of all unit heads/coordinators. The structure of student support organisation itself remains flexible and may be adjusted from year to year, depending upon institutional priorities or student demands.

From a management perspective, the variety of functions which came to be regarded as "student services" at CEU can be organised under four main functional flows: tasks related to Prospective Students; Current Students; Graduates; and Divisional Research and Enrolment Planning. Underpinning and connecting these

¹⁰ As of September 2007.

functions into an integrated set of organisational tasks is the CEU Student Information System (InfoSys), which stores and processes data about applicants, enrolled students and graduates. A similar integrating role of the variety of student-related functions is fulfilled by the organisation of the institutional website (Internet/Intranet) along the sequential areas listed previously, taking into consideration the information needs of the end-user.

1.7. Definitions

The CEU experience draws primarily upon the *Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education* by the US Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

According to Standard 9 (Student Support Services) of the 2006 edition:

The support of students toward their educational goals usually requires a well-organised and appropriate programme of student services, complemented by good staff leadership and broad-based institutional commitment. Within the scope of the institutional mission, student services can reinforce and extend the college's influence beyond the classroom. These services promote the comprehensive development of the student, and they become an integral part of the educational process, helping to strengthen learning outcomes. Appropriate and comparable student services should support the learning of all students... Similarly, the institution should clearly convey to students their roles and responsibilities as partners in the educational process. The quality of campus life ... should be attentive to a wide range of student life issues... Services should be responsive to the full spectrum of diverse student needs, abilities and culture, .. and should be flexible in nature. (2006, p. 34)

Using the actual organisational experiences at the Central European University, for the purposes of this study, the following definitions will be used as a reference throughout the text. These constitute, in my view, **the minimum integrated continuum** of student services provision. (See section 1.5.2. - Services for all students, for further distinctions which may suggest provision of special services based upon institutional mission, mode of enrolment, programme delivery methods, student profile and diversity, and students with special needs.) The referenced CEU examples are to be considered as an illustration; many other variations exist.

1.7.1. **Student Services:** A unit (division, centre), or a number of units, within central university management, dedicated explicitly to the provision—on the part of the institution—of a variety of student support functions for all enrolled students, and having direct contact with the students. In an integrated

approach, such units bring together functions such as recruitment, admission, enrolment, progress toward the degree, student life, and graduation. They work closely together, plan their activities in coordination with each other, and exist under the supervision of one senior administrator (for example, Vice-Rector, Vice-President, Director). In this context, Student Services are designed as a tool to fulfil the institutional mission and play a key part in all management processes related to students. (For example, see <http://www.ceu.hu/studentlife>.)

- 1.7.2. ***Student Services Units*** include the following (both in-person and online) functions:

1.7.2.1. Services for Prospective Students

Student Recruitment – a designated office(r) responsible for the comprehensive strategy, planning and implementation of the university’s—including individual faculties’—student recruitment plan; preparation of promotional materials; advertising; content and monitoring of relevant institutional web pages. (For example, see <http://www.ceu.hu/admissions/contacts/recruitment>.)

Pre-admission counselling – a designated office(r) or teaching staff responsible for direct contact with prospective applicants, advising on the selection of study programmes, admissions requirements, and other questions prior to and after the submission of an application. The academic departments fulfil this function at CEU.

Admissions Office – a designated office for the receipt and processing of all applications for admission to the university’s faculties and programmes, including on-line application, and data collection of applied, admitted and rejected candidates. In the cases where the application process is handled by central national organisations, the university’s admissions office receives and processes the data about all admitted students; first point of data entry in the university’s student information system; issues relevant student contracts and

admissions documents; maintains information on the relevant institutional web pages (for example, see <http://www.ceu.hu/admissions>).

1.7.2.2. Services for Enrolled Students

Student Academic Records and Registration – a designated office responsible for students' individual registration for academic programmes and courses (increasingly on-line, through the student information system); monitoring of academic progress and graduation requirements, retention and graduation rates, issuance of academic transcripts and diplomas, organisation of academic awards; maintenance of institutional statistics on student enrolment and information on the relevant institutional web pages (for example, see <http://www.ceu.hu/studentlife/services/registration>).

Financial Aid/Welfare Office – a designated office responsible for the management of government-sponsored grants or institutional financial aid. Coordinates related assistance programmes such as housing allocations, meals allowances, study and travel grants, and other forms of financial assistance; issues contracts; maintains information on the relevant institutional web pages (for example, see <http://www.ceu.hu/admissions/financialaid>).

Student Life and Student Activities Office – one or several designated offices (depending on the size of the institution) responsible for student orientation, logistical arrangements, and student life programmes during the academic year; liaison with elected representatives of the Student Union, assistance to student organisations; organisation of social and cultural events, independently and in collaboration with the academic units; residence life programmes for students in university accommodation; logistical support for students with disabilities and special needs; maintenance of information on the relevant institutional web pages (for example, see http://web.ceu.hu/online_orientation.html and <http://www.ceu.hu/studentlife>).

Health Services – a specialised office offering psychological counselling, and professional assistance in cases of addiction problems. In addition to working with individual students, Health Services provide information to the entire

student community and participate in various awareness-raising events organised with Student Life Services; maintenance of information on the relevant institutional web pages (for example, see <http://www.ceu.hu/studentlife/services/counselling>).

Housing and Dining Services – Frequently outsourced or run by separate professional units (such as Facilities Management, Residence Centres Management), housing and dining also constitute part of the services provided by the university. In terms of strategic planning and development, these units have a close connection to the overall student services programme and should be included in the communication flow between the various units; maintenance of information on the relevant institutional web pages (for example, see <http://www.ceu.hu/studentlife/services/slo>).

Sports Services and Security Services – similar to housing and dining services.

Career and Educational Guidance – a designated office responsible for providing information to students about employment, further study, or grants and scholarships opportunities, individual and group counselling on job-search skills, contacts with potential employers, distribution of information; maintenance of information on the relevant institutional web pages (for example, see <http://www.ceu.hu/alumnicareer>)

Other logistical support services – these may vary depending upon need and special institutional support programmes; included in this group may be ID cards services, health insurance, special events such as opening and graduation ceremonies, as well as services for students with special needs (for example, see <http://www.ceu.hu/studentlife/students> and <http://www.ceu.hu/studentlife/answers>).

1.7.2.3. Services for Graduates

Alumni Organisation and Services - a designated office responsible for the collection of data about the university graduates, organisation of alumni services and programmes, monitoring of alumni progress after graduation; maintenance of information on the relevant institutional web pages (for example, see <http://www.ceu.hu/alumnicareer>).

1.7.3. Institutional Services Related to Students

Student Policies and Procedures – a designated location (on-site or on-line) where students can access all relevant policies and procedures affecting their enrolment in the university (for example, see <http://www.ceu.hu/studentlife/students/policies>).

Student Information System/On-line Services – an integrated student information system which provides the backbone of all operations related to student administration. The student information system should be available to all student services units, with various levels of data access and data input. The student information system is maintained by Information Technology Services working in close collaboration with Student Services in data maintenance and development needs (for example, Cramer, 2005; Westman and Bouman, 2007).

Student Research and Statistics/Enrolment Planning - a designated unit (i.e. Institutional Research) or person (depending on the size of the institution) responsible for data collection, processing and production of student statistics, organisation of surveys and studies, specific research and provision of information needed for management or planning purposes: for example, preparing enrolment targets for each academic year, analysis of budget and financial aid allocations vs. actual data. No example is offered here as such information is confidential; sample reports can be provided upon request. Maintenance of information on the relevant institutional web pages (for example, see <http://www.ceu.hu/about/whyceu/studentprofile>).

Institutional Website (or Intranet) – although not a student service *per se*, the provision of information through the institutional website is increasingly replacing printed material or filling the gaps in information distribution. The institutional website is quickly becoming the main information source for the entire university community and beyond; its relevance and updatedness are essential in providing information about the available services, as well as on-line services. Student Services as a whole, and each individual unit need to have a designated space on the institutional web pages.

While this is not an exhaustive list of the services universities may provide to their students, it is **a summary of the essential core functions** performed by institutions of higher education, and which—according to the argument put forward in this study—should be understood as “student services”. Indeed, their variety is likely to be bigger in larger institutions, or even more specific depending upon student type (see section 1.5.2. - Services for all students, for a categorisation of the student body which might further influence the student support provision, in addition to the core services described in this section).

1.8. Multiple roles of student services

In an integrated setting and designed along the functional continuum suggested in the preceding section, student services are not simply a one-way communication and service channel from the institution to its students but a comprehensive management model, purposefully created to serve the needs of both the largest constituent group—the students—and those of the institution in terms of goals, planning, outcomes, effective administration and two-way communication.

Student services enhance the overall student experience in the following ways. They:

1.8.1. Fulfil a duty of care on behalf of the university toward its primary constituents. These duties include promulgating codes of behaviour, discipline, student-related policies and procedures, data gathering and dissemination, information services, complaints procedures, and

administrative support for student enrolment, registration and graduation. In this role, student services are the primary point of contact for students, academic units, university management and other support units.

1.8.2. Ensure easy navigation of institutional structures and provide competent assistance. Students need a lot of information about how their institution works in relation to them. Questions such as ‘who to ask’, ‘where to find’, ‘who can decide’ are part of the daily experience of being a student. Although universities issue useful handbooks, and maintain ample information on the Internet, student services provide a convenient starting point for inquiries and service requests. What matters for students is timeliness, consistency and convenience, and the availability of a central point where such requests may be directed.

1.8.3. Interpret the institutional mission into day-to-day practices and support programmes. Universities share a common goal with regard to their students: to pass onto them accumulated knowledge and further their interest in the academic discipline(s), to nurture talent and develop essential skills to enable them to enter the world of social and professional realisation as qualified individuals and responsible citizens. How universities achieve this goal depends on their mission, institutional climate, how faculty and staff understand this mission and convey its meaning in their communication with the students. Student services can provide a coherent institutional message in tune with the mission.

1.8.4. Understand the diverse characteristics of the student populations and provide adequate service according to need. Universities are no longer facing a homogenous cohort of high school graduates but an increasing percentage of students from previously disadvantaged groups (based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability), adult learners, international students. This expanding diversity of the student profile is also accompanied by other factors, such as youth socialisation in the early 2000s, the influence of a computerised,

automated and Internet-connected society, the speedy access to information and services, the power of advertising, the availability of goods, credit and the resulting instant gratification. These are students whose motivation and expectations of service delivery are more sharply focused, customer-based, and quality-oriented. Universities face the need to understand the differences in their student populations and be able to accommodate them, especially in the student support services, where many of these specific expectations and demands emerge.

1.8.5. Provide universities with a competitive edge through comprehensive knowledge about the student body as well as extra value. Related to the point above, universities that actively seek to understand the characteristics of their students are better able to organise institutional structures and support services. These range from academic advising, flexible scheduling, individual counselling, on-line support, integration of student feedback and flexibility to make adjustments consistently across university structures. The objective of this institutional attitude is to make the student feel welcome and accepted as a member of this community whose opinion matters. The end result is an expression of the institution's commitment to its students, which adds a competitive edge for the university and extra value for the students. As academic cultures may vary by discipline and by faculty, student services provide a convenient integrated vehicle to fulfil and implement these objectives.

1.8.6. Support and enhance the student learning experience through involvement, out-of-class activities, and participation in governance and decision-making. Studies on the undergraduate student experience and student development theories in the United States (Pascarella and Terenzini, 1991; Astin, 1993) confirm that the learning process in the university goes beyond the classroom interactions between students and faculty. Students learn from each other and from the daily experiences they encounter in the university environment. A "holistic philosophy of learning" (*The Student Learning Imperative*, 1994) takes into account the total personal

development, including cognitive skills, ability to apply knowledge to practical problems, practical competence skills, understanding and appreciation of human differences, and a sense of identity, self-esteem, integrity, sensibility and civic responsibility. Student services foster student involvement, and enhance the student experience, through coordinated student activities, student participation in governance and decision-making, through mechanisms for student feedback which may lead to assessment of the overall institutional effectiveness.

1.8.7. **Constitute a core management function, which ultimately serves the institution.** In simple words, student services are there to help students enter, enjoy, endure and exit from college or university (Delworth and Hanson, 1996, p. xvi). Translated into operations and management practices, this simplicity is transformed into linked processes, many of which have long-term effects on the institution. What many leaders and practitioners in the field (especially in Central and Eastern Europe) often fail to understand is that student services are not simply about the students. In the complexity of managing today's university, arising from a plurality of agendas set by the numerous stakeholders in higher education, institutions set out to make strategic development plans and to balance competing priorities. Visions about institutional mission, goals and objectives become translated into specific policies, action plans, sets of initiatives, which aim to mobilize all organisational structures. Student services provide the management structure to absorb and institutionalise such processes throughout the interconnected network of communications, procedures, and daily practices.

In summary, this study argues that student services play an important role in effective institutional management. They operationalise strategic objectives and provide the channels for transmitting policies and procedures from the centre to the margins in a consistent manner. Equally important is their capacity to communicate practical results from the institutional margins back to the centre and to raise awareness of unforeseen circumstances. Allen and Garb (1993, pp. 5-6) described the position of student services as one of "positive marginality" and commented on the

ability of student services to “function in a multidisciplinary manner” and “develop the “student as a whole”. Considering the multiple roles of student services, this study argues for the de-marginalisation of student services and acknowledgement of their contribution to the modernisation and upgrade of higher education institutions in Central and Eastern Europe.

1.9. Conclusion

This chapter has sought to outline the background to this research project, my personal position and assumptions, and has set out the arrangements at the Central European University as a benchmark in the study of policies and practices at other universities in the region. It has developed a rationale for the examination of the student services area as timely and necessary research, based upon a set of hypotheses derived from professional experience. As the first comparative research project in Central and Eastern Europe, dedicated specifically to the topic of student services, it aims to clarify the concepts and to propose a definition and a model of student services that other universities—undergoing comprehensive reform in the context of the Bologna process—may utilise in discussions with policy-makers and in actual practice.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

2.2. Perspectives from the United States

2.3. Perspectives from continental Europe

2.4. The Bologna process – the role of students and student support services

2.5. Conclusion

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of published sources on the topic of student services and related fields (student development, student affairs, student expectations and the student experience), which have influenced professional practices in providing student support. The *academic* discussion on the evolution of student support services and their role in contemporary higher education is relatively recent. **In the United States** it gained attention in the 1980s, following institutional growth, modernisation and concerns for student recruitment, retention and learning outcomes. Similarly, **in the United Kingdom** concerns for student satisfaction and the student experience in the 1990s were reflected in the body of literature dedicated to higher education management and quality assurance standards. Unlike the US, however, this academic discussion has focused primarily on teaching and learning support services. The topic of institutional student services as a separate area of study is more recent, culminating at present in policy papers, such as the 1994 Group Policy Statement *Enhancing the Student Experience* (2007).

In continental Europe student services is not yet an established or clearly defined area of study. Research into student services has been carried out in some countries (e.g. Germany) but within university consortia benchmarking studies¹¹ the findings of which have remained for internal use only. Published sources in English (e.g. European journals on higher education) contain a limited number of articles dedicated specifically to student services and can be found mostly in special issues (e.g. *Higher Education in Europe*, Vol. XIX, No. 3, 1994; *European Journal of Education*, Vol. 39, No. 4, 2004). Since 2003, references to student services emerged in the Bologna process documents and reports of the European University Association (EUA). However, the literature on student services in continental Europe still does not cover the topic in its entirety: research on student services is only just taking the form of reports, case studies, and conference papers, scattered among various fora and

¹¹ For example, Benchmarking Club: Technical Universities (Nov 2007), see slide 10 at http://www.education-benchmarking.eu/IMG/pdf/Yorck_Hener_Benchmarking_Club_Technical_Universities.pdf

journals on higher education management and research into higher education (see *Appendix III*).

The understanding of student services is also subject to historical factors and the differences among predominant higher education traditions. The residential college campuses with their inherent *in loco parentis* functions, framed by Oxford and Cambridge, and later adopted by American universities (Thelin, 2001), along with the diverse and entrepreneurial character of American higher education, where tuition fees have played a critical role in the relationship between students and universities, set a special context for the ‘Anglo-American’ tradition. In contrast, European higher education has been influenced in turn by classical Greek and Italian academic cultures, the German university tradition of the 19th century, or the French system of practically-oriented *grande ecoles*, none of which placed special emphasis on ‘services’ (Muller, 1996; Neave, 1998; Gevers and Vos, 2004; Van Vught, 2004). European history in the 20th century has also had an impact on the position of higher education institutions vis-à-vis the state and its relations with the students, contributing to the development of an enormous diversity in higher education systems, within which Central and Eastern Europe represent a separate tradition (Berryman, 2000). It is only with the beginning of the Bologna process in 1999—a concerted effort to coordinate and consolidate the European higher education area—that attention to student mobility and student concerns for social welfare gave rise to a new interest in defining and implementing student support services in continental Europe.

Following the major influences and trends in the study of student services, this chapter will review literature sources in three sections:

2.2. Perspectives from the United States.

My research into the literature sources has led me to believe that the dominant influence in the development of students services is currently that of the United States, with the understanding that service-oriented student support and guidance are deeply rooted in the “Anglo-American” university tradition and that developments similar to those in the United States are taking place in the United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia, and elsewhere in the world where this

model is followed. Since both my professional practice and concurrent research have drawn upon publications in the United States, I will focus mainly on sources from this country, with some mention of the most important trends in the United Kingdom.

2.3. Perspectives from continental Europe and historical background.

Based upon the limited results of my search for literature sources published in continental Europe, I hypothesised that the absence of student services is influenced by the dominant historical traditions in higher education on the continent. Reviewing the different approaches to student support provision, I decided to examine historical factors and attempted to construct an explanation from this perspective.

2.4. The role of the Bologna process

Starting in 1999, the Bologna process—supported by the strategic interest of the European Commission in the role of higher education in building a competitive European knowledge society—represents the most comprehensive reform toward consolidation of the European higher education area to date. As stated by the European Commission, it has “put in motion a series of reforms needed to make European Higher Education more compatible and comparable, more competitive and more attractive for Europeans and for students and scholars from other continents. Reform ... is needed today if Europe is to match the performance of the best performing systems in the world, notably the United States and Asia.”¹²

As of 2007, the Bologna process has drawn the participation of 45 countries, including all EU member states, Southeast Europe, Turkey, the Caucasus countries, Russia and Ukraine. Specifically for the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, it has played a key role in directing higher education development, by providing a system for comparison and generating

¹² http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/educ/bologna/bologna_en.html

a body of *National Reports* (2003 and 2005)¹³ that have in my case greatly enabled my research into higher education management across Central and Eastern Europe.

Throughout my research, I was aware that my reliance on materials published in English might be seen as a limitation. Therefore, when reviewing continental Europe, in addition to the national reports published in the framework of the Bologna process¹⁴ and the *EUA Trends* reports¹⁵ (fully referenced further in this chapter), I interviewed scholars¹⁶ of higher education policy, management, history, and sociology, who concurred with my findings that comparative research and published literature on the topic of student services is very limited. I believe that this chapter, bringing together US, UK and continental European perspectives, is a first of its kind and a unique contribution of this project.

2.2. Perspectives from the United States

2.2.1. A professional field in higher education management

The evolution of the student services profession in the United States is well documented by Garland and Grace (1993), Komives, Woodard and Associates (1996), Whitt (1997), and Barr, Dessler and Associates (2000), who attribute its importance to several major historical trends:

2.2.1.1. **The changing role of faculty members** in the residential campuses of colleges and universities in the United States at the turn of the 20th century and the gradual erosion of their *in loco parentis* role. Initially responsible for discipline matters, student deans assumed more responsibilities as ‘coordinators’ and ‘educators’, enabling faculty

¹³ http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/EN/national_impl/05NAT_REP.HTM

¹⁴ <http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/>

¹⁵ <http://www.eua.be/index.php?id=347>

¹⁶ Karady, Viktor (Recurrent Visiting Professor of History at the Central European University), interviewed in November 2005; Sadlak, Jan (Director of UNESCO-CEPES), contacted in June 2006; Campbell, Caroline (UK Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education), contacted July 2006; Rozsnyai, Christina (Hungarian Accreditation Committee), interviewed August 2006; Puigpelat, Jose (European Commission, Directorate General for Education and Culture), contacted September 2006; Lazerson, Marvin (Distinguished Visiting Professor of HE Policy at the Central European University), interviewed July 2007.

members to focus on teaching and research. Guided by the principles of student-centred learning, which characterised the classical Anglo-American residential campus, the individuals responsible for student-related administration also became the first to reflect upon their role in the educational process (*The Student Personnel Point of View*, 1937 and 1949).

- 2.2.1.2. **The processes of “massification” of higher education**, both in the US and in Europe (Trow, 1973; Scott, 1992 and 1995), and widening access as part of government policies to enhance economic development, social mobility and equity, leading to the emergence of new categories of students with diverse characteristics and expectations. With the growth of institutions and the number of students interested in higher education, there also emerged competition for the best students, for paying students, for national and international recognition and prestige. Student diversity and competition prompted universities to seek distinctive advantages, including services aimed at enhancing student satisfaction.
- 2.2.1.3. **Deepening complexity of management and legal requirements**: at the end of the 20th century, American higher education and the state-of-the-art (entrepreneurial) university, analysed by Clark (1983), Balderston (1995), Slaughter and Leslie (1997) and Duderstadt (2000), represent systems of immense complexity—“a complex global conglomerate” (Duderstadt, 2000, p. x). Pressures of globalisation, knowledge economy, government policies on assessment of outcomes, decreasing public funding, the expectations of donors, contractors, joint programme partners, students, parents, and alumni, have put forward competing agendas and priorities. To achieve and manage these, the university management structure has shifted its emphasis to specialisation and professionalisation, delegation of responsibilities and re-structuring to enable effective institutional responses.

Resulting from these broader developments, Student Services is a recognised professional field in higher education management in the United States. It should be noted that in its diverse higher education environment¹⁷, three terms have been used interchangeably to describe the profession: ‘**student personnel**’, ‘**student services**’, or ‘**student affairs**’ (Chickering and Reisser, 1993, p. 277; *Learning Reconsidered*, 2004, p. 21). As a field of study, they border on, and have benefited from, research in educational psychology and behavioural sciences, sociology and education, organisational management and, more specifically, the management of higher education. The following sections analyse the contribution of these fields to the evolution of student services in the United States.

2.2.2. Student development theories

One of the most significant international contributions of US practice in student personnel administration is its close connection to research in educational psychology and the periodic summation of findings as they relate to policy and practice. Terms such as ‘**student development**’, ‘**involvement**’, and ‘**engagement**’, now widely adopted in student satisfaction research in the US, UK and Australia, owe their origins to US educational psychology research which has provided a host of theories taken up by other social sciences and the interdisciplinary field of ‘research into higher education’. Summative reviews of such theories have been published in the US since 1957, including Jacob (1957), Feldman and Newcomb (1969), Bowen (1977), Pascarella and Terenzini (1991), and Chickering and Reisser (1993).

Building upon Pascarella and Terenzini’s categorisation, Chickering and Reisser (1993), summarise “the most relevant student development theories” into four categories: “*Psychological*”, “*Cognitive*”, “*Typology*”, and “*Person-environmental interaction*” (pp. 1-3), each clarifying “a different perspective on human development, and providing theoretical tools for college counsellors and current theorists” (p. 21). Two other categories, added by Carter and McClennan (2000, pp. 240-244), *college impact theories* and *marketing theories*, link student development theories “which focus attention on outcomes or the nature of student change” to the studies of

¹⁷ Systematized by the “Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education” [<http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/classifications/>]

“institutional characteristics, programmes and services, students’ experiences, faculty members” (Pascarella and Terenzini, 1991, p. 18). Although it is not the purpose of this section to analyse student development theories, in their cumulative impact they led Pascarella and Terenzini to conclude that “a student does not develop in separate unrelated pieces but rather grows as an integrated whole” (1991, p. 6).

This **focus on the “integrated whole”** has provided the theoretical grounding for some researchers to elaborate on the role of student personnel administration and argue for its integration into the educational process. In this regard, several authors stand out as most influential in the theoretical development of the student services profession: Chickering, Astin, Pascarella and Terenzini, Tinto and Kuh.

Chickering’s *Education and Identity* (1969, 1993) is a seminal work in transforming student development theories into specific directions for higher education policy and practice, and particularly student development (support) programmes and services. As an educational psychologist, Chickering identified “Seven Vectors” of student development¹⁸; as a higher education administrator and professor, he translated these into “The Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education” (1987, with Gamson) by which colleges and universities influence student development. An advocate of the education of the “whole student”, Chickering urged student personnel administrators to define their profession in terms of supporting student development, as participants in the “shaping of character” rather than “hand-holders or ancillary technicians” (1993, p. 427). He suggested a grouping of student services in three functional clusters from “a student’s point of view”: entering services, supporting services, and culminating services (1993, pp. 438-439). It is not difficult to recognise in this early classification of student support services the basic functional distinctions which now guide practice: services for prospective students, current students and for alumni. Writing specifically for the “supporting services”, Chickering emphasised the importance of orientation programmes, creating conditions for student participation in “co-curricular” campus activities, and ability to become involved with students’ behavioural problems (1993, pp. 444-448). These

¹⁸ Developing competence, managing emotions, moving through autonomy toward interdependence, developing mature interpersonal relationships, establishing identity, developing purpose, and developing integrity.

elements have consistently been implemented in student services programmes; a number of US universities have adopted the name “Student Development” as a coinage for their student affairs/student services units¹⁹.

Chickering’s vision of “creating educationally powerful environments” is based upon *how* the educational process is organised and conducted in order to reach certain outcomes, rather than *what* undergraduates are taught (1993, p. 265). Guided by a similar interest in *how* students approach their education and *how* faculty deliver the curriculum, Astin (1993, p. 31) studied college impact as the effect of “environmental characteristics”. He introduced the concept of “student involvement” in the collegiate experience as the by-product of environmental characteristics, such as institutional character, curriculum, the faculty environment and the student peer group, each expressed through a variety of discrete measures, and students’ abilities to relate to these characteristics through academic involvement, involvement with faculty, involvement with student peers, and other forms of involvement (1993, pp 32-82).

Astin’s theory of student involvement (1977, 1993 and 1997), suggested that “curricular planning efforts will reap greater payoffs in terms of student outcomes if we ... put more emphasis on pedagogy and other features of the *delivery system*, as well as the broader interpersonal and institutional context in which learning takes place” (1993, p. 427). Following from this, he formulated the position that traditional pedagogical theories placed students in a passive role as recipients of information. He argued with the assumptions that student learning improves simply on the basis of inputs into the educational process: better-structured information in the course syllabi (content theory); more resources invested by the institution (resource theory); or through individualised approach in course offerings and optional electives (individualised theory). Instead, Astin’s interest was in creating a learning environment where “involved” students devote considerable energy to studying, spend time on campus, participate actively in student organisations, and interact frequently with faculty members and other students (1997, pp. 199-210). Placing equal emphasis on both academic and non-academic activities, Astin defined student

¹⁹ Specific institutions are not listed here; a Google search of “student development office” provides numerous examples of this trend.

affairs professionals as key partners in supporting student interaction and peer group relations in areas such as housing, counselling, student government, student activities, and student organisations (1993, p. 428).

Astin's work has provided a "developmental theory for higher education" (Astin, 1997, p. 199), "with equal emphasis on teaching, research and student support services as part of the core business of the university" (Bateson and Taylor, 2004, p. 477). Student support and counselling programmes in US colleges and universities focus extensively on activities carefully planned to enhance student involvement: residence halls activities, social events, research projects, honours programmes, student government, work-study opportunities on campus, sports, and other university-wide programmes designed to bring students together in different out-of-class contexts. Whitt (1997, Part III) offers a comprehensive summary of these practices.

Although Pascarella and Terenzini do not make explicit references to the organisation or practice of student services/student affairs, their work of encyclopaedic proportions, *How College Affects Students* (1991) is the most widely quoted source on student development. Their own longitudinal study represents a landmark summative overview of the progression from psychological models of student development to sociological models of collegiate impact, which have become "essential for the planning of educational programmes and services that influence student development" (Feldman, 1991, p. xii).

Tinto's research on student retention, over a period of 30 years, presents longitudinal studies on student persistence and attainment²⁰, not as one or two isolated measures that colleges might introduce "at the margins of institutional life" to address the problem of student drop-out, but—similarly to Astin's approach—as the result of the integrated environmental influences of college on the student educational experience. In his summary article "Taking Student Retention Seriously" (undated), Tinto emphasises the critical role of the "conditions in which we place students rather

²⁰ Vincent Tinto, Vita:
http://soeweb.syr.edu/academics/grad/higher_education/Copy%20of%20Vtinto/Vita/VTVITA.pdf [7 May 2007]

than the attributes of students themselves.” He defines the conditions supportive of retention as expectation, advice, support, involvement and learning.

The interest in factors that motivate students’ behaviour toward involvement and educational attainment has found continuation in the research of Kuh *et al.* (1994; 2000) and through the National Survey of Student Engagement²¹ (NSSE). The survey identified five national benchmarks of effective educational practice, among which was the ‘Supportive Campus Environment’. In the NSSE 2000 Report, Kuh (2000, p. 4) noted that “students perform better and are more satisfied at colleges that are committed to their success and cultivate positive working and social relations among different groups on campus.” NSSE builds directly upon Astin’s work and theory of student involvement, the research of Chickering (1993), and Ewell’s indicators of good practice in undergraduate education (1996, 1997). Writing on student-centredness, Ewell suggested that organisational structures and cultures require a “fundamental shift of perspective for both the organisation and its members”, examining every function, structure and activity, including “substantially erasing the great divide between “academic” and “student affairs” [functions] prominently present on most campuses” (1997, pp. 14-15).

Given the large body of research on student development and college impact in the United States, this section scanned the most important theoretical influences on the development of the student services profession over the period of 1960—1990. Numerous publications to guide the profession have appeared concurrently with, and subsequently to, the major studies listed above. A sample includes: Stamatakos and Rogers (1984); Kuh (1984); Garland (1985); Barr, Keating and Associates (1985); Sandeen (1991); Garland and Grace (1993); Carpenter (1994); Kuh et al. (1994); Love and Love (1995); Rogers (1995); Dannels (1997); Whitt (1997); Barr, Desler and Associates (2000); Komives, Woodard and Associates (2001); Ludeman (2001); Amey and Reesor (2002); *Learning Reconsidered* (2004); Miller, Bender, Schuh and Associates (2005). Perhaps the most conclusive affirmation of the critical role attributed in the United States to student support services, in an integrated approach to institutional effectiveness, is their explicit inclusion in the accreditation standards of

²¹ The NSSE 2000 Report: National Benchmarks for Effective Educational Practice
[<http://nsse.iub.edu/pdf/NSSE%202000%20National%20Report.pdf>]

the six regional commissions (for example, *Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education: Eligibility Requirements and Standards for Accreditation* of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, 2006).

2.2.3. Limitations of student development research:

changing student characteristics, diverse student needs

Student development research has traditionally focused on the undergraduate student in a particular age group. However, as Duderstadt (2000, p. 17) has pointed out, “only 17 percent of students enrolled in [US] colleges today are in the eighteen to twenty-two-year-old group we generally think of as college students.” As education in the knowledge society has moved to a curve of lifelong learning, student characteristics have become exceedingly diverse. El-Khawas (2001, pp. 64-77) classified these by background (e.g. women, race and ethnicity, socio-economic class, homosexual, older students, students with disabilities, international students), by the type of programme in which they are enrolled (full-time, part-time, degree, transfer, intermittent study), by institutional type or by modes of delivery (e.g. distance learning). Three recent publications of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers analyse the common characteristics of “the Millennials” (Howe and Strauss, 2003), “Gen Xers” (Black, 2003a), and “the Gamers” (Westman and Bouman, 2006), from the perspective of recruitment and retention techniques.

While little longitudinal research is yet available on the characteristics of student generations in an age of technological advancement (Kirkwood and Price, 2005; Oblinger, 2007), about postgraduate student populations, or returning adult learners, Bateson and Taylor (2004, pp. 475-476) observe that “many of the students who enter universities today are exceedingly savvy with information technology, used to fast-speed communications and to customer-oriented services in their day-to-day life outside the university. Increasingly, they expect the same level of service and commitment inside the academic institution. Moreover, at a time of a growing number of opportunities and resulting student mobility across borders, ... universities now face the challenges of competition, demands for modernisation, continuous upkeep of

facilities, and the need to provide support for a diverse body of students on an individual basis.”

In this regard, the massification and diversification of higher education in Europe has shaped a more focused debate on the student experience, taking into account students’ special needs²². It should be noted however, that integrated institutional support programmes in the United States have been more flexible in anticipating and accommodating special needs, which may explain the lesser presence of this theme in the reviewed US literature sources.

2.2.4. Concern for the outcomes of undergraduate education in the United States

A significant spur to the development of student support services in the United States has come from a growing public concern, especially in the 1990s, about the effectiveness of undergraduate education. The massive expansion of research funding for higher education, both at the federal level and from industry, caused a shift in the major US research universities toward postgraduate education and research. Faculty evaluation systems placed more emphasis on the research output of professors rather than teaching, which resulted in an imbalanced concentration of institutional resources toward research.

Since the 1980s, national reports critical of American school and postsecondary education (*A Nation at Risk*, 1983; *Involvement in Learning*, 1984; *Integrity in the College Curriculum*, 1985; the Boyer Commission Report on *Reinventing Undergraduate Education*, 1998) have raised questions about undergraduate learning and higher education outcomes. The Boyer Commission Report (1998, p. 1) noted: “the American system of higher education has become less elite; ... the freshman year has too often been reduced to remediation or repetition of high school curriculum, rather than an introduction to a new and broader arena for learning.” The report presented recommendations which have intensified public concern for undergraduate education: “We believe universities must recognise the

²² For example, discussion of the Special Interest Group on the Student Experience: 29th Annual EAIR Forum, Innsbruck, 26-29 August 2007: <http://www.eair.nl/innsbruck/timetable.asp>

urgency of addressing misdirections and inadequacies in the undergraduate experience, sharpen their own plans and timelines, and move quickly ... to the institutionalisation of genuine reform...: restructuring both the pedagogical and the integrative aspects of the research university experience” (pp. 14-15). Among the list of recommendations, the report encouraged universities to “cultivate a sense of community” “through experiences outside the classroom...” (pp. 34-35), thus renewing the emphasis on student support services.

In both the public and private sectors, concern for quality in US undergraduate education has also resulted from its cost. Unlike European higher education, which has been supported by the nation states as public good, higher education in the United States has depended on tuition fees, bearing an inherent element of ‘customer service’ culture among its different constituents. The debate about the paying student ‘customer’ is beyond the scope of this section but concerns for the outcomes of undergraduate education in the United States have also brought into sharp focus the idea of “customer service in higher education” (Raisman, 2002). As costs and tuition have risen over time, so have the expectations of the paying public, particularly with regard to the purpose of education, and the provision of institutional services and support programmes for students to ensure the fulfilment of higher education as an investment in economic development, social mobility, and a means of sustaining national and international competitiveness in a global knowledge society.

2.2.5. Student services, student affairs, and enrolment management

2.2.5.1. Silo Cultures

The continuous search for a definition of the role of student support services has a long history and has been reflected in a number of statements: *The Student Personnel Point of View* (1937, 1949); *A Student Development Model for Student Affairs in Tomorrow’s Higher Education* (1975); *The Student Learning Imperative: Implications for Student Affairs* (1994); *Principles of Good Practice for Student Affairs* (1997); *Powerful Partnerships: A Shared Responsibility for Learning* (1998);

and most recently in *Learning Reconsidered: A Campus-wide Focus on the Student Experience* (2004).

One of the most important contributions of these statements is their attention to organisational structure and to the higher education institution as **an integrated system**. While colleges and universities in the United States have developed student support services in a variety of forms, the non-prescriptive nature of US accreditation has maintained a great diversity of organisational settings. Depending on the size or mission of the institution, “student affairs”—an umbrella of activities related to student learning, student development, student services, and student administration (*Learning Reconsidered*, 2004, p. 21)—exist as an integrated “one-stop” student centre or decentralised functions distributed among business services, registration services, enrolment and graduation services, academic support services, student life services, student government and activities, and residential life services. Despite the well-developed theoretical base for an integrated approach, many student support programmes, created in response to student and institutional needs, still remain (to use Balderston’s descriptors, 1995, pp. xii-xiii) the result of “symptomatic” actions attempting to address a particular need or problem, rather than a “substantive” transformation aimed at reorganising the system.

As student services practitioners have repeatedly pointed out at conference gatherings (for example, AACRAO’s Strategic Enrolment Management conferences²³), ‘silo cultures’ persist in many institutions of higher education where organisational patterns are decentralised. As a result, the tendency remains to identify **student services** with operational and business functions under admissions and the academic registrar, while the host of programmes and activities (on student development, student engagement, and retention), labelled as **student affairs**, are grouped under the supervision of deans of students or student development.

Allen and Garb (1993, p. 5) described this position as “marginal existence.” Similarly, Garland and Grace (1993, p. 6) argued that in their role of supporting the academic functions, “student affairs have often been regarded as peripheral.” With a

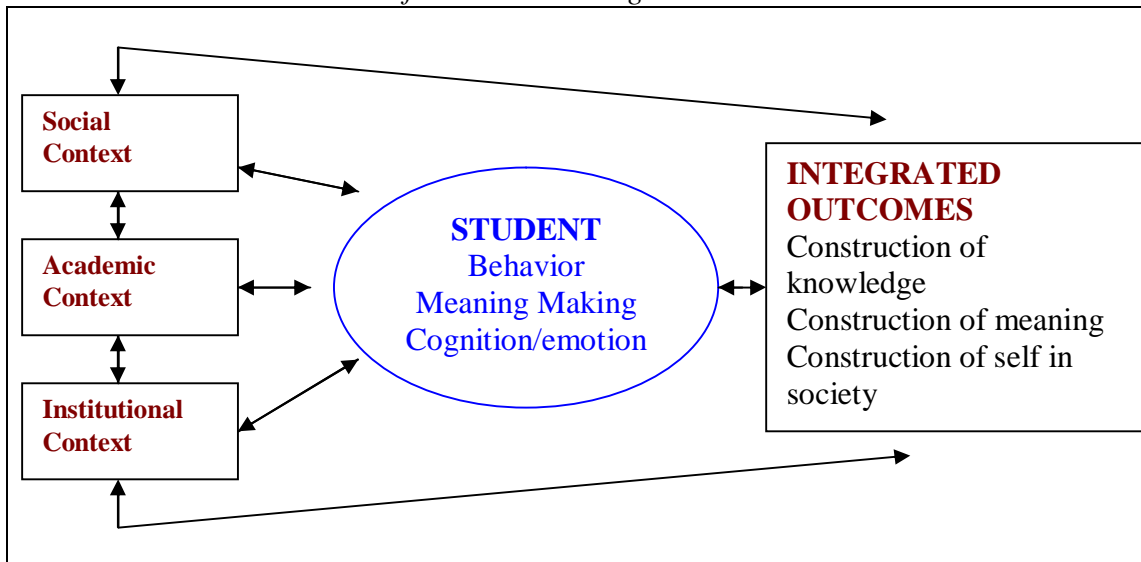
²³ Which I attended in 2001, and in 2003.

view to the involvement of student affairs in “creating inclusive campus communities”, they advocated for the closing of the schism created by “discipline-centred” and “student-centred” silos, highlighting the enormous potential of student services, from their position of perceived marginality, to act as a change agent in modernising and upgrading their institutions.

2.2.5.2. The Learning Imperative

In a renewed emphasis on the “integrated whole” (Pascarella and Terenzini, 1991, p. 6), *Learning Reconsidered* (2004, p. 3) presented “an argument for the **integrated** use of all of higher education’s resources in the education and preparation of the whole student... It advocates for transformative education—a holistic process of learning that places the student at the centre of the learning experience.” The concept of “transformative education” is based on an understanding of the interconnectedness of student learning within a map of learning sites which students use to create reference points for their overall experience. *Learning Reconsidered* (2004, p. 14) summarised these sites as follows:

Table 1. Interconnectedness of Student Learning



In the conviction that the academic (cognitive) growth of the student cannot be viewed in isolation from the psychological changes effected by the college environment, these processes are presented as a “wholeness of the college experience” (p. 5) in which every aspect of the institution (academic departments, academic support services and student support services) is viewed as an integrated network of

structures of equal importance to the institutional goals and outcomes. “On each campus, all educators face the challenge of creating systems and structures that will make such preparation possible for all students. ... In order to achieve this goal, every aspect of the student experience must be examined and a new configuration of learning processes and outcomes created. All of the resources of the campus must be brought to bear on the student’s learning process...” (p. 11).

2.2.5.3. The Integration Approach—Strategic Enrolment Management

This growing awareness of the multiple roles of student support functions became the basis—and supported the rapid growth—of the Strategic Enrolment Management (SEM) movement within higher education institutions in the United States in the late 1990s, promoted by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers²⁴ (AACRAO). In the context of changing student demographics, declining enrolments, increased competition, the erosion of public trust in higher education institutions, and the resulting funding decreases (Penn, 1999), enrolment management originated from practice and specific institutional needs, taking a variety of organisational forms (see *Appendix IV* for a list of the major proponents of SEM).

In parallel to the concept of the “wholeness of the college experience” promoted by student personnel professionals (*Learning Reconsidered*, 2004, p. 5), enrolment management focused on the “institutional context” as a system and a broad policy domain, involving organisational reengineering and transformation based upon strategic planning, information resources management and organisational decision processes (Dolence, 1997a). It sought to broaden the scope of student recruitment, admission and retention by integrating them into a comprehensive, holistic “cradle-to-endowment” continuum, including instructional management and delivery, student services, information technology and institutional research (Henderson, 2001, pp. 35-36).

²⁴ <http://www.aacrao.org/>: annual Strategic Enrolment Management conference; a series of books, case studies, reports, and the *SEM Monthly*.

The changing student demographics and the increase of non-traditional student enrolments which were anticipated—but not analysed—in the literature related to student personnel administration, positioned enrolment management in the 1990s as a vehicle for realigning higher education with the information age and redesigned products and services from a “market-driven, learner-centred perspective” (Dolence, 1997b, pp. 108-115). Hossler (1990, 2001) and Black (2001, 2003b, 2004) documented its growing reliance on business management theories. SEM imported and adapted advanced business practices from other industries (Black, 2001, p. 281): it turned to resource dependence theory, open systems theory, revenue theory and revenue maximisation, and to concepts such as students (and not faculty) as institutional image, cradle-to-endowment courtship, the academic enterprise as “simultaneously multiple, complex, contradictory and illusive” (Hossler and Hoezee, 2001, pp. 57-72), or to total quality management and applying benchmarking (e.g. the Baldrige National Quality Award) to the concept of excellence in higher education (Ruben, 2005).

As Black (2001, p. 281) summarised, enrolment management emerged as an **“eclectic” theoretical and practical model** to managing academic institutions as whole systems, with a view to focused institutional needs: marketing, customer relationship, customer retention, knowledge management, human resources and budget management, technology development and quality management. It successfully brought to the forefront the importance of information technology infrastructures, student information systems, on-line services, electronic communications, and the overall dependence of strategic management decisions on comprehensive institutional research.

For a period, roughly until 2003, **the integrative aspects of strategic enrolment management** were widely applied in US higher education institutions (case studies documented by Dolence, 1996, and Black, 2004; see also *Appendix V*). However, at the 2003 SEM Conference²⁵, it became apparent that enrolment management practices had developed more toward the business operations of the university: financial planning, marketing, recruitment and admission of students, and

²⁵ <http://www.aacrao.org/sem13>

internal planning of student registration. Student affairs and retention programmes, which had resulted from academic-led initiatives and student development theories, did not appear to have become integrated with this process. The two major national associations leading the movement for integration of all student support and services aspects, NASPA and AACRAO, had remained unengaged with one another.

In fact, by 2004 enrolment management had shifted to other areas, such as budget and finance²⁶. Bontrager (2004, p. 11) observed: “in an environment of increased accountability and constrained resources, ... enrolment management is characterised at many institutions as resource management.” Due to its cross-functional nature, the alignment of enrolment management within the traditional institutional structures was acknowledged to be a complex process. More particularly, aligning enrolment management divisions with student affairs was no longer seen as serving the purpose of strategic development: SEM in Bontrager’s view would better serve the organisation if aligned with the chief academic officer or the president (*Ibid*).

As a personal reflection, the aspirations of the enrolment management profession in the United States to become an integrated management model at the highest level are justified: among its major contributions to institutional practices is the attention to actual data/outcomes as the basis for overall decision-making. With enrolment management, modernising services such as information technology, integrated systems, and institutional research became integrated as key elements of institutional planning. However, having followed the SEM concept in my professional practice in integrating student services and related IT and divisional research functions under one umbrella, I find the trend of moving away from the core student support operations (for example, Kalsbeek, 2006) somewhat disappointing. At present, it would appear that enrolment management stands at odds with academic cultures and institutional traditions, its potential under-utilised. At CEU, I have used the concept of (strategic) enrolment management to persuade university fora about the need to position every unit of the institution (academic departments, academic support services and student support services) as an integrated network of structures of equal

²⁶ In 2007, AACRAO began a series of workshops on using SEM to enhance institutional financial planning.

importance to the institutional goals and outcomes²⁷. Our institutional approach to the entire services continuum has enabled a shift toward the de-marginalisation of student services and their acceptance into the university core, along with contemporary business practices based upon information technology, institutional research and attention to student satisfaction.

2.2.6. Summary of trends in the United Kingdom

As acknowledged in the introductory chapter (sections 1.3. - Research problem and hypotheses, and 1.6. - The case of the Central European University: a point of reference), my professional interest in the development of an integrated student services programme at CEU—as well as this research project—was guided primarily by US concepts, literature and practices in this field. Historically, however, US and UK practices have influenced each other more than any other European higher education system, especially in the area of student support. In turn, both models have been used as a reference in Europe and other parts of the world. Although my search of literature sources in the UK was not as extensive as that of US publications, UK “best practices” have been better promulgated within Europe through journals, higher education conferences and university consortia studies: a brief listing of the main influences will therefore aid in completing this review of the Anglo-American tradition.

Preoccupation with the motivation of students for learning has a long tradition in UK higher education but it has been associated largely with the role of teachers in creating conducive contexts for learning, focusing on curriculum, learning objectives, teaching and assessment strategies (Elton, 1988). In his definition of the “student experience”, Earwalker (1992, p. 45) examined the academic, personal and social development of students as an interconnected process, noting that “teaching staff may not have a very clear idea of how they are expected to contribute to the support process.” He also argued that the traditional British model of pastoral care provided through personal tutorial arrangements “fits less and less well into a modern higher education system with its large, looser and pluralistic institutions. There is a need in every institution to establish a central resource, staffed by professionals and readily

²⁷ In 2006, CEU established an Enrolment Trends Committee, chaired by the Provost. This is now a permanent committee of the CEU Senate.

available to all students. Development along these lines has actually been quite modest by comparison with some American institutions.” (p. 113) Turning to institutional policies, this author suggested that student support should be rethought as an institutional responsibility to redress the fact that “[it] seems marginal to the main thrust of what higher education is about” (pp. 124-134).

Although student support has been equally important to UK higher education institutions, the development of “student services” is a more recent trend, resulting from the transition from collegium-type university administration to specialised managerial competencies rather than from student development and college impact research as is the case in the United States. In 1996 Gledhill noted, “Of all areas of HE management [in the UK], [student management] is probably the least well covered by published guidelines and standard procedures. There is [an] assumption that student management is a simple, easy, clerical activity, that anyone can do” (1996, p. 103).

Referring specifically to student support services, Rowley (1996, pp. 167-168) also commented that “there is no one accepted model for the management or provision of this range of support services [accommodation, counselling and career services, learning/study skills, student union facilities, medical services, childcare, chaplaincy, services to students with disabilities]” but the tendency has been to “group those services together for management purposes, to form a student services department.” In 1997, *The Dearing Report* proposed the “management of learning” as a central objective, along with “appropriate support and guidance” for students outside the classroom (Summary Report, par. 31-35), but it did not specify how institutions and students should collaborate to improve delivery or promote reasonable expectations.

Similarly to developments of the US HE system since the 1960s, higher education in the UK experienced extensive growth and transformation, alongside with intense economic pressures, which resulted in a series of changes in management and service provision (Dopson and McNay, 1996, p. 19, p. 28). In parallel, UK institutions were the first in Europe to accommodate a diverse fee-paying international student body on a large scale (Bruch and Barty, 1998). More recently, in 2003 the UK

government set a specific agenda for fair access and increased participation in higher education (DfES, *The Future of Higher Education*, 2003). These ongoing trends of massification and student diversification have continuously challenged the traditional academic structures, pushing for a new management style that addresses university processes in a holistic manner, “relating each decision ... to the whole range of institutional activities and programmes, so that they complement one another.” (Shattock, 2003, p. x). From a management perspective, Shattock argued for an “adaptive model” based on “effective two-way communication between headquarters and the operating units” (2003, p. 29). Taking this notion further, in 2005 HEFCE launched the annual National Student Survey²⁸, while the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) expanded institutional audits to include formal student assessment and feedback (QAA *Handbook for Institutional Audit*, 2006, p. 15).

Despite the lack of specific national guidelines for the development of student services, examples of transformation, innovation and entrepreneurship abound in recent years: as Hannan and Silver (2000, p. 1) point out, these processes have involved “individual experimentation” in almost all areas of academic administration and institutional management, including the application of new technologies and responses to changing student numbers and structures. Focus on “organisational and institutional cultures” has led to re-examination of the ways in which “disciplinary, departmental and other contexts help to shape attitudes towards teaching and learning” (*ibid*, p. 33).

From a student administrator’s point of view (Wareham and Wareing, 2002; Yorke and Longden, 2004), student success or failure in higher education has come to be perceived as a wider issue than just internal processes and individual student circumstances. It is strongly influenced by competing philosophies within universities: for example, as Wareham and Wareing (2002, pp. 154-155) note, students are encouraged to become independent learners and critical thinkers which may lead them to question policies and practices; students of diverse backgrounds may not share the same understanding of a university’s implicit values and standards which may lead to a disjunction between norms and students’ understanding. Such

²⁸ <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/learning/nss/>

factors enforce the need for clear communication, adequate information and support services in all areas of the student experience.

In this sense, Shattock's (2003, p. 34) recommendation for proper attention to the institutional infrastructure—administrative services, student-related services, the maintenance of premises and equipment, libraries and IT services—and Yorke and Longden's attention to a "one-stop shop or a portal for support services" (2004, p. 137) emphasised the strategic importance of all related student support services to student success. A policy statement of the 1994 Group of UK universities, released in November 2007, affirmed these trends—among the priorities for enhancing the student experience are: the provision of transparent and accurate information around the student experience; promoting the student voice; and student-focused resources such as services, support and facilities (*Enhancing the Student Experience*, 2007).

In discussions with my supervisor, Professor John Taylor, we have often reflected on the increasing complexity of student management in the current UK context of widening participation and access for students from diverse backgrounds. In our view, the role of student services is in the process of change, with a strong influence from US practices, both within organisational structures and in response to student involvement in their development and monitoring. Despite the trend to professionalise, enlarge and integrate student services functions into "one-stop" centres (for example, the University of Southampton's Student Services Centre), questions remain as to: whether a centralised or devolved model will better serve the special needs of students; to what extent students' views are integrated into the management of such services; and how universities should partner with their Student Unions which have a long tradition in providing a number of student services independently of the university. The public debates around tuition fees in the UK have also reinforced the need to balance institutional priorities vs. "consumer" demands, and how to fund—and improve the quality of—support services with limited budgets. What we find important in these developments, however, is the recognition of student services units as a key player in fulfilling institutional objectives toward "student-centredness" and competitiveness in the evolving market-based management of UK higher education. With a strong internationalisation agenda, the European

Commission is pushing the rest of Europe in a similar direction; similar questions are now being raised in the higher education fora of continental Europe.

2.3. Perspectives from continental Europe

Reflecting on the 1969 edition of *Education and Identity*, Chickering (1993, p. xi) writes:

Not all those concerned with higher education [in the US] agree with our orientation. Many did not when the first edition was published. They doubted that colleges and universities should be concerned about students' personal values, ways of thinking, modes of learning, or interpersonal or intercultural skills. Since educational institutions were not supposed to be churches, parents, or social service agencies, it did not matter much whether students worked all night, slept all day, fought depression, or abused alcohol. Fostering self-esteem, healthy relationships, and socially responsible behaviour was not a priority. Instead, the goal was to give students a limited number of skills, insights, and points of view that would somehow help them find a job and a satisfying life.

Despite changing circumstances and numerous external and internal pressures toward educational reform in continental Europe, similar attitudes still permeate the climate of many higher education institutions, thus conditioning the development of—and research into—student support services. My search for literature sources on this topic yielded few and scattered reports: the term cropped up occasionally in references to institutional management, the student experience, or developmental objectives, but I could not locate any specific publication dedicated more extensively to this topic. In *Appendix III*, I have summarised my findings from a scan of higher education journals (list based upon Tight, 2003, pp. 16-20). Classified under 'student services' or 'student support' there was a broad range of topics: 'learning', 'pedagogy', 'assessment', 'student life', 'student roles', 'student perspectives', 'choice', 'university admissions', 'loans', 'mobility', 'ethnicity and student life', 'recruitment', 'marketisation', 'first year learning', 'non-completion', 'performance indicators', 'widening participation', 'equal opportunities', 'access' 'employment', 'disabled students', 'adult learners'. Each of these contributed to the understanding of student support; however, only two special issues: *Higher Education in Europe*

(1994) and the *European Journal of Education* (2004) contained more explicit articles about student services.

More recently, international conferences organised by the European Association for Institutional Research (EAIR), the European Association for International Education (EAIE), the European University Association (EUA), and the Academic Cooperation Association (ACA) have provided the fora for papers and case studies on ‘the student experience’, ‘student expectations’ and ‘institutional responses’. The inclusion of these themes heralded a new interest in the development of student support services, further demonstrated by the substantial number of participants in these seminars. Not surprisingly, many of these reports are delivered by university representatives from the United States, the United Kingdom, Ireland, and the Netherlands, the last three representing the most advanced ‘best practices’ in student support systems within Europe.

In parallel to the sharing of institutional practices and burgeoning research into the student experience within Europe, the most important impetus for the development of student support services has come from international student mobility schemes (such as ERASMUS/SOCRATES, implemented by the European Commission since the late 1980s) and the Bologna process.

2.3.1. Student support in the European public higher education sector

To understand the nature of student support provision in Europe, it is first necessary to summarise the features of higher education as a public sector. Despite the great diversity of higher education systems, a unifying characteristic is their connectedness with the state. As Scott (1998, pp. 110-115) argued, “most universities are not ancient institutions that go back unbroken to the Middle Ages... but are creations of the nation state.” As such, public universities have a special mandate to serve national purposes: to provide economic advantage; to produce new elites; and to ensure social equity. Social engineering—the populist mission of higher education since the 1960s—has underpinned the process of massification of higher education throughout Europe, opening access to a larger and more diverse student body,

spurring the growth in institutional size and in plurality of goals. However, the fundamental assumption remains that higher education as a public good sponsored by the state is responsible to the state. This relationship has placed students in the role of recipients of a benefit: for a long time the focus was on ‘getting in’ rather than ‘getting through’.

Broadening access to higher education also brought a system of student welfare packages in the form of scholarships, allowances, student loans, provision of student accommodation, dining services, health care and social services, funded and regulated by the state. Although universities administer these support programmes, they have limited ownership and consider them a set of added welfare services, independent of the academic involvement of the student. In Central and Eastern Europe, for example, such services are often delivered by units and organisations (Student Centres, Student Towns) entirely separate from individual higher education institutions.

Internally, every higher education institution performs a number of administrative functions related to student admission, enrolment and registration, course planning, monitoring of academic progress, and fulfilment of requirements for graduation. In the largely decentralised organisational structures, these operations tend to remain devolved into separate faculties, part of the ‘back office’ secretarial administration. Student involvement in university life is supported mainly through the Student Unions, also funded and regulated by the state, or other discipline-based student organisations.

Similar practices are common throughout Europe, resulting in a fragmented nature of the student support sector. Where “student services” exist, they frequently designate different functions, and are broadly understood as “social services for students” or “student welfare” (for example, Spaas, N. and Van de Beek, E., 2005, and “The Social Dimension” in *Bologna with Student Eyes*, 2005).

In my view, these contemporary characteristics of the public higher education sector in Europe are not simply a post-World War II phenomenon. Their roots can be traced back in European history, with a special relevance for Central and Eastern

Europe, to the beginning of the 20th century and the influence of the German university tradition.

2.3.2. Attempt to construct a history of student support services in continental Europe.

The history of the ‘European university’ comprises studies coming from disciplines such as history, sociology, history/theory of science, political science and research into higher education. However, as Ruegg (1992, pp. xxi-xxii) observed, “they have dealt with one or another epoch, with particular countries, universities and disciplines...”, while “the larger subject”—a comprehensive (and comparative) history of universities—was not explored until 1935²⁹. Speaking for the experience of the Conference of Rectors of the European Universities³⁰, he noted the need for better knowledge of the development of universities and their long-standing traditions. As a result, several recent publications have gained authority in the field: Rothblatt and Wittrock’s *The European and American University since 1800* (1993), and the series of volumes—*A History of the University in Europe*, I-III (1992, 1996, 2004). Scott’s research into the transition of higher education institutions in Central and Eastern Europe (2000, 2002) contextualised regional characteristics in the framework of dominant European traditions, expanded and complemented by a series of UNESCO-CEPES publications and articles by Neave, Sadlak, and Teichler.

Neave (1998) summarised the evolution of the modern university as the result of four dominant traditions: the Napoleonic model, the “earliest example of the state harnessing the university to the modernisation of society... and in asserting singular national identity”; the Humboldtian model, placing the university as the centre of knowledge advancement within a unity of teaching and research, independent from government interference; the British model as an example of institutional autonomy and the idea of “residentiality” with a focus on student personal development and intellectual growth; and the “market-driven” university education of the United States, which has combined the features of the three dominant European traditions: pragmatism and service to the national economy, independence of research, and the

²⁹ d’Irsay, S. (1933-5), *Histoire des universités francaises at etrangeres des origins a nos jours*

³⁰ As of 2001, merged with EUA.

student-centred approach in liberal arts education, which now sets the “Anglo-American tradition” apart from the other European models (also Rothblatt, 1993). Neave also mentions the “Soviet model” and its derivatives from a command economy as a system-shaping pattern: however, this model was not an invention—it built upon the state management elements already present in the German university tradition of the late 19th century.

While the ‘student-centred’ approach became a recognised philosophy of teaching and learning in the Anglo-American tradition, accompanied by the development of student support programmes and student services, the traditions of continental Europe, and Central and Eastern Europe in particular, are more diverse. Behind the structures (and strictures) imposed upon universities in this region in the period 1945-1990, there remains the strong influence of the Humboldtian model and 19th century German universities tradition (Wittrock, 1993, pp. 312-321).

2.3.2.1. Special characteristics of the Humboldtian model

The enduring influence of Humboldt’s educational reform ideas and the German university of the 19th century is embedded in a number of factors, many of which have become inherent academic philosophies in continental European universities, determining the context of student-professor and student-university relationships:

Education at the heart of nation re-building: Humboldt’s reforms followed Prussia’s defeat by Napoleon in 1806. The recovery programme initiated by the Prussian king placed a new emphasis on state and nation-building as a concern of the people (Paulsen, 1908), institutionalising educational reform as “an attempt to recreate and reinvigorate national culture after the traumas of military defeat and political disruption” (Wittrock, 1993, p. 317);

Allgemeine Bildung: A philosophy of education as a lifelong process of formation, self-fulfilment and active citizenship (Rothblatt and Wittrock, 1993, pp. 11-12), based upon the development of a ‘well-rounded’ individual, pursuing the interests of enlightenment and national emancipation (Wittrock, 1993, p. 315);

University autonomy and academic freedom of the teaching staff: although he believed that university professors should be appointed by the State (Wittrock, 1993, p. 318), Humboldt promoted the independence of scientific inquiry from the influence of politics by insisting upon institutional autonomy and especially the autonomy of the teaching staff (Hohendorf, 1993); culminating in

The idea of the Humboldtian University (University of Berlin, 1810): established with a vision to develop the student's philosophical mind "until he stands at the centre of his art" and to develop *Wissenschaft* as "scientific knowledge encompassing all areas of learning." (Schiller, 1789, in Wertz, 1993).

2.3.2.2. From 'Educational Philosophy' to 'Educational Ideology'

Humboldt's educational philosophy aimed to create the most conducive circumstances for the development of the individual and of science in service of a greater cause—the making of a nation (Hohendorf, 1993). He succeeded in creating an elite institution, based upon the unity of teaching and research, which was hailed as 'the undisputed international model for university reformers' (Wittrock, 1993, p. 321). However, by the end of the 19th century, the Humboldtian legacy became one of conflicting priorities: the consolidated German state required education for its civil service; *Wissenschaft* was gradually replaced by discrete disciplines and a new social organisation of science, leading to fragmentation of the institutional organisation; *Bildung* became a prominent part of the culture of each discipline and specialisation. Wittrock (1993, pp. 315-319) summarised these outcomes as an "irony" (also Nybom, 2003; Van Vught, 2004): "The Humboldtian university, inspired by holistic thinking in broad historical cultural categories and informed by a type of philosophy which rejected narrow-minded specialization, turned out to become the ideal and archetypal home for scientific activities which were, if anything, based on opposite conceptions."

Another consequence was the growing self-awareness of university professors as specialist scholars and their elevation to individual power and influence in their field. Nybom (2003, p. 144) reflected on this phenomenon critically: "an immediate consequence of this demand for almost unlimited autonomy was that university

professors gave up political ambitions”, thus becoming civil servants themselves—“the equally famous and infamous ‘apolitical German Mandarin’.” This disengagement of university professors from political and moral responsibility arguably facilitated and boosted “an unprecedented expansion in academic excellence, [but] it simultaneously strengthened the conviction among German (and other European) academics that they had no societal or even moral responsibilities outside their ‘autonomous’ academic sphere.”

From this position of having traded social awareness for academic status, university professors became tools of state intervention, influence and manipulation, bringing to final erosion the Humboldtian concept of *Bildung* through the student-professor fellowship. Weber’s journalistic writings in the period 1908-1919 (Weber, 1973, 1974) illustrate the all-pervasive influence of the state in the German university, of which he became an ardent public critic. He argued that the Prussian government was breeding a new type “compliant mediocrities” or “operators” in academe through “politically imposed professorships”, which weakened the moral authority of the faculties (pp. 4-6). Pointedly and repeatedly commenting on academic appointments in German universities, Weber suggested that “academic freedom” had become “bound up with the espousal of certain views which are politically acceptable” but limit the freedom of disinterested university education (p. 17).

For Van Vught (2004, pp. 97-98), the historical evolution of the Humboldtian concepts has developed into an “academic ideology”, based upon the ideas of state-guaranteed autonomy, academic freedom and “the conviction among academics that beyond their academic work they had no further social obligations” (Lepenies, 1992, quoted by Van Vught). This ideology has also served “as a façade behind which universities and academics have found it easy to hide. [It] has become a more-or-less taken for granted, intrinsic dimension of European academic life. Many academics use this ideology to distance themselves from societal issues and the contribution that science might possibly make to social development” (p. 98).

2.3.2.3. The collapse of imperial Europe and the rise of new nation states

Beginning with the Russo-Turkish War in 1877 and ending with WWI in 1918, the map of continental Europe was dramatically redrawn: the Ottoman Empire,

the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the German Empire had come to an end, giving rise to new nation states in Central, North-Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. Throughout this period, the social role ascribed to the university by German educators—serving the State, preparing competent civil servants, and embedding a sense of national awareness and culture—was especially appealing to them, consolidating the influence of the German university tradition in this region.

Concurrent with political events and the strife for national independence, there emerged numerous student movements, more notably in the Slavic nations of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Gevers and Vos' comprehensive chronology of student movements from 1800 to 1968 (2004, pp. 269-361) provides numerous examples of student political activism, which it befell their universities to quell. As the authors note, "for the history of the 19th and the 20th centuries, the topic of student movements is more significant than the history of everyday student life" (p. 269).

Student movements accompanied major political or emancipation events across Europe, characterised also by their more radical, action-oriented approach. In the Austro-Hungarian Empire conspiratorial activities were common among Polish, Czech, Slovak and Slav students in Vienna, Brno and Bratislava, leading the authorities to ban all student associations. Left-wing student movements joined with national uprisings: in Hungary in 1848, followed by Transylvania, Croatia and Prague. In Vienna and Graz, Slovene students demanded the establishment of a Slovene university in Ljubljana. Despite the official ban on student associations, politicisation continued throughout the next decades, with outbreaks of hostilities among the German-speaking students and those who spoke another language. By the 1890s, the University of Prague became the stronghold of Slav activities, joined by Croats, Serbs, Ukrainians and Slovenes, who proclaimed their nationalistic and democratic ideas and called upon the federalisation of the monarchy.

This brief adaptation of Gevers and Vos' extensive chapter on Student Movements, particularly with regard to countries in Central and Eastern Europe, provides the background against which, at the beginning of the 20th century, the new nation states and their universities strove to form new academic communities. It is clear from these accounts that—in contrast to the Anglo-American student-centred

tradition—the history of relations between students and universities in continental Europe was one of political involvement and repression.

2.3.2.4. The lack of student support services—rooted in history and politics

Throughout the histories of the ‘European university’, listed in this section, there is a striking absence of any reference to student support systems. Whereas descriptions of the British or the American model abound in examples of “the co-curriculum”, summarised by Rothblatt (1993, p. 55) as “combining the numerous campus services, its advisory and student assistance components (housing, financial aid, health and counselling centres, remedial education, pre-professional advising, placement services, intern programmes)”, the sources on continental Europe (available in English) did not yield comments about the existence of student support services.

It would appear that the Humboldtian concept of *Bildung* and the unity of teaching and research was in fact taken up by the American research university of the 1930s (Kerr, 1994, p. xviii), while the German university continued to serve primarily the needs of the state, centring student academic and development activities within the faculties, as a responsibility of the professors. As Rothblatt and Wittrock (1993, p. 5) note, “the State is itself a market, operating within a very large and complicated framework of moral and political pressures.” This interconnectedness with the State, however, did not allow universities in continental Europe to develop a service culture for their own internal constituents: the staff and the students.

The occupation of Central and Eastern Europe by Nazi Germany in 1938-1941 put an end to university autonomy. However, the subordination to dominant political agendas continued in the socialist period between 1945-1989: political manipulation, dogmatisation of the curriculum, and close monitoring of students’ and professors’ activities turned national universities into state apparatus tools, regulated by a host of national ministries. Since 1945, education systems throughout Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union were restructured to fit the needs of planned state economies and serve an authoritarian political regime. As Berryman (2000, p. 7) summarised, education in the communist countries was not without its accomplishments; however, it increasingly reflected the inefficiencies of planned

economies; and the absence of governance and institutional management led to opaque financial distributions and infrastructure crises (also Tomusk, 2004b).

The division along discipline lines, the departmentalisation of faculties, and the fragmentation of university structures became the predominant organisational model of higher education institutions during the socialist period. As a student in Sofia University (the oldest national university in Bulgaria) in the late 1980s, my own experience was that this separation prevented students from forming a community. Other than the occasional visit to the Academic Office for a paper certificate or a stamp in the student's record book, students communicated primarily with the department's secretary on any out-of-class matters. Student Unions were highly selective and a stepping-stone to membership in the Communist Party. During this period (and until recently), student involvement in clubs, associations and sports activities was organised in the student residential areas where students mingled together as a function of their temporary social status, rather than belonging to any particular higher education institution.

In a joint article (Bateson and Taylor, 2004), we have summarised the main institutional characteristics that emerged from this past: while achievements in the in the sphere of academic pursuits were substantial, the student's social and personal development in the context of the 'university experience' was neglected. Apart from the occasional leadership of individuals with a strong personal commitment to student initiatives, administrations did not seek to cultivate a community outside faculty-based units. Nor was there a systematic effort to offer orientation programmes, academic counselling, or individual guidance. For the student, the university (or the autonomous faculty) represented a self-centred bureaucracy, which performed the necessary administrative tasks but not 'services'. Communications for students were normally posted outside the faculty dean's office, and, by and large, students were left to find things out by word of mouth. In this impersonal environment, the tradition in this region is one of a marked division between student development in academic terms and the overall student social and personal experience.

It is also not surprising that in the period immediately following the collapse of the Socialist regime in 1989, universities in Central and Eastern Europe first turned

to restoring their academic and institutional autonomy (Scott, 2000, pp. 367-368; Scott, 2002, pp.143-144), maintaining a strong focus on academe, rather than on students. In Scott's view, it was not until the mid-1990s that universities in the region began to accept the new notions of civic and market accountability. Led by this 'emerging pragmatism' and against the background of decreasing financial support from the State, the agendas for the future development of universities in Central and Eastern Europe began to converge with those of Western Europe, culminating in the formal adoption of the *Bologna Declaration* (1999) and in joining the European Higher Education Area.

2.3.2.5. Hypotheses—in lieu of literature sources

My research of documentary evidence led me to conclude that the topic of student support services in higher education has received little attention in continental Europe, and even less so in Central and Eastern Europe. To explain this finding, I turned to history and have offered my construction on the inherited lack of traditions with regard to student services. In the absence of literature sources, I propose the following hypotheses:

i) Student development is seen primarily as a cognitive process guided by individual professors.

I attribute this to the enduring legacy of the German university tradition of the late 19th century in which professors assumed the central role in teaching and student guidance. In this tradition, student development was interpreted as a pedagogical approach to teaching and training in research, rather than overall psychological development of the student as an individual. The resulting focus on student activities in the classroom, under the guidance of the professor, minimised attention to student life outside the subject, the specialization, and the faculty in which the student was enrolled. Cognitive development took precedence over the cultivation of non-cognitive characteristics. This hypothesis was supported in my interviews with professors and students who repeatedly commented on the central role of the professor in guiding student involvement in any type of activity related to student life.

ii) The characteristics of the nation state university are not conducive to student involvement.

The German concept of the university created in service of the state, which was adopted by the new Central and East European countries in the beginning of the 20th century, set the conditions for the evolution of higher education institutions with a specific mission: to support the needs of the state. As a result, the identity of the university as an autonomous institution was diminished: especially in the cases where individual faculties operated as separate legal entities with direct links to the respective Ministries of Education. This, in turn, enabled the state to exercise direct control over the function of the universities, and their faculties, through national laws and specific regulations. The state ensured the provision of higher education and the necessary operational support for professors and students for academic purposes (facilities, libraries, record keeping offices, student welfare and living conditions). However, this operational support was prescribed and regulated so that universities had no ownership of these functions. Student support operations are therefore seen as purely administrative matters, separated from the process of teaching and learning. Unless regulated by the state (for example, student representation in academic governance), student involvement in university affairs remains minimal.

iii) Political events have led to disengagement of the process of teaching from student involvement.

Throughout European history of the 19th and 20th century, universities and their students have engaged in political strife, either for the preservation of regimes or for their overturn. In this, students have often taken opposing positions to those of their institutions, a factor which has created strong politicisation within, and distrust among students and professors. Totalitarian governments have used higher education institutions as vehicles of propaganda and indoctrination, in which student involvement was controlled or subordinated to political goals. The events of 1989, the wars in former Yugoslavia, and the uncertainties of politics in the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe have continued to maintain strong political orientations within the universities of this region. This environment of mutual suspicion, which may no longer be based entirely on political agendas, still influences university teaching and operations to the extent that learning and student engagement remain

two separate spheres, the latter being managed mostly by the Student Unions and not by the university.

iv) Student Support Services: ‘on the brink of a profession’³¹ in continental Europe

Following from these, my argument is that student services as an institutional programme could not develop in universities or academic communities where all three influences have remained strong, i.e. the university experience seen as:

- a cognitive process divorced from social and psychological development (i);
- a matter of regulations and administrative procedures managed in largely decentralised organisational settings (ii);
- disengaged from other forms of student involvement (iii).

This research project found that all three elements are still present in the cultures of the institutions selected as case studies. However, they are tempered by the growth in student enrolments and the presence of numerous student organisations, many of which have taken a leadership role in the provision of services for students. Further, the increasing complexity of administrative functions has stimulated universities to exercise greater institutional autonomy, and assert their identity through functional integration, in order to manage their operations more efficiently. As university operations, administrative support, and student-provided services become better defined and coordinated, I anticipate that institutional student support services will emerge as a logical new formation of institutional provision.

This assumption is supported by recent discussions of the role of student services in the context of international student mobility and the Bologna process reforms in higher education in continental Europe. For the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the Bologna process has assumed special significance as it coincided with the comprehensive higher education reform following 1989: it has provided a political and higher education policy agenda to guide the development of national systems and their integration into the European Higher Education Area (*Trends II*, 2001, p. 3, 39; *Trends III*, 2003, p. 46).

³¹ Phrase used by Henderson in the introduction of Strategic Enrolment Management. (In Black, 2001)

2.4. The Bologna process – the role of students and student support services

As introduced by the European University Association, “launched in 1999 by the Ministers of Education and university leaders of 29 countries, the Bologna process aims to create a European Higher Education Area (EHEA) by 2010; it has further developed into a major reform encompassing 45 countries. It does not aim to harmonise national educational systems but rather to provide tools to connect them, improve transparency between higher education systems, and implement tools to facilitate recognition of degrees, mobility, and exchanges between institutions...”³²

Initially a response of the European governments to the lagging competitiveness of their higher education systems in comparison with the United States, the Bologna process has evolved into a **comprehensive reform objective**, touching upon all aspects of academic and structural effectiveness, delivery and recognition of degree programmes, transfer of credits, institutional management, quality assurance and the internationalisation of European higher education. As *Trends IV* (2005, p. 6) summarised, “Many institutions have made great efforts to “internalise” the reform process, incorporating Bologna issues into their own institutional strategies and activities. In many cases, this is recognised as an opportunity to address problems which have long been known to exist.”

The Bologna process has also generated a substantial body of publications available online: country reports; cross-European comparative studies; the EUA *Trends* reports; communiqués; recommendations; conference papers and journal articles, that have enormously facilitated comparative studies of higher education and its administration. Since 2000, concurrent with Bologna reforms, the topics of autonomy and accountability, accreditation and quality assurance have taken on an increasing importance, directing attention not only to quality as an academic matter, but also to “all other activities: to look at the quality of teaching and research, without considering institutional and national conditions, may well prove to be ineffective” (*Trends III*, 2003, p. 76).

³² <http://www.eua.be/index.php?id=65> 28 May 2007

The review of these sources validates two of the main arguments of the preceding section: the historical lack of student support services provision and the lack of literature on this topic in continental Europe. The Bologna-related publications provide the first cross-European references to student services as a missing element in institutional management and connect it to internal quality assurance systems.

2.4.1. Student support services – a factor in supporting international student mobility

The Bologna Declaration (1999) formulated the idea of establishing an EHEA by setting several objectives, including the promotion of mobility of students and teachers. Following from this, student support (non-educational) services were first mentioned in the context of international student mobility as a special requirement that countries and institutions had to address. *Trends I* (1999, p. 27) reported “considerable differences between national student support systems, criteria for eligibility, and capacity;... comparisons are fairly complicated as it is necessary to include analyses of the actual grant systems as well as their interaction with family burden equalisation and taxation systems.” The latter referred to national student welfare systems as introduced in section 2.3.1. - Student support in the European public higher education sector.

Providing for the needs of international students and mobility schemes remained high on the agenda of the EUA *Salamanca Declaration* (2001); *Trends II* (2001) and the Lourtie Report (2001), which noted the need for “friendly social services, visa policies and support for mobility” (p. i, p. 9). However this report also suggested that national and foreign students have different needs (p.ii) and that services to students should primarily seek to help international students (p. 9). This differentiation has been somewhat unfortunate, as it directed institutions to focus on student services as part of the international relations offices, rather than on student services as institution-wide programmes for all students. In this respect, the contribution to view student support issues as part of the “social dimension” of higher education came (not surprisingly) from the Student Unions, which—as noted in

hypothesis *iii* (section 2.3.2.5. - Hypotheses—in lieu of literature sources)—have had the highest involvement.

In the *Student Goteborg Declaration* (2001), ESIB (the National Union of Students in Europe) drew attention to the role of students “as one of the driving forces for changes in the field of education” and called for “more formalised student involvement in all decision-making bodies and discussion fora dealing with HE on the European level.” The declaration asserted “the failure” of the Bologna process “to address the social implications [higher education] has on students... The social and civic contributions must be present as the primary functions of the HEIs.” Since then, ESIB has continuously emphasised the need to support “**the social dimension**” of higher education through adequate studying and living conditions, financial resources for students, quality assurance and seriousness of institutional commitments to student involvement in formal and informal bodies and decision-making processes, considering the fact that the mentality of other stakeholders (governments and universities) is such that they “are not willing to consider students as equal partners, and do not value the opinion of the students if it is different from their own.” (*Bologna with Student Eyes*, 2005, pp. 38-40, p. 51; *Implementing of the QA Bergen Report*, 2006)

The integration of ESIB’s proposals and acknowledgement of the role of students in the Bologna process in the *Prague Communiqué’s* (2001) included in the scope of the Bologna objectives institutional preparedness for meeting student expectations, such as “student-centred learning, flexible learning paths and access, a realistic estimation of workload, establishing institution-wide credit systems” (*Trends III*, 2003, p. 8). The report also assessed that while “many HEIs have improved conditions for student mobility: welcome and orientation services, language training, counselling services, social and cultural activities for incoming students, accommodation facilities, etc.” (pp. 29-30), “no data exists on the extent to which management, infrastructure and services are being reviewed by the institutions. Since external quality procedures only rarely focus on these themes, internal reviews would be all the more necessary to uncover existing problems” (p. 84).

2.4.2. Student support services – a factor in institutional quality assurance

It was only in 2003 (EUA's *Graz Declaration*) that a new convergence of trends initiated by the Bologna process led to **an explicit formulation of the need for institutional student support services**: the adoption of quality assurance as a policy framework for Europe; the recognition that governments must change legislation on student support; and the call for universities to involve students in the evaluation of their activities (study programmes and service departments). The EUA *Quality Assurance Policy* (2004) introduced the concept of "organisational quality". Simultaneously, EUA sponsored the **Quality Culture Project (2002-2006)**, involving a number of European universities in internal quality assessment as a grass-roots activity attempting to define 'best practices'. The three reports of this project are of central importance to this literature review:

The first report, *Developing an Internal Quality Culture in European Universities 2002-2003* (2005) introduced the first cross-European reference to Student Support Services, using a vocabulary resembling the integrated concept of learning and student development in *Learning Reconsidered* (2004): "the Student Support Services report provides **a holistic view** of this area, based on the notion that students are more than learners and that all aspects of their well-being must be considered" (p. 27). The report contains a comprehensive definition of student support services as "programmes and activities designed to increase student academic performance together with student personal well-being, offering members of the university community a range of services that complement the university experience and contribute directly to the welfare of individuals" (p. 27). While the document does not reference US literature sources, one of the participating institutions in the 2002-2003 project, the University of Debrecen (a case study in this research), was represented by a professor who had extensive teaching experience in the United States³³.

The second report, *Developing an Internal Quality Culture in European Universities: Report on the Quality Culture Project, Round II—2004* (2005),

³³ The Vice-Rector from the University of Debrecen is an interviewee in the research project.

expanded the initial recommendations, continuing the theme of the holistic student experience. Student Support Services emerged as an essential management tool in student recruitment, admission and retention, divided into four categories: academic support; social integration; academic and regulatory structures; and, data management (pp. 25-26). The report focused on specific challenges: adequate information provision before and upon admission; the use of the web for such purposes; facilitating the conditions to improve the social integration of students, including non-curriculum programmes, support for students with different needs or with disabilities; clarity of institutional responsibilities and services; involving students in providing feedback; integrating information systems, as a source of consistent institutional data, and in service of the students.

Owing to their seminal importance as **the first comprehensive definitions** of the role and scope of student services in continental Europe, an excerpt from both reports is included as *Appendix VI*.

The final report, *Quality Culture in European Universities: A Bottom-up Approach* (2006), contributed an important perspective on facilitating student involvement in university affairs by the recognition of **student support provision as an institutional task**: “Network discussions revealed that student participation in decision-making bodies is usually relatively low; institutions experience difficulties in increasing it. This is sometimes true even if the law mandates student participation. Most students are confronted with the notion of student participation for the first time when they enter higher education. They need to understand what it is about and the benefits it holds for them and the institution... [Universities need to] provide appropriate support for student groups, develop their leadership skills and their capacity to understand strategic issues” (p. 25).

The publication of the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in EHEA* (2005) brought **student support services to the level of an explicit institutional obligation**, i.e. Standard 5: Learning resources and student support; Standard 6: Information systems; and Standard 7: Public Information. Although these standards are not as detailed as the US accreditation standards, they provide a

thorough list of suggested practices for institutional provision, both for prospective and current students, with special attention to student feedback.

By 2005, *Trends IV* documented the importance higher education institutions assign to internal administration, support services, external and international relations. “While many institutions mention ad-hoc evaluations of particular administrative services..., a sixth submit their administration and support services to regular review and another sixth are beginning to address the quality of administration and support services more regularly and systematically... Student services were more often reviewed than other services, often with the help of student satisfaction questionnaires” (p. 30). The report concluded that Bologna reforms have posed systemic challenges, among which the move to student-centred learning: “many traditionally teacher-oriented systems [are] reflecting upon ways to place the students’ needs at the centre of their attention. Such a change of focus is making itself felt in the internal quality culture regarding teaching, teaching performance, and feedback being sought from students. The development of adequate student support services is also an increasing concern as expansion of systems and institutions continues” (p. 47).

2.4.3. Student services in the management of institutional quality

In parallel to the quality assurance theme within the Bologna-related documents and EUA publications (*Salamanca Declaration*, 2001; *Trends II*, 2001; *Trends III*, 2003; the *Berlin Communiqué*, 2003; EUA’s *Quality Assurance Policy*, 2004, and the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA*, 2005), the European Commission, the Council of Europe, UNESCO-CEPES, and OECD’s Programme on Institutional Management in Higher Education have sponsored a number of studies on national accreditation systems, quality assurance and institutional management in higher education, with a special focus on the shifting emphasis from internal/implicit quality assurance to external (government-driven) monitoring of higher education outcomes.

Reviewing the difference in practices across continental Europe, *Trends II* (2001) established the need for more convergence between national accreditation systems and quality assurance: “all [Bologna signatory] countries have some kind of quality assurance mechanism in place, although they differ significantly in terms of purposes, focus and organisation”, varying from implicit internal responsibilities or explicit quality evaluation systems within higher education institutions, to national accreditation agencies or quality assurance agencies, most of which were created in the 1990s (p. 35). Despite the diversity of approaches, observers of the quality assurance movement (El-Khawas, 1998; Brennan and Shah, 2000; Campbell and Rozsnyai, 2002; Van Damme, 2004; Frenyo and Rozsnyai, 2004; Tavenas, 2004) have commented on the growing involvement of national governments and the formulation of explicit benchmarks and indicators for quality assurance, both in academic terms and as a management concept.

Examining the changing characteristics of higher education—massification and growth in the size of higher education institutions; diversity of educational programmes, modes of delivery, and students enrolling in them; the emerging private higher education sector; reformulation of institutional roles to serve the needs of business, industry, or local, regional, and national development objectives—El-Khawas (1998) positioned the challenge for quality assurance upon “what remains central, i.e., what the student learns” (p. 13). Considering this as the most important outcome, El-Khawas questioned the traditional mechanisms of institutional quality assurance (library, classrooms, staff credentials, reputation, physical and financial resources), and introduced the task of assessment as a governmental-level concern, with new methodological requirements: “Decisions are needed on the learning objectives to be assessed, as well as the evidence that would demonstrate its accomplishment; methods must be developed for applying evaluation techniques to actual learning situations. With a focus on learning, rather than the setting in which learning takes place, all of these new decisions and methods must be made applicable to a wide variety of learning circumstances.” (p. 15)

Brennan and Shah (2000) offer a similar host of factors influencing the rise of quality assessment, including the internationalisation of higher education (p. 10). They trace its origins to “forces mainly from outside higher education”: actions of

governments; expansion, diversification and funding cuts; convergence of management approaches from other sectors of business and public life (p. 2), the combination of which has led to a change in the manner of governmental involvement in higher education. Referring to continental Europe, where “matters to do with curricula, staff appointments and promotions, awards and qualifications have been decided, at least formally, by the state” (p. 11), the authors introduce quality assessment as a transition from direct interference to a new approach to steering higher education, involving greater autonomy, competition and accountability. In their view, quality assessment has a direct impact on institutional management: “most forms of quality assessment strengthen institutional management, providing it with information on which to base decisions and a ‘threat’ to justify those decisions” (p. 15). As such, quality assessment has affected the balance between ‘producers’ and ‘customers’, empowering students to “contribute their views and experiences to the assessment process” (p. 16).

In this context—considering quality as a process to be assessed and managed—administrative functions, which affect the entire workings of an institution, have come to be regarded as an integral part of the core operations. In a broad (holistic) approach to quality assurance (Campbell and Rozsnyai, 2002, pp. 26-27), dimensions such as national regulations, educational process, curriculum design, the learning experience and outcomes, become interdependent components, closely connected to administrative functions and student support services. As quality assessment evaluation methods and instruments have expanded beyond the traditional process (self-study, external review/on-site visit by peer evaluators, and a final report) to include statistical data, qualitative information, performance indicators, user surveys, and external examiner reports (p. 48), the importance of the service units which collect and analyse this data has grown.

Increasingly, standards and indicators for quality assessment of the educational process examine its effectiveness in terms of curriculum, content and pedagogy relevance to stated objectives, planned and actual study duration, student support, and characteristics of student assessment. (Van Damme, 2004, p. 152). In another approach to performance indicators, Tavenas (2004) focused on the quality of students upon admission and their academic performance, based upon specific data

(grades upon admission, social origin, admission and enrolment rates, retention rates, measures for integration, average time to graduation and graduation rates) which touched upon administrative and student support services.

Although student support services are mentioned only in passing in these sources, quality assessment provides an important context for the development of institutional management and all related service units. As Brennan and Shah (2000, p. 16) point out, managing quality in higher education involves a re-distribution of power and transfer of foci: “By emphasising collectivity, transparency and accountability, quality assessment seems destined to alter organisational roles.”

2.5. Conclusion

This chapter has set out the main literature sources that analyse the concept of student services and have influenced the development of this professional area in the United States and in the United Kingdom. For continental Europe, it argued that there is little published in English that can be considered a substantive body of literature. It is possible that some publications exist in other European languages but the review of references in the main quoted sources suggests that there is a gap in published research on this topic. To explain the lack of references to student services, this chapter reviewed the relations between students and universities in continental Europe from a historical perspective and proposed a set of hypotheses in lieu of literature, which this study aimed to test.

Turning to the more recent developments resulting from the Bologna process in Europe, this chapter summarised the main references to student support services and the role of the students, in the context of comprehensive institutional reform processes. Tracing student services as a factor in international student mobility, quality assurance, and the management of institutional quality, the section dedicated to the documents generated in the framework of the Bologna process served to emphasise the overarching influence of public policy at cross-European level as a stimulus for change at the national and institutional levels.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODS

3.1.	Introduction – higher education as a field of study
3.2.	My position as a practitioner-researcher
3.3.	In search of theoretical grounding
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CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODS

3.1. Introduction – higher education as a field of study

Rothblatt and Wittrock (1993, p. 3) introduce the term ‘higher education’ as a “neologism” of the 19th century, which—in their view—remains imprecise. Since nations do not define ‘higher’ or ‘lower’ education in the same way³⁴, as an academic field of study it “encompasses battalions of topics and problems for analysis... As a form of inquiry, higher education includes all theories, hypotheses and conceptions, methods of arranging data and sifting through evidence that provide the researcher with distinctions, conclusions, patternings, and meanings.” Rooted in a complexity of social development, higher education is regarded as a multi-disciplinary subject, drawing upon philosophy, history, psychology, sociology, political science, economics, business studies, behavioural science, and education. According to Schwartz and Teichler (2000, p. 1), “research on higher education is a stable feature of cross-discipline research in the humanities and social sciences.”

Altbach (1997, pp. 5-6) considered this interdisciplinarity as both a strength and a weakness: while research within the established disciplines had expanded knowledge about higher education, it had also made the “emergence of a distinctive field [of higher education research] more difficult... Utilising research methods from diverse disciplines has contributed to original and innovative research [but it has also] hindered the creation of an identifiable research community.” Similarly, Evans (2002, p. 27) commented on the “non-cumulative character” of much educational research, owing to its fragmentation across different academic disciplines. As Tight (2004, p. 406) explained, “authors based in social science departments—mostly what May (1997) referred to as ‘mature disciplines’—and typically with only a part-time involvement in higher education research, are more likely to apply theoretical perspectives with which they are familiar from their own disciplines.” As a consequence, the field has developed in the midst of diverse methodological approaches.

³⁴ See also Huisman and Kaiser (2001).

Within the “higher education research infrastructure”, there is a well-established field of “institutional research” (Altbach, 1997, pp. 7-8), working on issues such as enrolment trends, data on student achievement, faculty and staff information. Tight (2004, p. 406) identified those as “fields of study and practice, rather than disciplines, ... which give relatively little priority to theory.” These more pragmatic aspects of higher education research, coupled with the fact that the development of higher education has been “increasingly subjected to state bureaucracy, which managed university affairs as part of a national education policy, ... and as a branch of state administration” (Ruegg, 2004, p. xxi, pp. 6-7), explain the relatively low recognition of the field.

However, as the role of “higher education itself has assumed greater importance” (Tight, 2003, p. 3), research on higher education has attracted the attention of scholars, practitioners and policy-makers, in a shared concern for “a better understanding of the nature of academic institutions, their roles, and their key components” (Altbach, 1997, p. 3). Calls for effectiveness, efficiency and accountability have positioned research of education in the context of politics and policy-making, with much of its justification coming from states and governments. In this new environment of keen interest in higher education outcomes, higher education research has assumed another dimension: it is not a product of disinterested inquiry into the organisation and operations of higher education institutions but is characterised by an inherent evaluative and comparative purpose, both within a given institution and in the hierarchy of entire systems (Cohen et al., 2000, pp. 38-44).

The ensuing argument that higher education research is context-based and not value-free (Evans, 2002, pp. 29-30) poses many challenges. As Punch (1998, p. 51) noted, “the choice of a research area, and of problems and questions within that area, involves value judgements.” Increasingly, the production of knowledge is associated with practitioners as being context-dependent, and including a wider, more temporary and heterogeneous sets of topics, framed in reflexive and socially accountable terms (Gibbons et al, 1994). In this process of legitimising knowledge in pragmatic terms, “objective knowledge of traditional theory” is perceived as “information to be learned and experimented with in practice” (Jarvis, 1999, p. xii).

Research into higher education has gained momentum in these contexts. As Jarvis argued (1999, pp. 4-8), it is often driven by practitioner-researchers in different occupations, crossing boundaries between higher education and the world of work, and based upon first-hand experience and personal theories.

3.2. My position as a practitioner-researcher

Recognising the importance of context and the fact that the choice of problems for research depends upon one's own position and perspective, as well as professional experience, this project adds to the body of higher education research conducted by a "practitioner-researcher". Using Jarvis' categorisation (1999, pp. 19-21), I belong to the group of adult learners: I decided to pursue a doctorate after 12 years of professional experience in higher education, having reached a senior management position at CEU. In addition to my motivation to undertake this research project out of concern for fellow practitioners in my immediate context, Central and Eastern Europe, I was also interested in finding a theoretical grounding for my work. This project has been a personal quest to answer questions as to *why* we do things in the way we do them, and to understand better the tenets of the academic profession within which my practical experience is immersed.

In my work I have been influenced by the position taken by CEU's President and Rector that the Enlightenment concept of universalism is increasingly challenged on a practical level by the shifting boundary between local universalism and global contextualism: research in any discipline and across disciplines must face "uncertainties", "contradictions and rapidly-changing presuppositions" (Elkana, 2005, p. 67). I must therefore acknowledge that there may be multiple answers to my research questions; I have selected the ones, which I identified on the basis of careful, structured and rigorous research practice and which can be replicated in this given context.

As I set out to conduct this research, I believed it to be necessary and timely from a pragmatic point of view; having completed the project, I believe I have found both practical and theoretical answers to my questions—again—valid for the context in which the research was carried out. My position remains one of an advocate; this

project aims to raise awareness about, and responsiveness to, a profession in the making, neglected mostly for historical reasons.

3.3. In search of theoretical grounding

With a strong sense of the challenging environment created by the interdisciplinary nature of higher education research and its context dependence (and given my own background as a practitioner-researcher), I was all the more concerned to identify a theoretical grounding for my project.

Because of its applied nature (Teichler, 2000, p. 18) and pragmatic orientation to support policy and practice, the definition and scope of higher education research has reflected a dichotomy in the approaches to the study of higher education as a field in its own right (Suslow, 1972; Burgess, 1985; Scott and Usher, 1996; Cohen et al., 2000; Teichler, 2000; El-Khawas, 2000; Teichler and Sadlak, 2000; Altbach, 2002; Evans, 2002, Tight, 2004). This is the tension between discipline-based, theory-oriented research and research designed to support the policy, planning, and practice of higher education—its organisation and management as a reflection of particular national and institutional settings, and its executive decision-making on the basis of reliable statistical and analytical information. Considering the implications of the latter aspect, Evans summarised the critique of higher education research as “lack of rigour” (2002, pp 29-33), resulting from the fact that “too few researchers contribute to and generate theory”—with the consequent “lack of conceptual clarity” affecting methodology and construct validity. In a similar vein, Tight (2004, p. 400) found that “theoretical engagement” is a minority interest on the part of higher education researchers working across disciplinary boundaries: “the demand for evidence-based practice gives little priority to theory” (p. 406).

To understand the nature of the argument, I turned to the philosophy of social research and the dialectic of the natural and social sciences. As introduced by Williams and May (1996, p. 2), “for many, to follow the path of the natural sciences is to replicate what is assumed to be, along with explanation, generalisation and prediction, a central feature of their practice: value-freedom.” In this school of thought, scientific knowledge is obtained and verified through replicable facts of

experience where the researcher and researched have distinct and distant roles, unencumbered by meanings and interpretations about how human beings come to know the world. However, as Punch (1998, p. 2) noted, this reliance on observable physical facts as the basis for social inquiry has been challenged throughout the 20th century on the grounds that knowledge and the ways of acquiring knowledge have “cognitive and social dimensions” which interact in complex ways to make science, and social sciences in particular, a psychological and social process, where meanings and values are ascribed to, interpreted, and followed within specific social settings.

Cohen et al. (2000, pp. 5-8) summarised this dialectic as “two conceptions of social reality”: one is the objectivist (positivist) approach, which accepts the likeness of social sciences to natural sciences with their emphasis on generalizability and the value of universal truths; the other is the subjectivist (anti-positivist) approach which emphasises the subjective experience and the importance assigned to the individual or group understanding of reality and the concept of “relatability” as opposed to “generalisability” of social phenomena. These two main schools of thought have separated “the nature of enquiry” and the related methodological concepts into two distinct traditions of quantitative and qualitative research.

While the latter is not theoretically or intellectually unified, scholars of educational research (Cohen et al., 2000; Bryant, 1996; and Rhoads and Black, 1997) agree on the major influence of one particular stream within the anti-positivist approach: critical theory. As a paradigm in which educational research is conducted, critical theory has provided a theoretical grounding to link scholarly endeavour and practice. As explained by Rhoads and Black (1997, p. 438), critical theory focuses on the concept of democracy and on “modernity’s power to limit human justice, equality and freedom” through the competition of different social groups “to legitimise their own versions of social reality.” The acknowledgement of a power imbalance helps in the understanding of the existing limitations to participatory democracy. Through the study of these limitations, critical theorists aim to deconstruct social reality and emphasise the cultural conditions that can be influenced in order to restore the balance and make provision for the participation of all members in an egalitarian society.

Similarly, Cohen et al. (2000, pp. 27-30) elaborate on the substantive agenda of critical theory by explicating its emancipatory intention “not merely to give an account of society and behaviour but to realise a society that is based on equality and democracy for all its members. Its purpose is not merely to understand situations and phenomena but to change them.” In doing so, critical theory recognises the existence and dominance of specific interests in specific situations, which determine what is accepted and defended as knowledge. From this perspective, social research (and, by extension, educational research) is an integrative approach to scientific inquiry that combines elements of the:

- (i) objectivist (positivist) school of thought—studying what may be predictable and controllable in a given paradigm;
- (ii) subjectivist (anti-positivist) approach which emphasises contextual understanding and interpretation and uncovers meanings and values; and, taking the anti-positivist approach a step further,
- (iii) action-oriented research that is conscious of ideology and is concerned with changing the practice in an ideologically-critical style.

Cohen et al. go on to emphasise the significance of critical theory for research and for the role of the researcher in the educational context. By adopting the “transformative” intention of critical theory, “researchers can no longer claim neutrality and ideological or political innocence” (2000, p. 28). Given the contexts in which much of the research on higher education originates—government regulations, stakeholder interests, effectiveness, efficiency and accountability—and analysing it in the theoretical framework of critical theory means to recognise its inherent evaluative aspect. However, to define educational research as a continuous examination aimed at understanding, analysis and improvement, also taking into account social realities and power structures, reconciles some of the tensions between ‘pure’ research and research with a special agenda which is acknowledged and is part of the research process.

3.4. Methodological framework

Cohen et al. (2000), Carr and Kemmis (1986) and Bryant (1996) associate critical theory with the methodological framework of action research. While Punch (1998, p. 143) relates action research to the feminist school of thought within the anti-positivist mode of inquiry, all agree on its transformational (change for improvement) and emancipatory (change for empowerment) purpose.

The recognition of action research as a methodology has been slow due to its origin in practical local situations as a form of solving specific problems by the practitioners involved in them. Although a “systematic, reflective and critical inquiry” (Carr and Kemmis, 1986, p. 40), it was considered a common-sense approach to analysing and coping with everyday situations. On the other hand, the suggestion for practitioners to delve into their complex immediate reality, in a rigorous and systematic manner, in order to understand and improve this reality, is of immense appeal to researchers in higher education. It gives an acknowledgement to the acquired knowledge and expertise of those working in the field and a framework of “disciplined inquiry” (Cohen et al. p. 226). where these may be put to use in the interests of the unit, organisation or system. Action research also connects the roles of practitioners and researchers in a reflexive continuum whereby one role constantly informs the other, thus resolving some of the contradictions arising out of the question whether practitioners are qualified to do research and whether researchers are qualified to inform practice.

Earlier definitions of action research draw primarily on case studies of the teacher-researcher (Kelly, 1985) or on research carried out by practitioners into their own practices (Kemmis, 1993, as quoted by Bryant, 1996, p. 110). Kelly, however, developed her research practice into a broader understanding of this methodology as an investigative framework of organisational and social processes where “action research aims at increased understanding of a given social situation and is primarily applicable for the understanding of change processes in social systems” (Kelly, 1985, p. 132).

In my view, this definition provides an explanation to the limitations of the initial descriptions of action research. One is the fact that it is couched in terms of problem-solving, rather than as a methodology for organisations and institutions of higher education to manage themselves through continuous self-learning and rigorous self-assessment. The second is the implied short-term nature of action research: through its definition of problem-solving in an immediate situation, its long-term potential as periodic analysis of institutional practices is under-explored. Applied in the broader sense introduced by Hult and Lennung (1980, quoted by Kelly, 1985, p. 132), action research is “a powerful tool for change and improvement” that can be used across institutional structures to study the processes of teaching and learning, and the effectiveness of institutional operations and management.

3.5. Choosing the research method for this study

Guided by the understanding of higher education research as an inquiry into real life situations, evolving from—and dependent upon—specific organisational and broader national and international contexts, and taking into account the evaluative purpose of the research question, I adopted critical theory and action research as the theoretical and methodological framework for this research project. Having identified the relevance of this study and the areas where literature sources are lacking, the outcome of this project is intended to inform both policy and practice and to offer some suggestions for organisational change.

For a specific method, I chose multiple case studies research, because of its comparative perspective on phenomena in similar organisational settings, and the possibility to replicate and check the validity of findings from one case study against those of the other cases. I chose this method also in acknowledgement of the fact that institutional development and change is a complex process which can be explored, described or explained within specific internal and external circumstances, which neither the researcher, nor the researched subject, can control for the purposes of the research project. As suggested by Yin (1994, p. 1), “case studies are the preferred strategy when ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon

within some real-life context.” Similarly, Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 25) define a case as “a phenomenon of some sort occurring in a bounded context.”

The reviewed literature on case study research posits this method as a form of qualitative inquiry, which has become common in education research. However, there seems to be no agreement on the scope of case study research. Some authors focus on the case study method as the portrayal, analysis and interpretation of unique real life situations, emphasising the value of the single case and what can be learned from it (Cohen et al, 2000, p. 79). Stake (1995, p. xi) also defines case study as “the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances.” Similarly, Bogdan and Biklen (2003, p. 54) define the case study as “a detailed examination of one setting, or a single subject, or one particular event.”

On the other hand, Ragin and Becker (1992, pp. 4-5) warn against conflating qualitative study with case study as a rhetoric which only “increases the perception that different kinds of social science are irreconcilable.” In their view, “in most variable-oriented work, investigators begin by defining the problem in a way that allows examination of many cases (conceived as empirical units or observations); then they specify the relevant variables, matched to theoretical concepts; and finally they collect information on these variables, usually one variable at a time—not one case at a time.” Merriam (1998, pp. 18-19) takes this idea further by pointing out that “case studies can be very quantitative and can test theory”, but “in education they are likely to be qualitative.” In this assumption she aligns case studies with “a variety of disciplinary perspectives: qualitative case studies in education are often framed with the concepts, models and theories from anthropology, history, sociology, psychology and educational psychology.” However, despite the prevalence of case studies in education, Merriam notes that literature on case study methodology is scant.

Despite the difference of opinions on the case study as a method of inquiry, it has established itself as a “research strategy” in areas of policy, planning, and administration research, in the professional fields, as well as in organisational and management studies, and dissertations and theses in social sciences (Yin, 1994, p. 1). The Literature Review Chapter of this dissertation abounds in case study reports,

particularly with regard to the examination of change and transformation, examined in a comparative or international perspective. For example, in adopting the case study method, Brennan and Shah (2000, p. 3) justify its use in the richness of sources and contexts it yields: “The framework for the institutional case studies comprised the following elements: contexts, internal quality assurance methods, impact upon management and decision-making, other kinds of impact, departmental case studies, interpretation of outcomes of quality assessment... A related framework for the national agency reports comprised contexts, audiences for quality assessment, ... effects on management and decision-making, ... system-wide outcomes, political and social support. Both frameworks emphasised the importance of considering all of the suggested elements in the context of institutional and system change.”

This implied versatility of the case study method is strengthened by “its ability to deal with a full variety of evidence: documents, artefacts, interviews, and observations” (Yin, 1994, p. 8). Moreover, Yin and Miles and Huberman agree on using multiple case studies as an expanded form of inquiry: “with much recent practice to support us, we argue that multiple cases offer the researcher an even deeper understanding of processes and outcomes of cases, the chance to test (not just develop) hypotheses, and a good picture of locally grounded causality” (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p. 26).

3.5.1. The case study method vs. grounded theory

Depending on the type of questions being asked in a given case study research, for example “what”, “how” or “why”, Yin (1994, pp. 1-3) distinguishes case studies as “descriptive”, “explanatory” or “exploratory”, emphasising that case studies can serve all three purposes both individually and simultaneously. Considering the other main characteristics of the case study method—investigation of events in real-life context, when the boundaries between events and context are not clear, and when the study may collect many variables of interest (p. 13)—Yin points to other approaches used in such circumstances: ethnography and “grounded theory”, particularly for research topics where “the existing knowledge base may be poor and the available literature will provide no conceptual framework or hypotheses of note” (Yin, 1994,

pp. 27-28) or where knowledge of the subject is “shallow, fragmentary, incomplete or non-existent” (Punch, 1998, p.155).

Given the scant literature sources on the topic of student support services in continental Europe and this project’s reliance on direct observation and data from the field of practice, at the outset I thought that planning the research design would benefit from using either the exploratory case study method or grounded theory. In fact, my preparation for the data analysis process was informed by techniques used in both methods. However, Wengraf’s (2001) distinction between the collection of data and the interpretation of data helped me to clarify the choice of the exploratory case study as more appropriate for the purposes of this research.

While Wengraf notes that “getting a better understanding of reality” may involve both “inductivist” and “deductivist” moments when actually doing the research, he makes a clear distinction between the “hypothetico-inductivist” model (the original “grounded theory” model introduced by Glaser and Strauss, 1968), where “the researcher collects all the relevant facts, examines them to see what theory is suggested by this set of all relevant facts”, and then formulates theory using the process of induction. On the other hand, “the hypothetico-deductivist” model assumes that “there is no such thing as *all the relevant facts*, there are only *hypothesis-relevant facts*, and that research must start with a body of prior theory, if only to decide which set of *collectable* facts should be collected or generated.” (2001, pp. 1-3)

Similarly, Yin (1994, pp. 20-29) advises on the need to formulate propositions and to construct “a preliminary theory” before the beginning of data collection, to guide the research project and to enable “a narrowing of the relevant data” so that it can be linked to the study propositions. This aspect of the case study method, in his view, sets it apart from ethnography or “grounded theory”.

In my case, although the literature sources on the topic of student services in continental Europe were limited, the consulted literature published in the United States, my previous observations and direct experience in managing a student services programme, gave me an adequate base to formulate a set of initial hypotheses for the design of the case study. In retrospect, the choice of the exploratory case study

method was justified because without the formulation of these hypotheses, which I set out to examine and test, I would have found it impossible to create any structure from the enormous amount of data I collected, or to set the limits of the enquiry, both with regard to time and in terms of relevance. At the same time, “grounded theory” analysis techniques yielded many helpful practical suggestions (especially Auerbach and Silverstein, 2003) for data coding and interpretation. Because of its open-ended nature, I did not select “grounded theory” as the research method for this study; it nevertheless contributed to my research through the rigour of its data collection and analysis techniques.

3.5.2. Multiple case studies vs. in-depth surveys

An important aspect of this research project was its intention to explore practices by comparing them in different organisational settings. Another approach that I considered at the research design stage was that of combining document research with in-depth surveys to be conducted from a distance. This method would have involved prior desk research, formulation of hypotheses and a set of corresponding survey questions to be administered to “discrete comparison groups” (Punch, 1998, p. 76). At the outset of the research project, conducting an in-depth survey appeared to have the advantages of being able to collect data from a larger group of participants, in their “natural setting” (*ibid*, p. 150), with a focus on factual rather than interpretative data. However, I heeded Punch’s definition of the survey method as a “descriptive” study (*ibid*, p. 78), which would have provided me with solid data on facts and opinions as they are in a given timeframe, but I would not have been able to study the individual contexts of the research sites. Relying only on survey results would have put more emphasis on my own interpretations, which—given my initial position of advocacy—I wanted to moderate via direct experience.

Conducting surveys had other practical problems which I had to take into account. One was ensuring adequate participation rates from the different comparison groups. For example, I knew I could not survey all students, all faculty or all administrators of the selected higher education institutions. I would have to create a sample large enough to yield at least a 30% response rate, while at the same time, there was the risk of having different response rates from the various comparison

groups which would have impeded the process of drawing reliable or statistically significant conclusions. Having organised and conducted three large-scale surveys at CEU, I was also concerned about the process of piloting the survey on one group of respondents (for example, from CEU) and then administering it in other institutions where contexts and circumstances might be quite different. The factor of conducting a survey in English, which would be a second language for all participants, was also a possible source of misunderstandings.

With these considerations in mind, opting for the multiple case studies method allowed me to design the project based upon prior and continuous concurrent document research of national and individual institutional contexts, including self-generated reports, longitudinal monitoring of the selected higher education institutions over a period of two years, site visits, interviews and focus group discussions, and subsequent contacts with interviewed participants for clarification purposes. The possibility of applying the same case study design to different natural contexts, using the “replication logic” (Yin, 1994, p. 45), was also important for the validity of the findings. As Yin explains, “a major insight is to consider multiple cases as one would consider multiple experiments. This is far different from ... the ‘sampling’ logic. ... Each case must be carefully selected so that it either (a) predicts similar results (a literal replication) or (b) produces contrasting results but for predictable reasons (a theoretical replication). ... If all cases turn out as predicted, in the aggregate [they] would have provided compelling support for the initial set of propositions” (*ibid*, pp. 45-46).

3.5.3. Problems with case study research

As reported earlier in this section, despite the widespread use of case studies in education research, different reports (Cohen et al, 2000; Stake, 1995; Ragin and Becker, 1992; Merriam, 1998) suggest that some researchers would consider the case study as a very specific, narrow, situation-oriented examination of ‘a single case’ which aims to inform and improve practice in the given circumstances but may not necessarily lead to generalisation.

Yin (1994, p. 10) and Punch (1998, pp. 153-156) consider the issue of generalisability in depth. As Punch summarised, some authors (Stake, for example) consider a case study from its unique perspective ('intrinsic', 'negative', 'instrumental') and do not seek to make generalisations but rather to enlighten or increase knowledge about a specific situation. However, the growing body of research in 'cases from the field' (for example, Dolence, 1996; Rodgers and Zimar, 2004; Westman and Bouman, 2005, 2007; Kelo, 2006, EUA's *Trends* reports) suggests that compilations of individual case studies may have broader implications to guide both practice and policy. In this, Punch agrees with Yin that case studies "can produce generalisable results" by means of conceptualisation and developing propositions (1998, p. 154) which can be tested by further case studies, multiple case studies, as well as other research methods. In addition, Punch argues that generalisation is not a mechanical process but part of the research objectives: when common elements can be found in different case studies, generalisation can be reached via conducting the analysis at a higher level of conceptual abstraction (for example, analytic or theory-connected generalisation, and case-to-case transfer). He also notes the widespread use of case studies in professional training (business, law, medicine and nursing, public administration, and social work) as a way of preparing future professionals to handle situations they will encounter in practice: "this clearly underlines the potential generalisability of knowledge built from case studies" (*ibid*, p. 155).

Other criticisms of the case study method are related to the rigour of research and the potential for bias (Yin, 1994, pp. 9-10). In part, both stem from the general epistemological concerns about qualitative research, which Punch (1998, pp. 139-140) defines as diversity of paradigms and perspectives, resulting in multidimensional and pluralistic approaches to complex social behaviour. Moreover, in common with Cohen et. al (2000, p. 38), Punch (*ibid*) recognises the "political nature of social research—a human construction, framed and presented within a particular set of discourses (and sometimes ideologies), and conducted in a social context with certain sorts of social arrangements, involving especially funding, cognitive authority and power." Given that research methods and styles themselves can be seen from this "politicised perspective" as non-neutral, this may lead to the suppression of a large area of knowledge as non-scientific. To counteract this, and specifically with regard to the case study method, Punch (1998, p. 156) proposes that it is "important to be clear

on the rationale behind the case study, and on its purposes. That means developing research questions to guide the study, either ahead of it or as focal points in the case become clear.”

Addressing the question of rigour through design, formulation of propositions and research questions, still does not deal with the problem of bias which may occur owing to the dynamic nature of the studied situation and the implicit evaluative aspects of the research. As Brennan and Shah (2000, p. 3) introduced their study, frequently authors of case studies are staff members of their institutions, who—depending on their seniority—might be providing the “official position”, or a “perspective reflecting their position and interests within the institution.” As such, case studies could be interpreted as a form of advocacy, influenced—for example—by the conscious selection of cases and research questions.

In this respect, this research project contains an element of advocacy, following from the position that research in higher education should have policy and practice implications.

3.6. Choosing the cases for this research project

Having formulated the research problem and hypotheses (section 1.3. - Research problem and hypotheses), I decided to select several institutions in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and develop my project in the form of parallel case studies of evolving student expectations and institutional responses. In the introductory chapter I explained my decision not to use my own institution as a case study in itself (section 1.6.). I was aware that CEU’s experience was unique in the region and that I should not seek to compare its institutional practices with those of other institutions.

Judging from the interest in the topic of student support services from national universities in CEE and beyond, and the observed lack of such services, I turned my attention to examining existing practices and specific changes with regard to student support in the context of larger national higher education system reforms. From my presentations (see *Appendix I*) and informal discussions on the topic of student services with many university officials, I knew that there was an audience of higher

education policy-makers, administrators, and students, interested in, or already in the process of, implementing change and seeking to improve their administrative structures.

With this aim, I sought to identify my cases from among the well-established national universities, with longer traditions and much larger student populations. Owing to the uniformity of the entire education system in Central and Eastern Europe under the socialist period and into the 1990s (Berryman, 2000), any random selection of countries and comprehensive national universities would have provided a comparison group for the purposes, and along the parameters, of this exploratory study.

To narrow the selection, it was therefore important to examine some additional factors, such as availability of information in English, prior published research which would help to formulate some propositions, openness of the institutions to participate in the study, and the identification of key informants with whom to consult throughout the research project.

3.6.1. Four countries, four cases

For a broader regional perspective, I thought of selecting cases from several countries, which had formally joined the Bologna process and initiated higher education reforms at the national level. Without any particular country in mind at the outset, my first step was to carry out preliminary research on existing information about the process of higher education transition, availability of sources in English, and to make some informal inquiries among universities about their potential interest in participating in this study.

The initial literature scan revealed a higher frequency of published English-language articles and reports on Hungary, Romania and the countries of South-East Europe (primarily former Yugoslavia). More notably, these were the publications of UNESCO-CEPES³⁵, among which *Ten Years After and Looking Ahead* (2000), Campbell and Rozsnyai (2002), Taylor and Miroiu (2002), Vlasceanu and Barrows

³⁵ <http://www.cepes.ro/publications/Default.htm>

(2004), Quandt (2002), Marga (2004a and 2004b), and articles published in *Higher Education in Europe*. Based upon these initial findings, I selected four countries: **Hungary, Romania, Croatia and Serbia**. This selection had the added value of examining trends within countries which had signed the Bologna declaration over a period of four years as follows: Hungary and Romania as initial signatories in 1999, Croatia in 2001, and Serbia in 2003.

Inquiries through a number of professional contacts—presenters at EAIR, CEU faculty members, students, and visiting professors from these four countries—led me to summarise a list of common features to look for when selecting specific universities as case studies. My interest was to identify institutions, which had:

- i) developed an awareness of problems and deficiencies in their administrative operations;
- ii) consciously and purposefully engaged in a continuous process of self-study, strategic planning, international evaluations and internal reform efforts;
- iii) created a supportive culture for conducting institutional research (in English) by:
 - making available the findings from internal and external evaluations;
 - providing translations of their organisational by-laws and other documents (in some cases also the national higher education law);
 - maintaining researchable institutional websites.

These criteria led me to four institutions: **Babes-Bolyai University (Romania), the University of Debrecen (Hungary), the University of Novi Sad (Serbia), and the University of Zagreb (Croatia)**. My further inquiries about the willingness of these institutions to participate in this research project suggested strong interest in the topic, and openness to further self-examination and sharing of information. The formal agreement to conduct the research was facilitated by the Vice-Rectors for International Affairs (Debrecen and Zagreb), the UNESCO Chair of Higher Education (Babes-Bolyai), and the Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee of the University of Novi Sad. Negotiating access and site visits to the four universities did not meet with any obstacles (see *Appendix VII*).

3.7. Research design

3.7.1. Propositions and research questions

Following the versatility of techniques incorporated by the case study method and the suggested use of “multiple sources of evidence” (Yin, 1994, p. 90), I prepared a short research objectives paper for each institution, including the topic of research, a set of propositions, and a number of specific questions (see *Appendix VIII*). In order to replicate the study in all four institutions, I used an identical set of propositions and questions in each paper. The questions became the basis for the interviews during the site visits. The suggested research protocol included document research, direct observation through a site visit, face-to-face interviews with key informants and a purposefully selected group of administrators, professors and students, document research after the site visit, and analysis of the data from the interviews.

3.7.2. Selection of informants

In addition to consulting with key informants from each university, all of whom were senior professors in “Vice-Rector” or “Chair” positions, I adopted the technique of “purposeful selection” of interviewees, as suggested by Wengraf (2001, pp. 95-96) and Silverman (2000, p. 104). In Wengraf’s view, in qualitative research interviewing “there is an obvious interaction between the selection of the type of informant and the development of a sequence of interview questions appropriate for them.” He therefore advises against random selection of informants in favour of individuals who have sufficient experience in the subject area, who are willing to share this experience and are likely to do so in an honest manner.

Following this recommendation to adopt a specific procedure for the selection of interviewees, I made some preliminary decisions:

- i) narrow the possible group of interviewees to individuals in leadership positions and unit managers;
- ii) interview roughly the same number of representatives from three categories: academics, administrators, and students;

iii) as much as possible, select these representatives from similar academic fields of study, for example humanities and social sciences. As it turned out, this was not always possible because some Vice-Rectors or elected student leaders came from other fields, such as sciences, architecture or dentistry, which ultimately added to the richness of the collected data and the possibility to compare and triangulate findings across different fields of study.

I studied in detail the individual organisational structures of the four universities (based upon information available on the institutional websites) and pre-selected a list of interviewees following the above criteria, whose names were included in each research objectives paper (see *Appendix IX*). All four institutions complied with my request and arranged interviews with the selected individuals. All site visits were conducted on the basis of a formal programme/itinerary (see *Appendix X*). In addition, some universities voluntarily added units such as their Library, invited more students, arranged for a relevant substitute interviewee in these cases where the requested individuals were absent during the site visit, and also included an extensive tour of their campuses, some social events and informal interaction which provided the additional benefit of thorough direct observation.

3.8. Data collection

The data collection process for this project was carried out over a period of 18 months, based upon data gathered through document reviews, site-visits and interviews between May 2004 and February 2005, post site-visit research of the collected documents, and longitudinal monitoring of the institutional websites. I stopped collecting further institutional data in November 2006.

3.8.1. Review of documents

Throughout the research project, I referred to a number of documents. Among them: institutional documents, publications (printed and on-line), websites, reports, plans, communiqués, internal procedures, and other materials which were produced for official use and circulation in the name of the university; external evaluation

reports and published articles specifically on these four universities; periodic national reports on the Bologna progress; reports of the relevant Ministry of Education; higher education laws; and external assessments of the national higher education systems. A full list of the materials consulted for each case study is available in *Appendix XI*.

These documents provided a significant and voluminous textual evidence of the national and the organisational set-up, functioning, internal and external assessment. They served a useful purpose in the beginning to help formulate the research objectives and questions, contained a body of factual information, which made it possible to trace reform processes, and also enabled the cross-reference, verification and validation of the interview findings. In this regard, an important consideration for the objectivity of this study was the possibility to compare the “documentary reality” in which organisations and settings represent themselves in an official manner (Atkinson and Coffey, 1997, pp. 45-46) against self-critical internal reports and institutional evaluations.

3.8.2. Site visits, interviews and direct observation

Having obtained the universities’ consent to participate in the study, and their assistance in organising the interviews, I visited each institution for two-three days and conducted a total of 41 formal interviews with 85 participants as follows (see *Appendix XII* for a detailed list of the interviewees):

3.8.2.1. Site Visits

Table 2. Site Visits Schedules

Institution	Visit	Interviews
University of Zagreb, Croatia	13-14 May 2004	12
Babes-Bolyai University, Romania	20-21 May 2004	8
University of Novi Sad, Serbia	20-21 January 2005	11
University of Debrecen, Hungary	7-8 February 2005	10
Total Number of Interviews		41

Appendix XII provides a list of all interview participants. Although the number of formal interviews at Babes-Bolyai University, Romania, is lower than the other three cases, I was able to visit this institution again in September 2004 and interview

again three key informants from the first visit who also provided me with additional documents. In November 2007, I revisited the University of Zagreb as a participant in a Tempus project on developing university counselling and advisory services. In her opening remarks at the first meeting of the collaborating institutions, one of the key informants from this university attributed the conception of this project to my visit there in 2004. I will be presenting the findings of my research at a national conference in Croatia in October 2008.

3.8.2.2. Summary of Interviewees by Category

Table 3. Interviewees by Category

Institution	Deans*	Administrators	Students	Others**	Total
University of Zagreb * Including 1 Vice-Rector and the former Minister of HE	6	8	9	3	26
Babes Bolyai University * Including 1 Vice-Rector	2	5	5	0	12
University of Novi Sad * Including the Rector and 1 former Vice-Rector	6	7	12	0	25
University of Debrecen * Including 1 Vice-Rector	4	11	5	2	22
Total	18	31	31	5	85
In Percent	21%	36%	36%	6%	100%

** *Zagreb: Interview with Student Information Centre, NGO; Debrecen: Interview with Library Director and staff member*

3.8.2.3. Conducting the Interviews

After consulting several authors on the technique of conducting interviews (Punch, 1998; Silverman, 2000; Cohen et al, 2000; and Wengraf, 2001), I took special care in the preparation stage to ensure that each interviewee received a copy of the research objectives paper and questions well in advance of the actual interview. Knowing that the knowledge base or perceptions about what **student services** mean may vary with the individual, I also provided a description of student services as defined for this project (see *Appendix VIII*). Each interview was structured to last approximately 45 minutes with those who spoke English, and about one hour where simultaneous translation was necessary. All interviewees agreed to have the conversation taped.

As Silverman (2000, p. 35) warns, it is impossible to predict and control the interview process completely: “what happens ‘in the field’ as you attempt to gather your data is itself a source of data rather than just a technical problem in need of a solution.” Indeed, I met with two types of obstacles during the interview process: the interviewee’s knowledge of English and the pre-conceptions formed before the meeting.

Although the majority of interviewees spoke fluent English, in several cases it was necessary to use an interpreter; on three occasions—with different interpreters—I was not able to follow the translated answers. This also left me in some uncertainty whether the interviewee understood the questions. Since I was recording the interviews, I decided to let the interviewees speak in their native language and dealt with this issue at the time of transcribing the material by having native speakers (a Hungarian and a Romanian student, both from CEU) translate the whole taped text into English.

A second unexpected problem came from a situation which I saw as significant in itself: some interviewees became so engaged in the topic that they either prepared their statements in advance or went on talking for a considerable time after the interview was supposed to end. In the first instance, I was unable to ask my questions in their planned order: I followed the monologue, with occasional interjections in an effort to clarify a point. In the second, two interviewees who initially remained distant and showed little interest in the topic completely changed their attitude by the end of the interview. It appeared to me that, in the course of our conversation, the interviewees gleaned answers to questions which had been on their mind and they ‘warmed up’ to the role of student services as a potential answer to these questions. As a result, they insisted on elaborating additional points which were not included in the structured interview. What was even more interesting, they did not ask to speak ‘off the record’ but allowed me to tape their statements in full. Both instances baffled me at the time of the interviews but, upon reflection, this level of engagement on the part of the participants confirmed my decision to ground the project in action research with its implicit emancipatory/change function.

For some interviews, especially with the students, it turned out that more participants had signed up than just those I initially suggested. In two cases, there were six students present for a scheduled interview with one. Though this was unexpected, I welcomed all participants and adopted a more loose structure for the conversation, in the form of a focus group discussion. In the data analysis stage, these two interviews became significant by revealing how students influence, disagree or argue with each other, and how political activism may influence (negatively) other forms of student involvement. One other interview was organised so that the three categories of interviewees (deans, administrators, and students) were present together. In this instance, although the interview proceeded in a very relaxed and friendly manner, there was an obvious dominance of the position taken by the dean.

In the special cases described above, where I could not manage the course or outcome of the interview/discussion, I was aware of the potential for reflexive bias in the recorded statements. To balance this, I also relied on direct observation and the extent to which non-verbal signs such as formality vs. informality in communication, physical office location, condition of the facilities, room decoration vs. bare walls, level of student noise/activity, confirmed the information collected from the interviews or the institutional documents.

3.8.3. Data processing and systematisation

All 41 interviews were taped and I transcribed them *ad verbatim*, in altogether 364 pages. In the cases where the interview was conducted with the help of an interpreter, a second transcriber—speaker of the native language—was engaged, with the task of translating directly the remarks of the interviewee. I sent each complete transcript by email individually to the 85 interviewees, with the following information:

As required by formal research protocol, attached I am sending you the full transcript from our meeting which I had taped. I should be grateful if you could confirm this information and provide your consent via return email that I can use the data for my research. Please be advised that if I do not hear from you, I will consider that you agree with the attached material. I should also welcome your additional comments or information on further developments since our meeting and conversation.

A few words on how the data will be used: I shall use the text first to identify relevant passages and repeating ideas that will lead me to more abstract themes and theoretical constructs. I will not reveal the interviewees' identity but categorise the list of interviewed individuals by their position, i.e. professor, administrator, student, with full consideration to ethical use of material and confidentiality.

In the cases of those who did not speak English, I sent the transcript to the interpreter. Using the properties of the email system, I was able to see that all transcripts, except for two, were transferred/delivered to the addressee. Two transfers (to a student and a dean) failed, most likely owing to a change of the email address. Altogether 14 persons responded, of whom eight accepted the transcript as sent, and six made minor changes.

As to the collected documents, I organised those in chronological order, marked all relevant passages and typed them up in an electronic “materials” file for each university, a total of 210 pages.

All documents: formal site visit programme, list of interviewees, interview transcripts, related email correspondence, the “materials” file, including the institutional documents and field notes, are bound together for each university/case study. Because of their size, they cannot be attached as electronic appendixes to this dissertation, but are available for review at CHEMPaS.

3.9. Analysis

With the exception of the variations in the interview process described in the preceding section, the interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner, following the questions, and within the allocated time frame. The transcripts were therefore relatively easy to manage in terms of the sequence of topics discussed. To begin the data analysis, I followed the process of thorough reading and re-reading of the texts, recommended by Auerbach and Silverstein (2003, p. 43) in grounded theory research. Following their practical advice on how to move from “raw text” to “relevant text” to “repeating ideas” and to “themes”, I began to identify common statements, factual data, perceptions, as well as common misunderstandings, and to group them in categories of answers to the specific questions asked.

To proceed from the raw data to a conceptual level of data display, I developed a list of 45 topics, within six main themes (*Table 4*), which integrated the interview questions (*Appendix VIII*). Using the coding technique suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994, pp. 50-83), Coffey and Atkinson (1996, pp. 26-45), and Auerbach and Silverstein (2003, pp. 31-57) as a way to simplify and organise data, each topic was assigned a code and related to one of the main themes. An alternative to the coding technique, suggested by Yin (1994, pp. 70-71) and Wengraf (2001, pp 318-319), was an approach to the data from the types of questions asked, by categorising them into hierarchical levels of specificity vs. more general, all-inclusive and normative questions. Having become ‘grounded’ in the data, however, and taking into account the open-ended nature of some of the interviews, I found the coding technique more adaptable to capturing the richness of the raw data, especially as I became aware of new topics which had not been part of my propositions, and of findings which did not support all of the propositions.

Following each theme, I developed a detailed list of 45 topics, and assigned a code to each topic (*Appendix XIII*). An extract from this list is presented in *Table 4*.

Table 4. Themes and Topics (sample) for the analysis process

Theme_Topic _ Code	Theme_Name (6)	Topic_Name (45)
T101, ...	Factors of institutional change: Changes in the organisational and management structure of the institution/faculty (Q 1 and 2)	Result of external factors (e.g. law, change of statutes, external review and recommendations, etc)
T201, ...	The role of student services - institutional awareness; student expectations: Awareness of the importance of student support services in relation to student expectations (Q 3, 8, 11, 12)	Interviewee was surprised by the topic, made special comments
T301, ...	Assessment of student services: Description of student services and location in the university structure (Q 4 and 5)	Types of student services
T401, ...	Cases of transformation: The role and evolution of student services in university management and strategic planning (Q 6 and 7)	Involvement of Rector/Vice-Rector
T501, ...	The role of the students: Student involvement and communication between university and students (Q 9 and 10)	Formal channels – documents, results, feedback: PRO-ACTIVE
T602, ...	Institutional self-assessment: Attitudes, awareness, and self-assessment of critical issues in university management, governance and the university experience in relation to students and student services (Q 11 and 12)	Positive/passive: students are encouraged but the university does not get involved in student activities (giving freedom to students)

During the third and fourth reading of the interview transcripts, I marked the relevant passages, according to the theme and topic, and assigned a code to each of them. To further organise the coded data, I followed Swift's advice to design a "coding frame: a matrix, recording the raw data in a way that we can recognise, based on a set of instructions to transform the raw data into codes, and to identify the location of all variables" (Swift, 1996, p. 153-183). This approach also allowed a cross-coding of the interviewees, in order to make their identity anonymous and reference them by number of interview and by category.

Following from this, I designed a Coding Frame in an Excel table where all relevant passages, in the form of quotes, were coded and transferred, along with the specific source of the quote. The actual transfer from Word format into the Excel table gave me another opportunity to continuously examine the raw text. Altogether, the Coding Frame includes 979 quotes. Using the 'Filter' and 'Sort' functions of

Excel, each column of the table allowed for discrete organisation (sorting) of the quotes according to many parameters (e.g. interview number, quote number, actual quote, category of the respondent, individual respondent code, institution, topic and theme) which facilitated frequency counts and the analytical process of testing out themes against propositions (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p. 10). Throughout the data reduction process, I remained close to the actual text and did not paraphrase or “transform” the quotes (*ibid*), so that they could be used as direct citations and be easily traced back to their sources. The complete Coding Frame table is available for review at CHEMPaS.

Based upon the initial propositions and the thematic grouping of the data according to the specific interview questions, I began to match the data to my predicted outcomes and to isolate the new findings. This study, owing to its exploratory nature, offered many findings which were not predicted. Where it became obvious that new topics were emerging or that the initial set of assumptions was not supported by the findings, I took special care to look for data and examine frequencies across all four cases.

Writing up the findings took four iterations. I began by summarising the interview data; when the first draft was completed, the patterns identified from this source were examined against, and complemented by, evidence from the document research or direct observations. In some instances, this led to re-organisation of the analysis or to further search for sources to explain or clarify certain points. The findings common to all four cases became the basis for the content of Chapter 4. Findings common to at least two institutions were treated with respect to nationally or regionally specific circumstances, while those which were identified as significant in one institution only were set aside to be reported as special cases (see section 4.6. - Cases of transformation).

3.9.1. Reliability and validity

Authors on qualitative research methods emphasise repeatedly the importance of rigour in the research and analysis process so that findings and conclusions are reliable and valid. As Punch (1998, p. 259) explained, “a strength of qualitative data,

and often a reason for adopting a qualitative approach, is to see a phenomenon in its context, to study it both holistically and in detail. If the aim of the research is to obtain rich, holistic data, then it needs to be asked, and demonstrated, how well this was done. The central issue is: did the research provide a sufficient description of the context to enable the reader to judge both the validity and transferability of the study's findings." In this sense, Punch described reliability and validity as "technical issues about the quality of the data."

Each of the reviewed literature sources on qualitative research offered definitions of these terms (Yin, 1994, pp. 32-38; Miles and Huberman, 1994, pp. 245-287; Merriam, 1998, pp. 198-205; Cohen et al., 2000, pp. 105-133; Silverman, 2000, pp. 175-188; Bogdan and Biklen, 2003, pp. 35-36). Having consulted these sources, the following description served as a good guide for me in organising and conducting the research process: "reliability refers to the consistency of a test or assessment instrument over repeated administrations", while "validity refers to the integrity of the instrument—does it measure what it was designed to measure or does it actually measure something else?" (*Student Learning Assessment*, 2003, pp. 34-35).

Yin (1994, p. 45) and Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 29) also use the term "replication". The latter argue that the multiple case study method "strengthens the precision, stability, ... and adds confidence to the findings." Following the idea of repeated administrations (or replication) as a source of reliability of the data and findings, I adhered strictly to the research protocol outlined in the research objectives paper for each visited institution. The same method of data and document collection, analysis and drawing conclusions was applied in all four cases, supplemented by literature review on broader questions such as national and international developments. All steps of the research process were fully documented and are available to be used by other researchers who may want to repeat the study with other cases.

With regard to demonstrating the validity of the data, I chose the method of "triangulation" suggested by Silverman (2000, p. 98), by using a combination of data collection techniques and also by sequencing them in a strict order: literature review; direct observation of the context (throughout recruitment visits before the case studies

were chosen, which helped to define the research topic); study of institutional websites; purposeful selection of cases; site visits, interviews and direct observation; study of collected institutional documents; and continuous parallel monitoring of institutional websites, which lent a longitudinal aspect to the research process, so that findings could also be confirmed over a period of time.

Throughout the research project, I was aware of its closeness to “grounded theory” research. Indeed, as I mentioned in section 3.5.1.- The case study method vs. grounded theory, many of the initial data processing techniques were borrowed from this method. Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 11) comment on the presence of the ‘inductive’ approach to the data in qualitative analysis. However, from the outset I relied on my prior knowledge of the contexts to be investigated and I formed propositions for testing, in order to have some expected conclusions “pre-figured at the beginning” (*ibid*). My initial hypotheses gave structure to the study and enabled anticipation of some patterns and explanations, leading to possible conclusions, which the protocol of repeated investigation through multiple case studies has helped to confirm.

I believe this study utilized the three forms of knowledge creation, suggested by Jarvis (1999, pp. 41-42): the *rationalist* approach, which led to theoretical speculation and hypotheses formulation; the *empirical* approach, which relied on concrete data gathered in a rigorous and methodical manner; and the *pragmatist* approach, which integrated empirical evidence with the context—its inherent values, specific content and processes. In my view, the organisation, management and delivery of student services in Central and Eastern Europe are still positioned in the realm of “practical” and “tacit knowledge” as defined by Jarvis (1999, pp. 41-49); this research project attempted to provoke a reflection of practice, explicate processes taken for granted, and theorise on a possible re-positioning within the institutional structures.

3.10. Making choices and setting the limits – my development as a researcher

The process of data gathering and analysis turned out to be a fascinating personal experience: I was surprised by the openness of the people I interviewed and their readiness for self-critique in a regional culture of modesty, acceptance of things as they are, and tendency to follow directions and orders. I anticipated that my research questions might meet with uncertainty, misunderstandings or rejection of these ‘American ideas, which are not applicable to our situation’: I did not want my research to be taken as a criticism. The literature review provided me with a historical perspective on the region, which many of the interviews confirmed. However, as I moved from one interview to the next, and from one institution to another, I met with support and positive encouragement ‘to show a way and help us do things better’ which increased my confidence as an advocate of the profession. I realise now that my professional experience and the wealth of information I collected through this project stimulated my own development as “a reflective researcher” (Evans, 2002).

One of the most interesting aspects of this study has been the multitude of findings it has yielded and the subsequent deliberation on which findings to include as the key results of this investigation. In reflecting on the research process itself, especially as I completed the analysis of each institutional case study, I thought that each university would make a full case study in its own right, able to address the research questions. However, this approach would have eliminated the comparative aspect and the intention to produce a study which would inform the interests of a broader audience. I therefore had to make a conscious decision on the selection of which findings to include—bearing in mind the research questions and the set of hypotheses (section 1.3. Research problem and hypotheses), I focused on these findings that enabled comparability and generalisability across all four cases.

Following from my grounding in critical theory, this research seeks to advise on a set of conditions which influence the provision of student services, examine how these conditions are—or might be—changing, and come up with some suggestions about how institutions can use new opportunities in sustaining internal reform. As the

first study on the topic of student services in Central and Eastern Europe, my suggestions and conclusions are by no means exhaustive; as with any exploratory study, the attempt has been to capture the major factors of change rather than focus on additional situation-based circumstances. Asking questions often raises new questions: these can be investigated in future research projects using the same method with another selection of case studies.

Perhaps the most significant limitation of this project is its time-datedness: it was conducted in the period 2004-2006 in the context of continuous higher education reform in Central and Eastern Europe. It is possible that some of the findings that were common to all four institutions during this time may have to be revised in future studies depending upon the progress made in certain areas: for example, the implementation of integrated student information systems. Nevertheless, the project offers a comprehensive review of a set of issues at a given time, against which progress can be measured by further research.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS: STUDENT SERVICES CASES OF TRANSFORMATION IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

4.1. Research questions and organisation of the major findings
4.2. Setting the context
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CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

STUDENT SERVICES - CASES OF TRANSFORMATION IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

4.1. Research questions and organisation of the major findings

This study of the role of student services in enhancing the student experience originated from a concern about an important professional area of university management, which has remained unrecognized, neglected, insufficiently developed and largely unexplored in policy debates, legislation and institutional reorganization in Central and Eastern Europe. The research design for this project drew upon a set of hypotheses (section 1.4.) derived from professional experience, direct observation, self-reflection and the review of institutional documents, as well as published research on student development, changing student characteristics, and the interconnectedness of social, academic and institutional contexts in relation to the student experience (Literature Review, section 2.2.).

The three main research questions of this study (section 1.4.) set out to test the hypotheses and the theoretical assumptions, based upon literature, that changing student characteristics lead to higher expectations of the university experience, which in turn influence internal organisation and service provision. The acknowledgement given by the Bologna process documents to the role of the students and institutional preparedness for meeting student expectations (section 2.4.1.) led to a further assumption about student involvement in determining institutional priorities and institutional student support provision. The third main question follows from the previous two, testing the assumption that student support provision is organised in order to meet student demand. The current higher education reform process in Central and Eastern Europe yielded a fertile ground for this research project, offering a number of anticipated, as well as new, findings.

To organize the data collection process, the initial hypotheses (section 1.4.) served as the basis for the formulation of 12 detailed interview questions (see *Appendix VIII*). These questions also helped to structure the review of all institutional documents, listed in *Appendix XI*. As noted in section 3.10. of the Research Methods Chapter, this exploratory study offered a multitude of findings, some of which were anticipated in the initial hypotheses, and some which were in contradiction. In addition, some of the findings suggested new developments which were not immediately obvious in the context of the research topic. For example, in each institution there were a number of activities related to student support and services, which had emerged as a result of changing student characteristics and expectations, but there was no apparent understanding of their role or link to the the student experience or to the overall institutional organisation.

To capture the richness of this data, and explain the contradictions and emerging new findings, the research analysis proceeded from organising these around the detailed interview questions toward conceptualisation in six main themes:

Theme 1: Factors of institutional change (based on Q 1 and 2, which focused on the driving forces for change in the organisational and management structure of the institution/faculty)

Theme 2: The role of student services - institutional awareness; student expectations (based on Q 3, 8, 11, 12, which focused on awareness of the importance of student support services in relation to student expectations)

Theme 3: Assessment of student services (based on Q 4 and 5, which focused on description of actual student services provision and location in the university structure)

Theme 4: Cases of transformation (based on Q 6 and 7, which focused on the evolution of student services in university management and strategic planning)

Theme 5: The role of the students (based on Q 9 and 10, which focused on student involvement and communication between university and students)

Theme 6: Institutional self-assessment (based on Q 11 and 12, which focused on attitudes, awareness, and self-assessment of critical issues in university management, governance and the university experience in relation

to students and student services)

These themes emerged from the repeated review and systematization of the interviews data, matching it to the evidence provided by the institutional documents, and cross-referencing the findings to the initial hypotheses and research questions, bearing in mind the broader theoretical objective of the study to contribute to the understanding and the interpretation of the role of student services in relation to the changing role of the students, the student experience, and institutional management needs. The findings from this research project suggest that despite the rapid growth in student enrolments, institutions have given little attention to the concept of student characteristics and expectations, and that the process of institutional reform has had a limited impact on student services provision.

Therefore, to answer the first main research question: *to what extent do changing student characteristics and expectations of their higher education experience influence the institutional reform processes in Central and Eastern Europe?*, the data led to a detailed examination of the factors driving institutional change (Theme 1), the perceptions and attitudes of university leadership, staff and students that determine how these organisations are reacting to, developing, or neglecting, the provision of student services (Theme 2), and to the common concerns about organisational efficiency apparent in the self-assessment reports (Theme 6).

Probing further into the lack of strategy with regard to student support provision, Themes 2 and 5 clarify the attitudes to student expectations, and the legal and institutional contexts that influence student involvement and the actual role students can play in determining academic and management priorities. These two themes relate to the second main research question, *what is the role of students in determining institutional priorities and responses to student support provision?*

To answer the third main research question, *how is student support provision organised in order to meet student demand?*, the findings of this study suggested two distinct patterns: one organised around traditional administrative functions (Theme 3), and another emerging in response to both institutional and student needs (Theme 4). In addition, Theme 6 contributes findings related to the question ‘how’ by elaborating

on the need for qualified professional staff and the need for improved student involvement.

This chapter sets out the major findings of this project, in a comparative perspective along the six main themes. Owing to the thesis' regional focus on four countries in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), the chapter will first present the specific context of higher education development in the period after 1989 in each country.

4.2. Setting the context

As noted by Frenyo and Rozsnyai (2004, p. 55), “following the 1989-1990 regime changes, the countries of CEE underwent fundamental political and socio-economic restructuring. The region is still undergoing considerable transition, a phenomenon that certainly applies also to higher education.” The process of renewal, both at national and at institutional levels, has gained further momentum with the signing of the *Bologna Declaration* in 1999, which placed national and institutional reform in a broader international context. Two distinct phases set the background to higher education developments: the decade following 1989, and the period commencing with the implementation of the Bologna process. Both are reflected in the evolution of national legislations and the re-organisation of higher education institutions in the region.

The recent histories of the four institutions selected as case studies for this research project offer a multitude of examples of institutional changes, both planned and already accomplished, along the continuum of transition from “heavy-handed” state regulation (Berryman and Drabek, 2002, p. 5) to institutional autonomy and self-management in the context of evolving national higher education policy and European harmonisation. Because of the nature of planned economies and the complete dominance of the state in the pre-1989 period, the institutional changes which followed afterwards cannot be viewed separately from the evolution in the higher education legislation in the four countries. Further, because of their status as public institutions, their development continues to reflect the current state of national legislation.

4.2.1. Changes in national legislation

Reports on the reforms in the higher education systems in CEE after 1989 caution against making sweeping generalisations but concur on one major motivation behind the series of legislative measures taken by the governments of all countries in the region: the effort to restore university autonomy within a new definition of the relationship between the state and public universities (Scott, 2002; Quandt, 2002;

Taylor and Mirou, 2002; EUA, 2002a, 2002b; Campbell and Rozsnyai, 2002; Frenyo and Rozsnyai, 2004; Vizek-Vidovic and Bjelis, 2006).

In this regard, Scott (2002, pp. 138-144) summarised the 1989-2000 reforms as largely organisational, driven by two imperatives: “the desire to disengage the academic system from the very tight association with, and subordination to, the economic system that had prevailed in the communist period, and to liberalise academic structures.” Quandt (2002, p. 61) commented on the legacy of communist control as “the assiduous application of the principle *divide et impera*: the functions of universities were separated from those of academies of sciences, universities themselves were broken up into constituent parts”, resulting in enormous fragmentation and inefficiency. “While the educational system as a whole tended to be highly centralised—being run in effect by decrees issued by various government departments—university functions were excessively decentralised. Not only were institutions divided into separate parts by fields, but even within, deans had exceptional powers, and service functions were independently organised. The power of the Rectors was correspondingly diminished” (*ibid*, p. 116).

Themes that run across the rapid evolution in legislative frameworks include limiting political control and transfer of fiscal responsibility, tackling the fragmented or highly specialised structures of higher education institutions, divesting and redistributing powers within—all well demonstrated in the legislative changes (*Table 5*) of the four countries included in this study:

Table 5. Changes in National Legislation (1990-2005)

Period	Romania	Hungary	Croatia	Serbia
1990-1999	1991 Univ. Autonomy in Constitution 1993 Law on Accreditation 1995 Law on Education 1997 Statute of Teaching Staff <u>1999 Romania signed the Bologna Declaration</u> 1999 Amendment to the Law on HE	1993 Law on HE 1996 Amendment to the Law on HE <u>1999 Hungary signed the Bologna Declaration</u> 1999 Amendment to the Law on HE	1993 Law on HE 1996 Amendment to the Law on HE	1998 University Act (cancelled university autonomy)
2000-2005	2000 Regulation on Quality Assurance 2002 Law on Public Finances 2004 Regulation on study cycles	2000 Regulation on ECTS implementation 2001 Ratification of the Lisbon Convention 2003 Regulation on Diploma Supplement 2004 Regulation on two-cycle system 2005 Law on HE 2006 Amendment to the Law on HE	2000 Law on HE (Amendment) <u>2001 Croatia signed the Bologna Declaration</u> 2002 University Reform Act 2003 Law on HE 2004 Amendment to the Law on HE	2002 Law on HE <u>2003 Serbia signed the Bologna Declaration</u> 2005 Law on HE

As Table 5 demonstrates, since 1989, Croatia, Romania and Hungary have experienced rapid changes in their national legislations, taking place almost at the same time. A similar process started in Serbia in 2001. As Taylor and Mirou (2002, p. 16) pointed out, these rapid changes mirrored the political instability in the region and the frequent change of governments, creating a context of permanently shifting agendas and demands.

While the early legislation in the four countries dealt with the question of institutional autonomy, the interpretation of the concept varied. For example, in Serbia and Croatia institutional autonomy effectively meant autonomy of the faculties, with universities functioning as a loose association of legally independent entities. In Romania, autonomy of the universities meant a process of deregulation at the national level and decentralisation at the institutional level. In Hungary, the re-establishment of university autonomy and academic freedom was accompanied by a process of integrating the great number of small colleges and universities inherited

from the socialist past. Although the harmonising influence of the Bologna process has become fully apparent in national legislations after 2000, these national specificities continue to account for individual institutional circumstances in each of the four case studies and therefore merit a separate discussion.

4.2.2. National specificities

4.2.2.1. Romania

According to Romania's *Country Reports* (2003, 2005), reform in higher education legislation started immediately after 1989. University autonomy was fully guaranteed by the provisions of Romania's Constitution (1991) and the country embarked upon the construction of a higher education system as compatible as possible with the European educational space. The specific legislation regulating higher education in Romania is based upon three laws, passed in 1993, 1995 and 1997, with the latter including a regulation about 25% student representation on university senates. "These laws have provided the framework for Romanian higher education to become more coherent, based upon a progressive increase of university autonomy and accountability, and decentralisation of activities" (*Country Report*, 2003, p. 1).

In the account of Marga (2000, p. 253)—Minister of Education in the period 1997-2000—by 1999, Romanian universities were able to take responsibility for "decisions as to the number of students, the initiation of academic and scientific research programmes, granting of academic titles, recruitment of staff and professors, election of Rectors and deans, and fund-raising." The 1999 Amendment introduced the system of lump-sum funding and authorised universities to admit fee-paying students, leaving to their discretion the use of "extra-budgetary" revenues, thus making "the financial autonomy a reality" (pp. 253-255).

Romania was among the original signatory countries of the *Bologna Declaration* in 1999, described as a "fundamental charter of change in Romanian higher education" (*Country Report*, 2003, p. 5). Since then, the national legislation

has included regulations on Quality Assurance and Study Programmes, implementing the Bologna cycle of study programmes (in 2005), transferable credit system and the diploma supplement, and formal quality assurance systems.

4.2.2.2. Hungary

The history of higher education in Hungary has been particularly “chequered” because of wars and the frequent redrawing of borders until 1945 (Quandt, 2002, p. 60). Universities were established, moved or closed alongside the expansion or contraction of Hungarian borderlines. After World War II, many of the existing universities were broken up (for example, separating medicine, agriculture and law) and new specialised institutes and universities came into being following the Soviet model, under the supervision of different ministries. In the post-1989 period, Hungary inherited 89 institutions of higher education (55 state, 28 church and 6 foundation universities), (Ministry of Education, 2002).

The 1993 Law on Higher Education placed all institutions³⁶ under the Ministry of Education, and introduced norm-based budgeting. By 1996, universities and the government were discussing plans for the re-integration of these institutions into comprehensive universities. The academic communities of three regional centres, Debrecen, Szeged, and Pecs, led the process by establishing aggregates called “*universitas*” (Quandt, 2002, p. 116). The HE Law Amendments of 1996 and 1999 initiated the unification and provided the legal framework, so that by January 2000 Hungarian higher education institutions had merged into 60 institutions³⁷.

Hungary was also among the original signatory countries of the *Bologna Declaration* in 1999. Since then the government has adopted a number of decrees and regulations aimed at implementing ECTS, the Diploma Supplement, and Bologna-type degree structures, fully reflected in the most recent 2005 HE Law (amended in 2006). The *Hungarian Universitas Programme* (Ministry of Education, 2006b), launched by the government in 2004, defined Hungary’s needs in terms of “open and competitive higher education” responsive to the needs of the economy. The

³⁶ With the exception of the University of Defense and the Police College

³⁷ 12 state universities; 11 colleges; 5 art universities, 26 church universities, 6 foundation universities, and 2 specialized institutions

government committed to “budgetary support” that would guarantee stability and predictability. “In terms of financial management, it means the promotion of clients’ intentions, market sensitivity, strengthening the guarantees of owner’s liability, the conditions of regulation and operating promoting a result-oriented approach” (Ministry of Education, 2006b, Section II). Hungary implemented the Bologna cycle of study programmes in 2006.

4.2.2.3. Croatia

Croatia ceded from Yugoslavia in 1991, was at war with Serbia until 1995, and was led by a nationalist president until 2000. Higher education in Croatia inherited the legal and organisational structure of former Yugoslavia. “In Croatia the university is a voluntary association of faculties which retain the right to make their own decisions on key issues regarding their activities and their finances. Therefore the autonomy of the university guaranteed by the Croatian constitution, turns into ‘the autonomy of faculties’, which results in fragmented study and research programmes and makes it impossible to establish the university as an integral organisation of any kind.” (*Country Report – Croatia 2003*, p. 2).

Berryman and Drabek (2002, p. 25) summarised the Croatian higher education legislation up to 2003: “laws have fragmented the universities and subjected them to political micro-management.” The report identified the system of direct financing of each faculty, rather than the university, as the most “devastating” – “faculty-specific financing means that the university’s rector and top leadership have no fiscal power to modernise the university. It also exacerbates disciplinary fragmentation, eliminating incentives to collaborate across disciplinary boundaries.”

Croatia signed the *Bologna Declaration* in 2001 and adopted a new HE Law in 2003, which provided the legal framework for functional integration of the universities, introduced the concept of lump-sum funding, and stipulated a full legal integration (by which the faculties would lose their legal identity) to be introduced by 2007 (*Country Report – Croatia 2003*, p. 3). However, the change of government later in 2003 delayed the implementation of this law. Following a further round of

discussions, an *Amendment* was adopted in July 2004³⁸. The implementation of the Bologna process, functional integration of universities, and establishing a systematic monitoring and quality control mechanisms for higher education teaching and scientific research work, are now among the fundamental goals for higher education improvements in the *Education Sector Development Plan 2005-2010* (2005, p. 32).

4.2.2.4. Serbia

Substantive changes in the higher education legislation started only after the removal of President Milosevic in 2000. The 1998 Act had cancelled university autonomy, leading to the suspension of Serbian higher education institutions from the (then) European Rectors' Conference. The new government of 2001 set out to remedy this situation and harmonise Serbian higher education with European trends. A new HE law was passed in early 2002, as an expedient necessity, with the acknowledgement that it could not reflect fully the variety of needed reforms. Taking into account external evaluations, institutional proposals, and the differences between universities, the law provided only a general framework oriented to the deregulation of university operations, stressing the link between autonomy and accountability (*Country Report - Serbia 2003*).

According to EUA's evaluation (2002a, p. 6), the HE law of 2002 did not "take the essential step of integrating each individual university, currently no more than a weak conglomerate of highly autonomous faculties and other bodies." As long as the structure of the universities remained fragmented, the report saw no prospect for a successful reform of higher education in Serbia. At the same time, in their evaluation of the University of Novi Sad (2002b, p. 10), the EUA team noted that this law offered possibilities to re-affirm institutional autonomy and redefine power structures through the university statutes. As one of the key informants at the University of Novi Sad put it: "We decided to do the things which were not forbidden by the law."

³⁸ I visited the University of Zagreb in May 2004 – the anticipated Amendment was subject to much discussion.

Although Serbia joined the Bologna process formally in 2003, and adopted a new HE law in 2005³⁹, which is designed to streamline the structure of Serbian higher education with Bologna requirements, this law left open the interpretation of university and faculty autonomy (Republic of Serbia, *Law on Higher Education*, 2005, See Articles 33 and 34). The *Country Report - Serbia 2004-2005* (p. 8) continued this ambiguity of terminology referring both to “the foundation of faculties, or universities, as being regulated by the law.”

4.2.3. Common developments

Although rooted in specific national contexts, the recent evolution of the legislative frameworks of Romania, Hungary, Croatia and Serbia share common features: the apparent concern for clarifying the relationship between the state and higher education institutions and the role of the state in creating relevant higher education policies; the process of actual recognition of university autonomy and functional integration guaranteed by normative funding mechanisms; upgrading the efficiency of the higher education sector; and harmonisation within the European Higher Education Area. The fact that each country has formally joined the Bologna process makes it possible to compare developments based upon common objectives.

In the following sections, common developments related to the specific topic of this study will be presented in six main themes. For organisational purposes, frequency counts, and grouping of findings, the universities are listed in the following order: Novi Sad (Serbia), Zagreb (Croatia), Babes-Bolyai (Romania), and Debrecen (Hungary).

³⁹ The 2005 Law on Higher Education was adopted in August 2005. My visit to the University of Novi Sad was in January 2005.

4.3. Theme 1: Factors of institutional change

At the outset of this research project I formulated a hypothesis that *the comprehensive reform process touches on every aspect of institutional management, including the provision of support services for students* (section 1.3.1.). Based upon the initial documents scan, I expected to find numerous changes in the organisational structures of the four universities. However, I was not certain which were the factors of primary importance as the driving forces of change, and what was the relationship between internal institutional initiative and the evolution of national legislation (section 4.2.1.- Changes in national legislation).

The findings in this section serve to clarify my concepts about the motivation for change in higher education institutions in Central and Eastern Europe. As the data demonstrates, the state of national legislation assumes the greatest importance in understanding each university's development. Further, legislative change tends not to go in a simple direction of supporting reform: in parallel to its development, or in spite of the lack of development, the universities in this study have undertaken a number of activities and initiatives in trying to develop their own responses and strategies for coping with change. What the data also suggests is that in addition to national policies and the internal activities, all universities are being influenced by international developments and the Bologna process.

The findings in this section provide an important context in order to understand how universities are reacting to, developing, or ignoring, the provision of student services.

4.3.1. Key importance of—and dependence upon—national legislation

Interviewee comments and institutional documents reflected the key importance of national legislation with regard to higher education development. For example, the highest number of comments came from deans and administrators at Zagreb, where the implementation of the 2003 new HE law was still pending.

Similarly, deans and administrators at Debrecen attributed great importance to the changes in national legislation, which brought about the integration of the university in 2000, and its continuing impact on day-to-day operations. The least number of comments came from the students, who tended to formulate expectations of what the law should do, but seemed less well informed of the actual status.

Table 6. Frequency of Interviewee Comments on National Legislation

	# of Interviews/ Total # of Interviews	# of Quotes (T101)	Deans	Administrators	Students	Others
Novi Sad	5/11	12	3/6	1/7	1/12	-/-
Zagreb	8/12	28	4/6	5/8	1/9	-/3
BBU	2/8	2	-/2	1/5	1/5	-/-
Debrecen	3/10	16	2/4	1/11	-/5	-/2
Total:	18/41	58	9/18	8/31	3/31	-/5

Interviewees at Novi Sad and Zagreb assigned high importance to the regulating role of the law in terms of the organisational structure and operations of the two universities. Interviewee 27_Dean 11 from Novi Sad reflected on the legal framework of former Yugoslavia which had determined the organisational structures of all universities in the country. Because of this, higher education institutions in Serbia, as well as all other former Yugoslav republics, faced similar problems in their reform efforts (27/729, 27/731):

“For instance, when you compare the University of Zagreb with the University of Novi Sad, I don’t go further to other universities, you see many similar things. This is because we are developed on the same matrix.” (27/728).

In Zagreb, interviewees (1_Dean 1, 1_Admin 1, 2_Dean 3, 4_Admin 5, 7_Admin 6, 9_Dean 5, 10_Dean 6) anticipated the changes related to the “functional integration” of the university and the new funding system, as giving more freedom to the university to plan its development (7/264).

The influence of HE legislation was both a positive and a negative factor: it was seen as a necessary pre-condition and incentive for change, but waiting for top-down decisions resulted in uncertainty, lack of initiative and a continued

state of “flux”. For Novi Sad, the 2002 HE Law had given universities considerable independence “to do everything which is not forbidden by the law” (27/746), opened the possibility for universities to secure additional income through student fees (23/690), and delegated the decision on integration to the university itself (27/732). Interviewees at Novi Sad and Zagreb shared the opinion that without the external pressure of a strong HE law and policy on national HE objectives, the support for reform was not sufficient and the impetus for integration—if left to the university itself—would be stifled in internal politics (24/705, 27/732). However, a state legislation which regulated the internal operational and management processes of the university was also seen as a tool of interference and political pressure (7/244, 7/245, 7/247, 7/257, 7/265).

Zagreb’s development strategy, *Breakthrough 2001* (pp. 3-4), identified the relationship between the state and the state universities as the main problem limiting the universities’ development and the process of their inclusion in the European university system, and called for an “adequate legal framework to foster the conditions” for change. While the *Self-Evaluation Report* (2004) acknowledged the 2003 HE Law as providing the necessary conditions for transformation, its delayed implementation deprived the university of the much needed “reform funds”.

Although interviewees at Babes-Bolyai and Debrecen did not comment on the changes in legislation as frequently as the other two universities, many of the reforms within the universities had been accomplished as a result of the favourable legislative progression in each country. Both institutions appeared to be firmly in control of their internal developments, having the flexibility—and taking the initiative—to organise and re-organise their governance and management structures. The review of institutional documents on internal restructuring (*Appendix XI*) confirmed this. As the *Strategic Plan of Babes-Bolyai University* (2003, p. 30) stated, “it must be remembered that fiscal incentives granted by the State, for diversifying the financing resources for education, are materialised through legislative provisions.”

The relevance of a strong legislative framework and the influence of a coordinated government policy were particularly well demonstrated in the case

of **Debrecen**, which took a leading role in the integration process started by the government in 1996 (32/817, 32/819, 36/906). 36_Dean 16 referred to this process as

“one of the really best things that happened to Hungarian higher education in the 90s, and Debrecen benefited from it...” (36/906)

To support the HE integration policy, the Hungarian government had provided financing for capital investments, integrated information system software (Debrecen implemented the *NEPTUN* system in 2002), and competitive funding of some 200,000 Euro for operational integration projects (Ministry of Education, Republic of Hungary, 2002, p. 17).

4.3.2. Key importance of internal initiatives and responses

Both interviews and institutional documents revealed a great deal of internal activity: self-assessment and strategic planning, re-organisation and changes of regulations at the university and at the faculty levels. Each university contributed and participated—to the extent possible—in the national debates on higher education legislation. Where national expertise on particular topics was lacking, the universities took the initiative and sought advice from international organisations and sources. The process of institutional reform is ongoing.

Table 7. Frequency of Interviewee Comments on Internal Changes

	# of Interviews/ Total # of Interviews	# of Quotes (T102)	Deans	Administrators	Students	Others
Novi Sad	3/11	10	3/6	1/7	-/12	-/-
Zagreb	7/12	22	3/6	4/8	-/9	-/3
BBU	8/8	18	2/2	4/5	4/5	-/-
Debrecen	2/10	5	2/4	-/11	-/5	-/2
Total:	20/41	55	10/18	9/31	4/31	-/5

All four universities operate on the basis of formal statutes (charter, organisational plan), which have undergone several amendments. The Statute of Novi Sad⁴⁰ (adopted in 2002) has been amended four times, the latest in 2005. The

⁴⁰ <http://www.ns.ac.yu/stara/>

latest Statute of Zagreb⁴¹ was adopted in February 2005. The Charter of Babes Bolyai⁴² was adopted in 1995, and amended in 2000 and 2003. The University of Debrecen adopted its new Organisational and Operational Regulations in 2000, which—according to the key informant from this university—has been amended “many times”, with the latest set of changes in 2006. (A table maintained on the university’s website, attached as *Appendix XIV*, provides an interesting demonstration of the multitude and frequency of revisions.)

Three universities—Novi Sad, Zagreb, and Babes-Bolyai—which participated in the EUA Institutional Review Programme and in the Universities Project of the Salzburg Seminar, conducted **internal self-evaluations which resulted in a coordinated strategic planning process**: Zagreb adopted a formal strategic plan, *Breakthrough 2001: A Development Strategy for the University of Zagreb*, in 2002; Novi Sad adopted the self-evaluation report as a draft development plan (EUA, 2002a, p. 4); while Babes-Bolyai had started a strategic planning process in 1996, with the first *Strategic Plan* adopted in 1998 (Marga, 2000, p. 258). A second *Strategic Plan* was adopted for the period 2004-2007.

As could be anticipated from the status of national legislation in Romania and Hungary, Babes-Bolyai and Debrecen have initiated significant internal re-organisation at the university level.

Babes-Bolyai University

As Marga (2000, p. 251, 258) reported, “in 1990 the membership of the University Senate and the faculty councils was renewed by a factor of 90%.” Since then, “the internal structure of the university has undergone a series of changes” aimed at increased managerial efficiency, adjustment to market demand in terms of qualifications, and in response to the economic and administrative demands of the region and the country. In *Eleven Years After* (2004b, pp. 35-36), Marga reflected on the institutional reconstruction of the university as a process of building, projecting, decentralising, and setting in motion creative forces in order to plan the future of the university, rather than adjust to fluid contexts. “Since 1993 the functioning of the

⁴¹ <http://www.unizg.hr/fileadmin/rektorat/dokumenti/statut/statuteng.pdf>

⁴² <http://www.ubbcluj.ro/www-en/despre/carta.htm>

university is based on written and public regulations, which makes the process controllable” (p. 32). The university’s website and published institutional materials confirmed this statement.

All interviews at Babes-Bolyai, except with 14_Dean 7, touched upon a new culture of openness and increased communication among all levels of university management and with students (13/436, 15/490, 16/547, 17/556, 17/563, 18/602, 19/616, 20/631, 20/632). Interviewee 16_Dean 8 attributed this change to the introduction of strategic planning at the university, and the related effort on the part of the management to “educate people” in strategic planning:

“We have been the first who introduced strategic planning in the university: I have to say it’s a very difficult task because people have to be educated in this field.” (16/504). “I was the first elaborator of the strategic plan [in 1996-98] and I tried to choose some persons to work with and I could not find...only two or three persons. Now when we passed the second strategic plan of the university [2004], I observed that we could find maybe 10 or 15 persons to talk about all these things. I was surprised.” (16/511).

The university established a number of units and centres. A sample, compiled from university brochures and the university website, demonstrates a great deal of activity at the university administration level: Alumni Association, 1996; Centre for Lifelong and Distance Learning, 1997; Department of Strategic Management, 1999; Department for the Management of Projects, 2001; Centre for International Cooperation, 2001; UNESCO Chair of Higher Education Management and Governance, 2001; The *EXPERT* Centre for Psychological Counselling, 2001; Department of Quality Assurance, 2002; Academic Council, 2004; Centre for University Development⁴³, 2004; Career Centre, 2005.

University of Debrecen

The Hungarian government programme for the integration of higher education institutions had strong support, both at the political level and at the level of individual institutions. In Debrecen, discussions about a possible institutional re-integration had already started in the 1980s, and **the Debrecen Universitas Union was officially**

⁴³ <http://www.cdu.ubbcluj.ro/>

formed in 1991. It facilitated cooperation between the separate institutions, and served as the vehicle for integration by creating a computer and telephone cable network, restoring and managing campus buildings and facilities, and obtaining competitive government development subsidies of some 2.4 million Euro for building renovations. In 1999, *Universitas* re-registered as a non-profit company supporting the connection between the academic and the business spheres (University of Debrecen, *2001-2002 Brochure* pp. 7-8).

The University of Debrecen came into being in January 2000, as a union of three large universities in the town of Debrecen: the University of Agriculture, the Medical University, and Lajos Kossuth University (Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, Institute of Economic Studies and Business Administration, Institute of Law, Faculty of Engineering). Other faculties, institutes, and colleges in the region, including the Conservatory of Debrecen, also joined the union (University of Debrecen—ECTS Website⁴⁴). As 36_Dean 16 recalled,

“[the integration of the university] was a big thing, that made people aware of what should be done in new ways, and the new [responses] that must be developed; every HE component had to be re-programmed” (36/893).

The new university adopted its own “unique” mechanism (36/905) of harmonising “the diverse cultural backgrounds that had come together” (36/904, also Quandt, 2002, pp. 117-118): each year from 2000-2004 a new Rector of the university was elected from the former Rectors of the three institutions that first came into the union. In the period 2000-2005, the university re-organised its 9 Faculties, 7 Institutes, a Conservatory, and 3 affiliates (University of Debrecen *Brochure 2001-2002*, p. 11) into 3 Schools and 3 Affiliated Institutes (University of Debrecen—ECTS Website⁴⁵). The senior management of the university evolved from Rector and 5 Vice-Rectors in 2001-2002, to Rector and 3 Vice-Rectors in 2005-2006. The central university administration is organised under the Rector’s Office. In 2004, the position of Director of Quality Assurance was established.

⁴⁴ <http://erasmus.admin.unideb.hu/ects/history.html>

⁴⁵ <http://erasmus.admin.unideb.hu/ects/>

Unlike Babes-Bolyai and Debrecen, the impetus for internal change and reorganisation at Novi Sad and Zagreb suffered because of institutional fragmentation. While all four universities shared common formal features of their organisational structures (as of 2004-2005):

- the senior university management was organised under the leadership of the Rector, Vice-Rectors, and the Rector's Office;
- academic governance was delegated to the University Senate (or Council), which adopted the University Statutes, and its Committees;
- the locus of academic activities was the Faculty (Schools at Debrecen) as a distinct organisational unit;
- faculties had their internal organisation under the leadership of a Dean, Vice-Deans, and academic administration offices (Faculty Secretariats and Student Offices);
- academic governance within the faculty was delegated to the Faculty Council;

a major difference with regard to Novi Sad and Zagreb, came from the legal definition of university and faculty autonomy. Although formally both Novi Sad and Zagreb existed as autonomous legal bodies, until 2004-2005 their faculties were also legal entities, which entitled them to direct state budget allocations and individual financial management. The changes in higher education legislation in Croatia (2004) and Serbia (2005) were intended to modify the autonomy of the faculties within the autonomy of the universities. However, at the time this research was carried out, the process of actual institutional “functional” integration was in its very initial stages.

As a consequence, **institutional fragmentation emerged as a separate topic** in the data analysis of Novi Sad and Zagreb. I should note that the interviews in Zagreb were conducted in May 2004, at the time of active discussions on the proposed amendments of the 2003 HE Law.

Table 8. Frequency of Interviewee Comments on Institutional Fragmentation

	# of Interviews/ Total # of Interviews	# of Quotes (T106) (T107)	Deans	Administrators	Students	Others
Novi Sad	4/11	9	3/6	-/7	1/12	-/-
Zagreb	8/12	41	5/6	1/8	4/9	2/3
Subtotal:	12/23	50	8/12	1/15	5/21	2/3

The fragmentation of the university structure was clearly perceived as a problem in both institutions. Interviewee 7_Admin 6 (Zagreb) described the situation in former Yugoslavia as “very complicated” (7/235), while three deans at Novi Sad (23_Dean 9, 24_Dean 10 and 27_Dean 11) shared the view that the university was functioning “as a loose federation of faculties” (27/730). A student from Novi Sad described the university as “a cloud above all faculties” which does not have the legal power to enforce university-wide decisions (31/792).

Interviewees from both institutions observed that **the relationship between the faculties and the university was problematic and that it was difficult and complicated to operate at the university level** (1/31, 6/207). In particular, deans and students saw the situation of “strong faculties, weak university” (1/26) as a power struggle (1/34, 1/26, 12/397). The university did not have many integrated functions (27/733), and cooperation among faculties and departments was inadequate (24/696, 24/695, 23/691). **A common perception expressed by interviewees at Zagreb was that each faculty was different from the others.** Deans had no particular knowledge about, or interest in, the operations of the other faculties. In the absence of a common information system, **faculties operated in isolation** from each other (7/237, 9/300, 10/341). This topic was also emphasised by the students in Interviews 5 and 6 (5/164, 5/173, 5/184, 5/201, 6/206).

Fragmentation vs. Decentralisation: In contrast to Novi Sad and Zagreb, the faculties at Babes-Bolyai and Debrecen did not have legal autonomy. The latter operated on the basis of faculty autonomy within the university, applying the principle of management decentralisation under common regulations and financial control (Marga, 2000, p. 256; Debrecen’s *Recommendations for Best Practices in Student Support Services*, 2002).

Faculty autonomy as decentralised management was perceived as an efficient organisational model by the deans of both Babes-Bolyai and Debrecen, allowing each faculty to handle its own planning and problems (14/437, 36/899). At the same time, **some of the problems of faculty isolation identified at Zagreb became apparent at Babes-Bolyai as well:** similar to the dean's views in Zagreb, 14_Dean 7 thought that each faculty was different and had its own problems. He saw no benefit from exchanging information with other faculties (14/449, 14/450). 20_Stud 13 noted that there was some cooperation between the faculties and with the university, but "it is not so big" (20/638). The administration of the university counted on the strategic planning process (as opposed to university-wide regulations) to harmonise the activities of the faculties (16/510, 16/540, 16/541).

4.3.3. Key importance of international developments and the Bologna process

International developments, such as the Bologna process, EU programmes, student mobility and international exchanges, joint-degree programmes, and international training, were reported in—and documented by—all four institutions as the third most important factor and impetus for institutional change.

Table 9. Frequency of Interviewee Comments on International Developments

	# of Interviews/ Total # of Interviews	# of Quotes	Deans	Administrators	Students	Others
Novi Sad	4/11	4	3/6	1/7	-/12	-/-
Zagreb	8/12	27	4/6	3/8	-/9	3/3
BBU	3/8	5	1/2	2/5	-/5	-/-
Debrecen	2/10	3	1/4	1/11	-/5	-/2
Total:	17/41	39	9/18	7/31	-/31	3/5

All four institutions reported institutional changes related to the establishment, or increased role, of International Relations Offices, participation in Tempus and Erasmus/Socrates projects, implementation of ECTS and curricula reforms, a growing number of international cooperation and exchange agreements,

and increased activity in student mobility. **The four universities have willingly engaged in international cooperation projects and reported satisfaction with their activities in this area.**

Three of the institutions had participated in the EUA Institutional Review Programme and in the Universities Project of the Salzburg Seminar (Novi Sad, 2002 and 2004; Zagreb, both in 2000⁴⁶; and Babes-Bolyai, 2001 and 2002). The University of Debrecen participated in the **EUA Quality Culture Project** in 2003. Babes-Bolyai also took part in a **PHARE project for reform of higher education**, which was reported to have contributed “a major advantage” through training in “the field of information, academic management, strategic planning, support services, etc.” (16/503). For reference details of the institutional documents, see *Appendix XI*.

At the institutional level, such projects raised awareness about academic management, strategic planning, quality assurance and academic programming, as well as in the development of service networks within the university and across faculties (Zagreb, BBU), and student advising programmes. Vizek-Vidovic and Bjelis (2006, p. 172) summarised the impact of such projects: “As the state financial and expert support to the transformation of the higher education system was practically missing, the University of Zagreb took a proactive stance and successfully carried out a series of Tempus projects on university management in partnership with the most prominent EU universities on university management in main areas of change: international relations, quality assurance, financial management, and staff development.”

The EUA and Salzburg Seminar evaluations of the University of Novi Sad had facilitated **the first comprehensive self-assessment and effort to coordinate the work of the faculties** under the leadership of a university Committee for Strategic Planning. Both reports emphasised the weaknesses of the system and of institutional fragmentation, giving the university **a platform for institutional reform**. As 27_Dean 11 summarised,

⁴⁶ Documented in *Breakthrough 2001*

“You asked about our strategic plan, about algorithm how to do it. I would say that if we want to participate in the European Higher Education Area fully, then we should play on the ground which means that we should also recognise the rules, the structures and we should make structures which are compatible with that.” (27/735)

In **Zagreb**, the deans reflected on recent changes in the curricula and programme structure as a **result of the Bologna process and ECTS** (1/44, 8/287, 10/323), while another saw the Bologna process as a “reason for transformation” which would require the introduction of advising services for students to adapt to the new academic structures (8/288).

Although interviewee comments at **Babes-Bolyai** made only specific references to activities undertaken, according to Marga (2004a, p. 52), it was the first Romanian university to subject its organisation, management and programmes to qualified international evaluations: the OSCE High Commissariat for Minorities in 2000, EUA in 2001, and Salzburg Seminar in 2002. In the publications of the university since then, internationalisation, bringing up university activities to international standards and participation in international projects permeate the language of reports, decisions, plans and institutional descriptions.

The influence of international developments was least explicit in the **Debrecen** interviews, despite the fact that the institutional website⁴⁷ lists a number of international projects and exchange programmes. In the words of 36_Dean 16,

“everything was happening at the same time: adjust to Europe, open up, different ideas of the university than before, different ways of dealing with structures and curriculum development, and in management...” (36/893).

This could be interpreted in two ways. One is related to the fact that by 2005, Hungary had joined the European Union and had already regulated the adoption of the Bologna principles which were becoming internalised in the university structures: “the reform initiative of the Hungarian higher education administration is inseparable from the principles of the Bologna process: the overall objective of the current reform

⁴⁷ <http://www.unideb.hu/index.php?lC=en>

is the access to the European Higher Education Area, through the provision of EU-harmonisation and EU-compatible higher educational services to the teachers and students at all higher education institutions.” (Ministry of Education⁴⁸: II/3. Higher education. Meeting the challenge of the EU-accession in 2004). The second is that the university was still much too pre-occupied with the operational logistics of the 2000 integration to give attention to internationalisation other than the steps required by the national regulations toward EU harmonisation. As 36_Dean put it, “Just think of the Bologna process and what it needs at a big university like this” (36/919).

4.3.4. Lack of student comments/views on factors of institutional change

The frequency tables (*Tables 7-10*) listing the number of quotes coming from the different groups of interviewees reveal **a strikingly low number of student comments within Theme 1**. More particularly, there were no student comments at all on the sub-theme of international developments. This was surprising, given that all institutions reported a number of projects facilitated by the International Relations Offices, involvement with EU student mobility schemes (except Serbia), and considered these among the most successful university activities.

One student at Babes-Bolyai University complained:

“I see a lot of changes in the legislation, we have many years of changes but I have seen only very few changes in a practical way. Although we are adopting the Bologna process legislation, our structure is moving and adapting very, very slowly and I see very few changes in this area.” (18/577).

Given the high level of activity in this university, this comment raised concern about the extent to which students were involved in, or informed about, the aims and background of internal re-organisation.

This finding raises questions about student involvement and communication with students, which will be examined further in this chapter under Theme 5 and 6.

⁴⁸ <http://www.om.hu/main.php?folderID=137&articleID=2208&ctag=articlelist&iid=1>, 25 June 2006

4.4. Theme 2: The role of student services— institutional awareness, student expectations

In my preparatory research prior to the site visits, I studied the institutional websites as well as those of the national Ministries of Education of the four countries. Based upon these reviews, I found that references to “student services” led to information about **student support provision as a form of government subsidy for student accommodation, meals and scholarships, regulated by normative acts and distributed to students according to a set of competitive criteria.**

For example, in Serbia⁴⁹ and Croatia⁵⁰, the student support provision was regulated through a “Student Standard” set by the respective Ministry of Education. In the case of these two countries, the state budget allocations under the Student Standard were distributed to **Student Centres**, separate legal entities affiliated with the universities, which organised and managed student accommodation and dining, scholarships, sports and cultural activities for students. The Student Standard in Croatia also regulated the activities and funding for the Student Union. During the site visits, I found that similar arrangements existed in Romania and Hungary, although the government subsidy for student support was allocated directly to the universities (in the form of normative funding and student scholarships) and administered by central university offices such as **facilities management** and **student welfare offices** (for example, the Social Service at Babes Bolyai and the Social Welfare Office at Debrecen).

The units responsible for student support provision at each university worked on the basis of government and university regulations. With the exception of Debrecen, these units understood their role as executors of rules and regulations set at higher levels. For example, the “Student Service” link on the website of the Student Centre of Novi Sad⁵¹ led to the text of the Law on the Student Standard and the Regulation for its implementation. As 26_Admin 19 explained:

⁴⁹ <http://www.ns.ac.yu/stara/eng/prezentacija.html>, <http://www.studentskicentarns.co.yu/>

⁵⁰ <http://public.mzos.hr/default.asp?ru=705&sid=&akcija=&jezik=2>

⁵¹ <http://www.studentskicentarns.co.yu/>

“The director of the Student Centre has the obligation to implement the regulations and decisions of the Government of the Republic of Serbia. So, the job is to have a team of people working on different aspects and the director coordinates these activities and represents the Student Centre in front of the bodies of the Republic.” (26/723)

Similarly, the operation of the Student Centre at Zagreb was determined by the Student Standard⁵²:

“The budget of the Republic of Croatia, within the scope of funds allocated to institutions of higher education, secures funds for student standard of living and working, or more precisely for the following: defining the criteria for financing student room and board, student standard of living, student cultural activities, defining the criteria for awarding national scholarships and grants for student programmes and projects.” (Croatian Ministry of Science, Education and Sport)

During my visit to the Social Service at Babes Bolyai, the interviewee had brought the regulations, explaining that:

“These are the regulations based on which both the scholarships and the housing are granted. The regulations are approved by the University Senate. We work according to them.” (13/424)

At Debrecen, a new Office of Social Affairs and Quality Policy, established in 2000 under the Rector’s Office, had undertaken the main integrative functions of student welfare in the new university. As 35_Admin 32 recalled:

“Before the integration there were four separate institutes, and with the integration we had to involve these together [to work as one]... and I could relate about [the] differences, and we had to find those fields which could be unified, where the collaboration could work out. We had to establish a unique profile and level, and this made financing more difficult” (35/875)

⁵² <http://public.mzos.hr/default.asp?ru=705&akcija=>

With regard to the role of student services, understood as the system of student welfare, these four institutions did not differ from the mainstream student support notion in the European public higher education sector, explained in section 2.3.1. Beyond the services related to student welfare, the interviews gleaned a variety of perceptions, as well as misconceptions, about student services.

4.4.1. Institutional awareness of the importance of student services

Table 10. Frequency of Interviewee Comments on Awareness of the Importance of Student Services (T201-209)

	# of Interviews/ Total # of Interviews	# of Quotes T201- T209	Deans	Administrators	Students	Others
Novi Sad	4/11	11	4/6	-/7	-/12	-/-
Zagreb	8/12	25	5/6	4/8	2/9	2/3
BBU	5/8	7	2/2	1/5	2/5	-/-
Debrecen	2/10	3	2/4	-/11	-/5	-/2
Total:	19/41	36	13/18	5/31	4/31	2/5

This research into the position and role of student services in the organisational structure of the university was perceived as a novelty. Six interviewees (from Zagreb and BBU) commented on their “positive surprise” to see student services as a topic of research. Two deans (8_Dean 4 and 10_Dean 6) from Zagreb shared their enthusiasm for the topic as a “modern question for the transformation of our university and our region too” (8/266). They were interested in the discussion because they had “the same questions” (8/268) and were planning to set up a student services office, especially in the area of career planning and contacts with employers (8/285, 10/317). The staff of the Student Information Centre in Zagreb were “nicely surprised” (12/379) but questioned whether “the very traditional [higher education] systems in Europe which were under the German influence” would be open to implement a US-style university-wide student services programme (12/417). Similarly, at Babes-Bolyai one administrator shared her interest to read about how to improve student services, “this is the first paper I see on the topic of student services [for our region]” (15/465), while student 20_Stud 13 went on to say that:

“such research is needed for Romania also, to be made by [the] Ministry of Education... Your being here will be an example for our teachers who will understand that they need to improve their relation... with the students, and their way of seeing the university as a whole system.” (20/629, 20/630)

In several cases, the responses from both deans and students indicated a general lack of understanding of the term “student services” (2/80, 5/188) or thinking of student services as a discrete unit in the functional organisation of the university or the faculty such as dining and accommodation (19/609, 28/751). A dean at Babes-Bolyai noted that the whole university was about students and therefore everything that happened at the university was in the service of the students (16/552).

One dean from Novi Sad reported resistance on the part of the professors with regard to providing students services at the faculty (28/760):

“My biggest problem is that some colleagues are giving resistance to this [i.e. actively supporting student services and student engagement]... They still think of the professor-student relationship in a classical way... and for me it is very difficult [as a Dean].” (28/763)

On the other hand, the two interviewees (one dean and one student) who associated “student services” with a particular office or function (Novi Sad: 27_Dean 11; BBU: 19_Stud 12,) **confirmed the importance of these services:**

“Student Services means something to me now because I read [your paper], but before the Social Service was the only student service department at our university... that I could think about. Here student services is... not just one structure to take care of the students from beginning to end, but more pieces, more separated departments.” (19/609) “It is important because in this university we are students coming from all over the country... so it is very important to have a place where we can go [and ask for help]. (19/610)

Three other deans and one administrator **agreed on the importance of student services as an institutional obligation** (7/246, 27/741). For 36_Dean 16 at Debrecen, student services were seen as part of institutional quality management, where “quality is a lot more than [just] course quality” (36/889). However, although student services were perceived as important at Babes-Bolyai, “it is one of [other] important things, the fact that we discuss in each meeting student problems means that we give importance, but we give the same importance to other problems” (16/552).

The deans from Novi Sad and Zagreb suggested that the area of student services in their institutions needed improvement. On the practical level, both deans and students from Zagreb thought that it was a priority to computerise services (1/43, 1/48), centralise services at the university level (1/28, 5/196), and improve the communication and understanding of the role of students (10/337). Interviewee 10_Dean 6 suggested that it was necessary to change the [hierarchical] way of thinking and to help students, deans and the Rector to see themselves as partners in a unique system where “students are the centre of the education process” (10/338, 339). The same sentiment was echoed by 28_Dean 12 from Novi Sad, who spoke of her belief that professors were there for the students “and not the other way around, and we have to offer all we can in [our] work with the students” (28/761). **However, none of the interviewees reported any specific discussions on how to integrate such considerations into management practices.**

Commenting more broadly on student learning, the deans from Novi Sad and Zagreb were concerned about the fact that students were not sufficiently engaged in their studies: acknowledging that students did not attend lectures (1/70), they agreed on the need to provide better quality of teaching and better facilities (2/118), to improve the technical delivery (24/712), and to update the curriculum to “give students more usable knowledge and optional subjects” (28/765). 23_Dean 9 (Novi Sad) commented on the important role of a course survey which had “surprised some professors” (23/686) in that students were critical of some professors’ attitudes. “I have observed the changing behaviour in my department, [the professors] are getting more used to the importance of the students” (23/687).

Despite these concerns, there were no specific comments related to awareness of the role of student services as a possible means of improvement. Other than the slogan-type statements of what needed to be done, none of the interviewees spoke of practical steps to address these problems. The deans, in particular, had no awareness of the role student services could play in this regard.

4.4.2. Institutional awareness of the impact of competition

In defining the interview questions, I anticipated that student services might have been introduced as a result of increasing competition among institutions, a phenomenon much felt and discussed at my own university. I was therefore interested to find out whether competition for students was a factor in the decision to improve existing—or provide new—services, and whether such changes had an impact on the students' choice of institution or programme.

This theme was addressed by three of the four institutions: Zagreb, BBU and Novi Sad. Interviewees at Debrecen made no reference to the issue of competition.

Table 11. Frequency of Interviewee Comments on Awareness of the Impact of Competition

	# of Interviews/ Total # of Interviews	# of Quotes (T210) (T211)	Deans	Administrators	Students	Others
Novi Sad	3/11	4	3/6	-/7	-/12	-/-
Zagreb	3/12	4	2/6	1/8	-/9	-/3
BBU	4/8	8	-/2	2/5	3/5	-/-
Debrecen	-/10	-	-/4	-/11	-/5	-/2
Total:	10/41	16	5/18	3/31	3/31	-/5

Competition at the national or international level was not perceived as a serious concern. As the EUA Evaluation of Serbian universities (2002a, p. 7) explained: “All universities in Serbia follow the same traditional model in their organisation and structure. They all have more or less the same profile of faculties and academic programmes, the curricula and teaching materials are highly similar from one to another, and in many cases, the same teaching staff is actually employed by

several universities at the same time. This situation leaves little room for diversity or differentiation between the universities...”

Three deans from **Novi Sad** confirmed this view: 23_Dean 9 thought that there was “no real competition” due to the lack of a national evaluation system of the universities in the country (23/688); for 23_Dean 9 and 24_Dean 10 the choice of a university was a pragmatic/financial decision, more so than an academic one, based on what the students’ families were able to afford in terms of accommodation and living expenses (23/688, 24/707). The interviewees from **Zagreb** (two deans and one administrator) made similar comments concerning the question of competition at the national level (2/117, 3/132).

At the same time, **interviewees from both Novi Sad and Zagreb acknowledged the rise of internal competition among faculties of the same university** (9/304, 24/708, 27/749). The target to increase student enrolments, both as a policy at the European level and as a financial necessity for the university, meant becoming more aware of the “market” so that faculties which were “struggling for students” would need to offer more (27/749).

With particular reference as to whether student support services had an impact on the students’ choice of institution or programme, all interviewees who commented on this topic were unanimous in their assessment that student support services were not a factor. Deans 9_Dean 5 (Zagreb), 23_Dean 9 and 28_Dean 12 (Novi Sad) agreed that, in principle, student support could be a factor but only after enrolment (9/305, 23/688, 28/762). Respondents from BBU (15_Admin 14, 16_Admin 15, as well as 18_Stud 10, 18_Stud 11 and 19_Stud 12) reported that services such as study abroad advising were used for student recruitment purposes but were not convinced that this information had any influence on the students’ choice (15/496, 15/495, 16/544). According to a study conducted among students at Babes-Bolyai, the main motive for the selection of the university was its name and perceived recognition; students did not have much awareness of the types of facilities and services that were offered (16/543).

The only three **students** who commented on this topic (BBU: 18_Stud 10, 18_Stud 11 and 19_Stud 12) **confirmed the view of the deans and administrators that the provision of student services did not influence the students' choice of institution or programme.** As major issues, the students saw the lack of preparation as to what to expect from their university studies, how to choose what subject to study, and insufficient information about career prospects (18/605, 18/606). **For these students, however, there was no connection between the lack of adequate information and the lack of student services.**

4.4.3. Student expectations

One of my initial hypotheses was related to student expectations as a key factor in the provision of student services: *Changing student characteristics lead to increased student expectations of the quality of support services they receive from the institution, ranging from a variety of customer-oriented flexible support to a higher degree of student involvement in the governance and decision-making processes within the institution* (section 1.3.5.). Accordingly, I assigned a special code (T208: interviewee thinks that student expectations are evolving and the university needs to respond) to this topic. **Contrary to my proposition, I found no references at all to match this description.** The findings below correspond to Code T212: students do not have big expectations.

Table 12. Frequency of Interviewee Comments on Student Expectations

	# of Interviews/ Total # of Interviews	# of Quotes (T212)	Deans	Administrators	Students	Others
Novi Sad	4/11	13	3/6	-/7	4/12	-/-
Zagreb	2/12	9	2/6	-/8	1/9	-/3
BBU	3/8	11	-/2	1/5	3/5	-/-
Debrecen	2/10	3	1/4	1/11	-/5	-/2
Total:	11/41	33	6/18	2/31	8/31	-/5

Of the **six deans who commented on this topic**, two (Zagreb and Novi Sad) noted that there had been **some small change** in the attitude of the students **toward the quality of the educational process:**

“Students tend to turn their attention to get more quality... for example, they might complain that some lecture is like it was 10 years ago, there is no new information” (2/96, 2/97), “a bit changed but not that much” (24/703).

The other four were unanimous that student expectations had not changed (8/273,277; 23/693,694; 27/748,749; 37/938,939). For 23_Dean 9 (Novi Sad), students were not sufficiently mature and responsible, unaware of their own interests in obtaining the maximum from their university experience. In fact, 37_Dean 17 from Debrecen thought that the change was for the worse, attributing this to insufficient preparation at high school and the increase in university enrolments. In his view **students came to the university with a lower level of academic preparation and no clear expectation, not knowing what they wanted from the university** (37/938):

“Now in this system when the number of our students is three times bigger than it was previously, the students at their first and second year don’t know what they want from the university. And I think that five years are not enough to realise whether their choice before entering the university was good or not. So I think that the output of the university is worse than it was previously because the input was stronger previously.” (37/939)

Two administrators from BBU and Debrecen echoed the comments made by the deans that students did not have high expectations: interviewee 15_Admin 14 from BBU shared her experience that students were not actively seeking to be informed about the various services offered by the university, and only those who had some “direct business that involves us get an impression of [the possibilities we offer]” (15/497); at Debrecen, 34_Admin 26 from the *Pont Iroda* Service Centre reflected on the **lack of tradition in Hungary for students to have high expectations**. This in fact presented a problem for the centre because they wanted to expand their offerings but the students were not receptive, “the students close up to this” (34/873).

Although three of the four institutions (except Debrecen) had introduced tuition fees at some or all faculties in the previous five years, neither deans nor students saw a relationship between fees and changing student expectations. On

the one hand, at one faculty in Zagreb it was taken for granted that students “do not have great expectations” because they did not pay fees (8/273). At Novi Sad, 24_Dean 10 noted that “even if students pay, their expectations are not changing that much” (24/704) and he thought that it was important for students to understand that they must contribute more toward their educational costs (24/711). In addition, the introduction of fees at Novi Sad was seen as an unavoidable necessity which required both the students and the university to adjust to a situation of insufficient financial resources: “we have to compromise on that” (24/703). Vizek-Vidovic and Bjelis (2006, p. 176) confirmed the “chronic financial scarcity” at the University of Zagreb and emphasised the importance of the government’s decision to allow universities to charge tuition fees. In their report, by 2003, some 30% of the students enrolled at Zagreb University were tuition fee-paying students. **On the other hand, the fact that students were paying only 15 to 25% of the real cost of education might explain the attitude of the university administration and professors that it was a necessary step just to keep things going as they were.**

The student responses corroborated the reflections of the deans and administrators in supporting the perception that students did not have high expectations of their university experience:

The student group at **Novi Sad** shared the view that student expectations, regardless of the introduction of tuition fees, had not changed. For 31_Stud 21, the payment of the fees was “something that we have to do and that’s it” (31/789), and together with 31_Stud 23 they agreed that the financial situation of the university was such that student fees were better used to support teachers’ salaries, or for the faculties to be able to purchase better equipment and books (31/797, 31/799, 31/800, 31/801). The students appeared to be more aware of the competition between state and private higher education institutions and supported the idea that fees should be used to pay their teachers better so that they would not leave the university to teach elsewhere (31/802).

At the **University of Zagreb**, one student seemed resigned:

“In the last few years there has been increasing student activism, but I don’t think there is feedback from the institution because the university is connected to the state, it functions like a state apparatus, so it doesn’t really require any student feedback, it doesn’t [need] to question the opinion of the subjects which are involved in the process of education. We have this mass of all kinds of departments who don’t really care and leave questions or problems that would need change” (5/178)

For students from **BBU**, the problem lay in the recent growth of student enrolments (18/599) and in students’ doing only the things they were obliged to do (20/634). For 18_Stud 10, upon entry to the university most of the students did not know what to expect (18/607) and although they could find out about activities and ways to become engaged, most of them had no interest in this (18/598):

Only us, the students [can make changes, but] the problem is that the bureaucratic structure is so big that if you want to make a change, you have to make a huge process and it is really very hard to make a decision, or to have an idea and to make this idea work. (18/586)

Another student from BBU, 20_Stud 13, who complained of the same attitude among students, went on to describe this apathy as an obstacle to continuing the activities she was involved in (20/632, 20/647). In her view, students did not see the benefit of these opportunities for additional personal development (20/633), nor were they open or interested (20/647).

At the **University of Debrecen**, students did not comment directly on this question. However, the Student Union and former students who joined the *Universitas* non-profit company (section 4.3.2. - Key importance of internal initiatives and responses) had created a number of student services and units as outsourced activities (see section 4.6. – Cases of transformation). As these were Student Union ideas, which were implemented by the students, **the implication was that students did not expect the university to play a role.**

The institutional documents of Novi Sad and Zagreb offered further insight into the main reasons for the low level of student expectations: **prevailing institutional bureaucracy and rigidity** (EUA on UNS 2002b, Quality Management pp. 7-8; Berryman and Drabek, 2002, pp 48-49); **“traditional” attitude** of deans and professors, which placed students in a passive role, as recipients rather than involved participants, leading to disengagement and low expectations (University of Zagreb’s *Self-Evaluation Report* (2004, pp. 26-27).

4.5. Theme 3: Assessment of student services

The four institutions in this study represent cases of large public comprehensive universities, with student enrolments at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels (*Table 13*). The University of Zagreb, located in the capital, is the largest university in Croatia; the second largest institution, the University of Split, has an enrolment less than half the size of Zagreb (Vizek-Vidovic and Bjelis, 2006, p. 162). The other three institutions are regional higher education centres: Novi Sad and Babes-Bolyai come second in place to those in the capital cities of each country, while Debrecen is the second largest regional university.

Table 13. Student Enrolment Data (institutional websites, July 2006)

Institution	Number of Students	Number of Faculties
University of Novi Sad [http://www.ns.ac.yu/stara/eng/prezentacija.html]	39,200	13
University of Zagreb [http://www.unizg.hr/homepage/]	50,000	29 faculties, 3 art academies
Babes-Bolyai University [http://www.ubbcluj.ro/www-en/index-en.htm]	45,500	21
University of Debrecen [http://www.unideb.hu/index.php?lC=en]	26,000	13 faculties, 20 doctoral schools, 2 independent institutions

In the decade following 1989, **growth in student numbers**, although not consistently documented on each institutional website, is reported as a general phenomenon in higher education in the entire region of Central and Eastern Europe (Frenyo and Rozsnyai, 2004, p. 56). In particular, the recent history of Babes-Bolyai⁵³ notes a steady increase in student enrolments from 6,000 in 1989 to the current 45,500—a substantial eight-fold increase in a relatively short period of time. The integration of the University of Debrecen in 2000 quadrupled the size of student enrolment in the newly-established institution.

In this context, I anticipated that *institutions are aware of the evolving student expectations and are making conscious efforts to improve student services provision, including policies and procedures at the level of strategic planning* (section 1.3.5.).

⁵³ <http://www.ubbcluj.ro/www-en/despre/istoric.htm>

My findings under this theme revealed a complex network of administrative and student support functions, scattered at many levels of the institutional structure of all four universities, or existing outside of the university (see detailed tables in *Appendix XV*).

This study found that the concept of Student Services, as presented in this research, has emerged in several sets of external review recommendations and in some government policies but none of the institutions have yet turned their attention to a planned or systematic re-organisation and optimisation of student-related functions.

Table 14. References to the general description of student service units

	# of Interviews/ Total # of Interviews	# of Quotes (T301)	Deans	Administrators	Students	Others
Novi Sad	10/11	50	6/6	3/7	5/12	-/-
Zagreb	9/12	78	3/6	6/8	4/9	3/3
BBU	8/8	83	2/2	4/5	3/5	-/-
Debrecen	9/10	70	4/4	4/11	1/5	1/2
Total:	36/41	281	15/18	17/31	13/31	4/5

Based upon institutional documents and interviewee descriptions of the type and position of student-related offices and services in each institution, I designed a matrix detailing existing student services at all levels of the organisational structure presented in *Appendix XV*.

For the purposes of presentation in this section, which draws upon *Table 14*, the findings on the position of student services are structured in the following sequence: services provided at the level of

- the faculty;
- of the university and overseen by the university;
- of the university but not overseen by the university.

4.5.1. Services provided at the faculty level

Table 15. Additional references to student service units at the faculty level

	# of Interviews/ Total # of Interviews	# of Quotes (T304)	Deans	Administrators	Students	Others
Novi Sad	2/11	3	2/6	-/7	-/12	-/-
Zagreb	9/12	24	4/6	6/8	1/9	-/3
BBU	4/8	12	1/2	3/5	-/5	-/-
Debrecen	3/10	9	2/4	1/11	-/5	-/2
Total:	18/41	48	9/18	10/31	1/31	-/5

The main functions related to student academic administration, such as enrolment, course registration, examinations, grades, and graduation requirements, were located at the level of the faculty. This organisational pattern was found in all four universities. At Novi Sad, Zagreb and Babes-Bolyai, these functions were fulfilled by the **Faculty Secretariat/Student Office**, under the supervision of the Dean and the Vice-Dean for Teaching/Education. At Debrecen, this function was fulfilled by a **Registry Office**, also under the supervision of the Dean. **Most student-related issues came up for discussion at the executive meetings of the faculty, and the Secretariat acted upon decisions or instructions from the Dean or the faculty's executive committee.**

At Novi Sad, student services at the faculty level were described by two deans as having a very concrete task: registration for classes, registration for examinations and payments, schedules, practical details which were connected to the students' everyday life in the faculty (23/681, 28/752). Beyond that:

“On the topic of student support services, I'm afraid we don't have anything structured. We have a kind of official meeting [in the first year] of all the students from each department and the staff: we address them to the secretary of the department, they get our emails and the phone numbers and that's it.” (23/680).

Similarly, in **Zagreb** all student matters, other than the routine administration handled by the Student Office, were referred to the Dean (1/3,10; 2/76,85;

3/128,130,134,142; 5/183; 7/262; 8/293). These might include both academic and non-academic issues, for example, student parties and special activities (1/67) or the theft of bicycles in front of the faculty building (3/138). Academic matters were normally decided by the Vice-Dean for Teaching. Special problems might be referred to the Faculty Council or to the Advisory Committee of the Faculty Council (2/91).

At **Babes-Bolyai**, in addition to the organisational structure described at Novi Sad and Zagreb (14/452), each faculty/department appointed a junior professor to serve as Tutor for a given year, responsible for the orientation, academic counselling and organisational matters. (14/441, 14/442, 14/443). The tutor participated in the departmental meetings and communicated to the department head/Dean issues related to students (14/444). The professors who were appointed as tutors had no relief from their teaching duties, and their function was strictly department/faculty based—there was no forum for tutor meetings at the university level (14/448, 16/539). 14_Dean 7 reported no changes in the organisational structure of student support at the faculty level (14/439).

Each faculty of the **University of Debrecen** had a professional Registry Office, dealing with student enrolment, statistical information and reports, managing the data in the university information system, scheduling of classes, issuing student transcripts and certificates (40/968,970,972). The Head of Registry reported to the Vice-Dean for Teaching and occasionally (upon request) participated in meetings of the Faculty Executive Committee (40/973). **40_Admin 36 reported that there were periodic meetings of all Heads of Registry at the university (40/969).** Similarly to Babes-Bolyai, every department appointed someone “in charge of the students”: although this did not appear as a formal organisation, it was a type of “invisible student support management or self-management” (36/917). However, interviewee 41_Dean 18 noted that although professors received a lot of information and were expected to know of the activities of student offices and student organisations, he thought that this communication was not efficient (41/979). He reported that student issues were discussed at every Faculty Council meeting, but there had been no discussion on “student services” (41/976).

This strictly faculty-based student academic administration meant that all arising matters, both academic and non-academic, were dealt with inside the faculty. With the exception of Debrecen, the staff of the Faculty Secretariat/Student Office did not have a meeting forum at the university level to share information or discuss particular problems. **As a result, the process of identifying student needs, working to meet student requests or solutions to problems, was limited within the faculty, without a channel to reach higher levels for policy discussion, overall planning and evaluation of these services.** As one key informant put it:

“it means that student services are done by faculties in very different ways, in many aspects without any coordination and [in the cases of NS and Zagreb] unfortunately without a unique or at least compatible system of information.” (7/237)

Particularly in Zagreb and BBU, **some of the deans** (1_Dean 1, 1_Dean 2, 3_Admin 3, 3_Admin 4, 10_Dean 6, 14_Dean 7) **believed that it was their task to deal with all matters related to student affairs, both academic and non-academic** (1/6,10; 3/128; 14/452). At the same time, 10_Dean 6 acknowledged:

“I know some deans are more relaxed and approachable by students, I remember myself in this position, but others are very far from the students.” (10/353)

Unlike the deans and vice-deans who were elected on a rotating basis, the staff of the Secretariats/Student Offices were permanent appointments (7/253).

2_Dean 3 explained that their role was to “execute” the faculty policies, decisions of the Faculty Council and general regulations (2/89). Two comments on the staff in the Student Offices are worth noting: while one dean in Zagreb spoke very highly of this office (1/46, 1/47, 1/51), another dean thought this service needed new people, who were more student-oriented and familiar with information technology (9/311, 9/312).

Other than the administrative functions performed by the Faculty Student Offices, **some of the faculties at NS, Zagreb and BBU supported various student projects, using discretionary faculty funds.** One dean from Novi Sad expressed openness to student requests, but in her view:

“the main initiatives have to come from the students. The faculty does not believe that we have to define the activities but to offer students the opportunities.” (28/758)

This faculty had active student organisations (28/753) and the dean expressed commitment to “meeting the needs and the requests of the students” (28/754,755). The dean of another faculty acknowledged that “very little goes toward students services”, meaning purchasing books, computers, photocopiers, vending and coffee machines (24/702, 28/754). According to student reports at Novi Sad (31/796, 31/803), one of the larger faculties had implemented a new information system which improved the examinations process, introduced the diploma supplement in English⁵⁴, and purchased computers and library books. Students were satisfied with this.

In Zagreb interviewees reported a wide variety of projects and services which had been organised by individual faculties. The Faculty of Philosophy had a special on-line service—“The Forum”—which facilitated direct communication between the dean and the students (3/127); a Student Information Service (different from the Student Office and operated by students) which provided information for prospective and for current students (3/142, 5/186). Many student associations were housed in this faculty, including the Student Ombudsman Project (5/168, 5/194). Three deans of other faculties were pleased with their efforts to create an alumni database (8/286), to provide individual academic advising (8/288, 8/289) or special programmes, such as summer school, international events, field trips, informal support of student activities, and to create a fund for a special award (1/19; 9/286, 9/298, 9/301, 9/310).

Despite the positive comments on these additional services, this variety of arrangements was criticised as inconsistent from one faculty to another:

“there are professional services for students at faculties but they are so uncoordinated and so different...” (7/253)

⁵⁴ All documents used to be issued only in the local language, translations and notarizations done by the students at considerable expense.

8_Dean 4 also emphasised the differences between large and small faculties, referring to the closer links between students and professors in the small faculties (8/279, 8/280). For 10_Dean 6, much depended on the attitude of the deans, the system and the traditions of the individual faculty (10/352). For the students, the Ombudsman Project had highlighted these differences: one faculty had accepted it readily, while another had rejected it as something for which there was no regulation (5/168, 5/194).

Similarly to Zagreb, **students from Babes-Bolyai also noted differences between the faculties**. While one student was satisfied with the support her faculty gave to student initiatives (19/628), she also noted that students were not willing to get involved if they did not get support from their professors (19/627). The same comment came from two other students who had organised a student fair recently and were disappointed that their professors did not come to the event (20/644).

4.5.2. Services provided at university level, overseen by the university

Student services at the university level varied significantly among the four institutions (see *Appendix XV*). As the absence or presence of university services depended on the organisational structure, for presentational purposes, they have been grouped under two headings:

4.5.2.1. Services in a fragmented university structure (Novi Sad and Zagreb)

As could be anticipated from the fragmented structure of the two institutions, services at the university level were very limited. For 23_Dean 9 at Novi Sad, student services were “rudimentary at the university” (23/677). 27_Dean 11 formulated student services at the university level as objectives, rather than a practical reality: the university needed a common information system to monitor the academic progress of the students (27/740); better coordination with the Student Centre, and with the student organisations (27/745, 27/742, 27/744). The university had organised an open day for prospective students (27/738), while each faculty provided enrolment

statistics on their websites⁵⁵ (27/739). Some faculties had also started to print better quality brochures.

Three deans at Novi Sad referred to the services provided by the Student Centre (section 4.5.3. - Services provided at university level, not overseen by the university). Although this was perceived as a university level service (23/683, 27/745), the legal independence of the Student Centre presented management problems:

“We have no influence [on the day-to-day running of the Centre] and we are not happy about that. For example, the work of such services should support [the] general policy of the university and [here] we have two management systems and even two ministries.”
(24/698)

In Zagreb, 7_Admin 6 noted that there was no mechanism to coordinate student services at the university level (7/238) The only unit at this level was the **International Relations Office** which provided services mostly for international students (11/355, 11/358), and maintained the Alumni Association (11/359). Although available for students of the entire university, the **Student Counselling Service** was based at the Faculty of Philosophy (3/144, 4/154). The Vice-Rector for Teaching and Students had no direct control over the practical service arrangements (10/318). Both the Vice-Rector and 7_Admin 6 advocated coordination of services at the university level, but acknowledged that it was not simple to have a unique well-organised system for such a large university (7/263, 10/317).

Both universities lacked a central University Information System: all data regarding student enrolment and professors’ teaching loads, courses and student fees, was managed at each faculty on the basis of “home-grown” databases. The senior administrators of both institutions complained bitterly about this situation, but neither institution had the financial means to launch an integrated database development project (7/238, 7/246, 27/740). Zagreb’s *Self-Evaluation* (2004, p. 16) reported the lack of a comprehensive information system as one of the main obstacles to the university’s integration: “Since the management of university constituents is

⁵⁵ See <http://www.ns.ac.yu/stara/eng/prezentacija.html>

decentralised, due to their high level of legal autonomy, most of them have developed independent information systems regarding management of students, work force and financial issues.”

4.5.2.2. University Services at Babes-Bolyai and Debrecen

Both universities had a number of central service units related to student administration:

Babes-Bolyai University	University of Debrecen
Social Service (under the Economic Director)	Student Welfare Office (under the Rector's Office)
Common Information System	NEPTUN (Student Information System)
Centre for International Cooperation	Office of International Relations
The <i>EXPERT</i> Centre	Office of Education (supervising the Mental Health Project)
Alumni Association	Office of Academic Affairs
Career Centre ⁵⁶	Office of Sport
Centre for University Development	Economic Directorate

The functions of distributing state subsidies to students at BBU and Debrecen were integrated in central university offices:

The Social Service at Babes-Bolyai was the oldest student service unit (the interviewee from this unit had worked there for 17 years, 13/418). It had a very specific function, its operations entirely prescribed by government or university regulations. Although a front-desk service for the students, this office did not initiate changes to the regulations: amendments to the university regulations were decided annually by the Senate and implemented by the service in a top-down management fashion (13/424). Over the preceding two years, the service had become more involved in dormitory management and handling student complaints (13/433):

⁵⁶ Established after the site visit, in 2005

“The Social Service has been very closed for people, and in the past the social service didn’t have a social aspect, it wasn’t involved, and now we are – not only nominally but in practice too. (13/436).

Students, however, were sceptical about the office’s ability to initiate changes: “the Social Service have no authority, they don’t decide anything” (18/584, 18/585). Similarly, one Vice-Rector referred to it as

“an execution body, administrative simply. Although we have tried to bring them in this flow of strategic planning they were not able to. I mean they are simple clerks. Because I have spoken with all the heads of these administrative offices to convince them to plan their activities in the future—it is a resistance and they are not used to such a thing. We have not prepared persons to do this until now.” (16/513)

At Debrecen, the Student Welfare Office had been a key unit in the integration of the social support services (scholarships and dormitory accommodation) **since 2000:** it led the long process of negotiations with representatives from all institutions in order to reach comparable criteria for disbursing the social-financial funds allocated by the state (35/877); it also prepared the regulations for the university, the implementation of which was delegated to several scholarship and dormitory committees, which were run mostly by the Student Government (35/881, 35/882). **The Student Welfare Office coordinated the work of these committees and managed the information system for the distribution of the state funds.**

Both universities had computerised the work of these service units through common information systems and had dedicated central offices responsible for the maintenance and development of the systems. According to BBU’s 2004-2007 *Strategic Plan* (p. 36), “the existing information systems [include] educational management, financial, accounting and human resources.” Interviewee 13_Admin 12 reported that this had improved their work (13/419). At Debrecen, the NEPTUN integrated information system was introduced in 2002 (38/944). According

to information from the university website⁵⁷, “the system is used for educational administration by the following users: administrators of the various Educational Offices (Registry Offices), departments, lecturers, practical teachers, and the students.” The system is managed by a central office, a Student Information Centre, but for specific questions or problems students would normally communicate with their faculty Registry Office (38/948, 40971). **In both bases, the governments had provided subsidies for development or software packages.**

The international relations offices at both institutions fulfilled a student service function for international exchanges, providing educational advising services to the public, as well as support to outgoing and incoming students (15/466, 15/483, 15/487). At Babes-Bolyai, the centre had started to conduct its own training programmes and student surveys in order to fine-tune its activities to the specific needs of the students (15/473, 479). Although my site visit programme at Debrecen did not include a visit to the International Relations Office, the information available on the university website indicated that this office fulfilled functions similar to those at BBU. The office has published an extensive information guide in English “*Welcome to the University of Debrecen*”⁵⁸, which includes a number of references to student services (pp. 14, 15, 21, 26, 41).

4.5.2.3. University Websites

Many of the findings in this chapter are based on my **extensive use of the four universities’ websites** between 2004 and 2006. I consulted the sites in preparation for my visits, and when comparing interview comments with official information. **Each of the four institutions maintains an English-language version of their websites which enabled independent research into their structures, policies and public information.** In the cases of Novi Sad, Zagreb and BBU, documents such as the Law on Higher Education, University Statutes and external evaluation reports were publicly available. Many of the documents were also available in English.

⁵⁷ <http://www.unideb.hu/index.php?lC=en>, 10 June 2006

⁵⁸ http://www.unideb.hu/media/3_1.pdf

The English-language information on these websites did not change in the period 2004-2006 covered by this research. In fact, the website of the University of Debrecen was “in construction” for the entire period. **The sections related to Students and Student Services were rather static and patchy, and the information leading to the findings in this chapter was compared and constructed from many different links, using both the native language website and its English version. None of the websites contained information on student activities, events, or a complete list of student services.**

4.5.3. Services provided at university level, not overseen by the university

In three of the institutions—Novi Sad, Zagreb and Debrecen—a number of services were provided by agencies and organisations outside the university management structure.

The **Student Centres in Novi Sad and Zagreb** were **separate legal entities** which managed student accommodation, dining services, cultural programmes and activities, financed directly by the relevant Ministries of Education under a special provision called the “Student Standard”. In both cases, the student centres were direct recipients of, and operated on the basis of, state subsidies for “student accommodation, meals, scholarships, grants, cultural and sports activities as well as many scientific programmes”⁵⁹

Novi Sad: although the Student Centre was located on the university campus, interviewees both from the university and from the centre did not report any regular meetings. The staff of the centre did not identify any particular person or position at the university as a regular point of contact (26/727); none of them had been involved in the strategic planning discussions at the university, nor had they taken the initiative themselves—their expectation was that they should be invited by the university management (26/721, 26/727). Based upon comments from both

⁵⁹ UNS: <http://www.ns.ac.yu/stara/eng/prezentacija.html>, Zagreb: <http://public.mzos.hr/default.asp?ru=705&sid=&akcija=&jezik=2>

sides (24_Dean 10, 26_Admin 19), occasional consultations took place when the university organised special projects, such as summer schools or international student exchanges (24/698, 26/718). 26_Admin 19 reported some interaction with the student organisations and the Student Vice-Rector, but did not give specific examples⁶⁰ (26/719, 26/722). When student disciplinary issues occurred, either in the residence halls or on the dining premises, those were handled entirely within the centre, without involving the university administration (26/727). As 26_Admin 19 emphasised:

“The Student Center is an independent legal entity, so except providing dining services and accommodation for students of Novi Sad, there are no other connections legal or otherwise [to the university].” (26/718)

The centre’s operations, referred to as **“student service”** on the centre’s website⁶¹, **were based entirely on state regulations.**

Zagreb: the *International Student Guide 2004/2005*⁶² and the Centre’s own website⁶³ described the Student Centre as being responsible for providing meals and accommodation to students, allocating student rooms in the university residence halls according to government regulations⁶⁴, assisting students in finding part-time employment, a place for cultural events, foreign language or computer courses, entertainment, tourism and sports activities. The programmes were organised by staff and students, separately from the university or faculty administrations. **Although the centre performed a wide range of student-related activities**, no one from the interviewed participants from the faculties or the Rectorate knew much about it, nor did he have direct contact with it. **In fact, no one mentioned it in the context of student services in particular**, but rather as the place managing “things that are decided by the law” (1/5, 1/7, 8/275), and the location of the Student Government. According to the university’s *Self-Evaluation Report* (2004, p. 16), the Student Centre presented serious management problems: “although formally owned by UZ, it was effectively under the control of the government and the Ministry... The university has

⁶⁰ I rather had to press him on this, asked the same question three or four times but he did not give details which makes me think that there have not been many such occasions.

⁶¹ <http://www.studentskicentarns.co.yu/>

⁶² <http://www-old.unizg.hr/guide/index.html>, 7 June 2006

⁶³ www.sczg.hr (available only in Croatian, *researcher’s own translation*)

⁶⁴ <http://www.sczg.hr/default.php?id=kat&katID=226>

no available means to influence and control the management of the company under its formal ownership.”

My visit to Zagreb included a visit to the Student Information Centre⁶⁵ (SIC), an independent NGO, spun off from the educational advising activities of the Open Society Institute in Croatia. SIC provided educational, study-abroad and career advising services to the Croatian public, including students enrolled in any of the higher education institutions in the country (12/375). In the view of the interview participants, the centre was:

“filling a structural gap in the [higher education] system [in Croatia]” (12/383, 12/388, 12/400); “...because of the need of the students: there was no information dissemination system and they did not have access to information about study in the country or abroad, no information about some kind of mobility system, so this is where this type of centre grew from.” (12/380)

⁶⁵ Now: *The Institute for the Development of Education*, <http://www.iro.hr/eng/index-e.shtml>

4.6. Theme 4: Cases of transformation

In my initial hypotheses, I anticipated that *the comprehensive reform process touches on every aspect of institutional management, including the provision of support services for students* (section 1.3.1). The findings under Theme 1: Factors of institutional change, illustrated a great deal of activity: self-assessment, strategic planning, re-organisation and amendments of regulations at the university and at the faculty levels, resulting from legislative changes, internal initiatives and international developments. **I was surprised, however, that in this context of innovation student services received little mention.** Interviewee comments did not indicate any specific formal discussions or planning related to student support services. Only two remarks from interviewees at Zagreb (5_Stud 8) and at Novi Sad (28_Dean 12) indicated that decisions regarding student support were discussed and taken at the level of the faculty or department, in response to specific requests of the students (5/189, 28/756). This leads me to conclude that **in the absence of ‘pro-active’ institution-wide policies or plans, or staff leadership charged with the strategic development of student support activities, such services remain the result of ‘re-active’ decisions, taken in response to specific needs (or critical situations), which continue to operate in an uncoordinated manner.**

Despite the lack of strategic planning for student support services, in this section I list separate cases from each institution which—in my view—demonstrate transformation and integration of student services.

4.6.1. Establishment of new offices/centres

Centres for psychological counselling had been set up at Zagreb, Babes-Bolyai and Debrecen. At Zagreb and BBU these centres had emerged as initiatives by psychology professors and were based at the respective faculties but available to all students of the university. Having identified a lack in the provision of professional counselling services (other than psychiatric counselling) in Croatia in general, professors at the Department of Psychology (Faculty of Philosophy) at Zagreb had established a **student counselling service** in 1997 (4/151, 4/152). In 2004, the service was available to all students from the university and plans were under way,

with the support of one of the Vice-Rectors, to submit a proposal to the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Family Planning to recognise/accredit this counselling service on a national level (4/156). **The *EXPERT* Centre for Psychological Counselling** at BBU was set up in 2001 and was especially active in reaching out to the students (17/557, 17/561, 17/567, 17/571). By 2004 it was able to function as a self-financed consulting unit. Reflecting on her experience in establishing the centre, 17_Admin 16 recalled:

“It was a little bit like a pioneer work. This centre is a first of this kind in Romania and it is a bit difficult because all the other university centres ... inform students on different courses and faculties. But we do much more than that, it is such a novelty what we did ... It was like we created structures actually from zero” (17/560)

Debrecen launched the **Mental Health Programme** in 2001, a special project under the Rector’s Office providing individual and group consultations on a variety of topics, including drug-prevention.

The Centre for University Development (CDU) at Babes-Bolyai was the most recently-established unit at the time of the site visit (in 2004), and was created by the integration of several smaller ones: “the centre for life-long learning, the strategic management centre, and the quality assurance centre” (16/501). Its main function at the time⁶⁶ was to provide policy analysis and research assistance to the newly-formed Academic Council in charge of policy and strategic planning (16/532). In doing so, **the centre found it necessary to collaborate with all other units and services within the university, and assumed an unofficial coordinating role for their activities, working on a common plan for development** (16/533, 16/534). An interesting comment, confirming the findings in section 4.5.2.2. - University services at Babes-Bolyai and Debrecen, was related to the fact that the traditional services units, such as the Social Service and the faculty administrations, were

“used to receiving regulations from the Senate, and just to put [those regulations] in practice, and not coming up with any initiatives [themselves]” (16/535)

⁶⁶ Description is based on Interview 16, from May 2004. Since then the Centre has developed an extensive website in English [<http://www.cdu.ubbcluj.ro>] with a lot of additional information.

CDU also launched a series of **large-scale student surveys**⁶⁷, “Student Ratings of Instruction”, conducted in 2003 and 2004. The results of the two surveys were published on their website⁶⁸. The actions taken by the university in response to the survey’s findings can be followed in the decisions of the University Senate (Decision regarding the student evaluation, *Universitas 2004*, p. 17)

4.6.2. Evolving roles of existing centres

At Zagreb, Babes-Bolyai and Debrecen, the role of **the International Relations Offices had expanded to include integrated services for students participating in international programmes**. Interviewee 11_Admin 8 saw the institutional involvement in Tempus projects as a vehicle to develop a university-level service—a **support network involving all faculties** with appointed contact people (11/358). Similarly to Zagreb, the Centre for International Cooperation at Babes-Bolyai coordinated the agreements for international cooperation and exchange, and facilitated joint degree programmes and students’ participation in international exchange programmes (15/468). Through participation in the Socrates and the CEEPUS programmes, this office has developed **an integrated advising service for incoming and outgoing students**, and for the public (15/478). In addition to coordinating student and faculty mobility, **these offices also published comprehensive student guides in English**⁶⁹.

Serving the needs of international students had become **a point of cooperation** between the Student Centre of Novi Sad and the university administration (26/719).

Providing support services for students participating in international exchange programmes had become a major focus of activity at faculty levels. Deans at Novi Sad and Zagreb saw this as a new service and “the best service” they provided for their students (8/281, 9/314/, 3/194, 28/757).

⁶⁷ <http://www.cdu.ubbcluj.ro/Evaluare%20En.htm>

⁶⁸ <http://www.cdu.ubbcluj.ro/Evaluare%20En.htm>

⁶⁹ Zagreb: <http://www-old.unizg.hr/guide/index.html>; BBU: <http://www.cci.ubbcluj.ro/prospective-students/practical-information.htm#>; Debrecen: <http://www.unideb.hu/index.php?lC=en>

4.6.3. Students in administrative roles

At Novi Sad and Babes-Bolyai, **student representatives had been included in a formal capacity as members of the Rector's management teams**: a Student Vice-Rector at Novi Sad, and a Student Prefect at BBU.

At Novi Sad, a **service programme for students with disabilities** was launched as a student initiative of the Association of Students with Disabilities⁷⁰ (established in 2001), “which deals with creating equal study conditions for students with special needs”.

Debrecen had delegated a number of **student-related management tasks to the Student Government**. “The university had to establish committees to handle the regulations...there are committees where the majority are students, or exclusively students, one of them is the Accommodation Committee” (35/879, 36/912). The non-profit company, *Debrecen Campus*, co-owned by the Student Government and the university, took over the administration and management of facilities for social and cultural programmes for students (39/952, 39/962).

Students at Babes-Bolyai reported a similar new process of the university sharing responsibilities for student support with the student representatives:

“student services were mostly done by university departments, but not necessarily done well. Part of these responsibilities passed to the student representatives. Now it is like half to the students and half to the university. Now, we try to establish a structure which is more efficient.” (19/615)

4.6.4. Student Services provided by university not-for-profit companies

Debrecen offered an interesting example of student services provision overseen only partly by the university. In the process of integration leading up to the formal merger in 2000, the four universities had established an alliance, *Universitas*,

⁷⁰ <http://www.ns.ac.yu/stara/eng/prezentacija.html>

which—after the integration—transformed itself into a university company, *Universitas Co.* (39/952) A second company was established in 2002 from the merger of activities of the student governments, *Debrecen Campus Co.*, with 50% ownership by the university and 50% owned by the student government organisations (39/950).

These were initiatives of the Student Government and its organisations. As 39_Admin recalled:

“this [company] was created from nothing. The university gave its consent but it did not come up with any idea. The idea was proposed by students. At that time I was a student, when we started it, and those who work here used to be students as well. Now they do it as a regular job and help students. The actual students do not have to conceive it, fight for it, they just have to use it.” (39/956)

By 2004, both *Universitas* and *Debrecen Campus* had a substantial portfolio of managing real estate (the *Lovarda Cultural and Conference Centre*⁷¹), sport facilities, language-teaching facilities, cafeterias, buffets; it employed staff and provided programmes for students (39/960, 39/957, 39/959, 39/963, 34/862, 34/864, 34/870). *Debrecen Campus* published **the university newspaper** and operated **The Pont Iroda Service Centre** (a general student services office) which offered a range of services: city information, accommodation, job postings and career advising (24/867). The interviewees from the *Pont Iroda Service Centre* reported that **the centre was independent from the university and was flexible in providing services upon student demand** (34/861, 34/863).

⁷¹ <http://www.lovarda.hu/>

4.6.5. Concept of integrated student services

Through its participation in the EUA Quality Culture Project in 2003, the University of Debrecen made a complete inventory of its student support services. According to their proposal, the university “wishes to create a motivating, appealing and modern environment for its students that serves scientific training, career building, stable conditions of life and an enjoyable passing of free time. The university wishes to adapt flexibly to the reasonable and continuously changing needs of the students, and continuously widen the scope of support services both in the fields of financial support, and various services and allowances in-kind. **To this end, the university is developing an infrastructure,** and widening the scope of its relations both with its internal and its external partners on the local, regional national and international levels too.”

This inventory (*Appendix XVI*) is **one of the most comprehensive documents on student services in the region that I identified.** Unfortunately, the university has not made this document public within the community, nor taken steps to fully implement it. Apart from the two interviewees who wrote the proposal (36_Dean 16 and 35_Admin 32), no other participant mentioned it in our conversations. Despite its thorough and thoughtful approach to the topic of student services, it did not appear that the university had taken steps at the strategic planning level to consider its implications. The information about student support services which was publicly available fell seriously short of the comprehensive list and analysis offered in the document. It is significant, however, as these recommendations were integrated in the project report published by EUA⁷² (see section 2.4.2.- Student support services – a factor in institutional quality assurance).

4.6.6. Student services in the Hungarian HE Law of 2005

A significant step toward the development of student services in Hungary (and the region) was the inclusion of “Support for Students” as a key element of the 2005 Act on Higher Education:

⁷² *Developing an Internal Quality Culture in European Universities 2002-2003* (2005)

The availability of student loans for studies abroad, the new scholarships for study periods to be completed abroad, the increased budget for normative support for dormitory and accommodation grants, **improving services for students, creating the operational conditions for study and career guidance and for an advisory system**, the support for gifted students in the form of student circles, special colleges, etc. and the possibility of state financing granted for twelve terms fundamentally change students' living and working conditions. **The new act also extends many of the previous provisions concerning students' rights.** (Ministry of Education, Republic of Hungary, *Towards Bologna*, 2006, section IV.9.)

Given the high importance assigned by all interviewees to the need for a legislative framework for the development of student services (see section 4.3.1. - Key importance of—and dependence upon—national legislation), the explicit reference to services for students in the HE law is a significant transformation in itself.

4.6.7. Summary

This section noted the emergence of a number of services and activities, both as new centres or as expanding responsibilities of existing offices, as well as the positioning of students in roles of managerial responsibility. Although these activities were not reported in the course of the interviews as “institutional” services, they constitute an important development in the periphery of the existing structures, or within, which seek to coordinate their functions with those of other related services. The most interesting example of transformation is the one of Debrecen (section 4.6.4. - Student services provided by university not-for-profit companies): the activities and services run by the *Universitas* and *Debrecen Campus* companies, which have grown substantially in the institutional margins, without direct links to the university management structure.

These examples of bulging activity in the periphery provide an important evidence of the development of student services in all operational areas, which are not restricted by legislation and regulations.

4.7. Theme 5: The role of the students

The assessment of student support services is inherently linked to the role students play in university governance and management. In my initial hypotheses, I assumed that students *are considered as partners in this process: their requirements and demands are actively sought and integrated into strategic development objectives; reform is internally-driven, guided by student demand and interest in enhancing the student experience* (section 1.3.2.). Similar to my findings under Theme 3: Assessment of Student Services at the university level (sections 4.5.2. - Services provided at university level, overseen by the university, and 4.5.3. - Services provided at university level, not overseen by the university), which identified varying arrangements inside and outside the university (see *Appendix XV*), **the role of the students in university governance, management and general student involvement in university life varied considerably in the four universities:** the level of student involvement at the universities in Novi Sad and Zagreb was markedly lower than at the other two universities. For this reason, the findings from interviews and literature review on Novi Sad and Zagreb will be discussed separately from those at Babes-Bolyai and Debrecen.

4.7.1. Student involvement

Table 16. Frequency of Interviewee Comments on Student Involvement

	# of Interviews/ Total # of Interviews	# of Quotes (T405)	Deans	Administrators	Students	Others
Novi Sad	6/11	17	1/6	5/7	6/12	-/-
Zagreb	4/12	16	3/6	-/8	5/9	-/3
BBU	7/8	24	1/2	3/5	5/5	-/-
Debrecen	3/10	4	2/4	1/11	-/5	-/2
Total:	20/41	61	7/18	9/31	16/31	-/5

Political situation in Serbia and Croatia

To understand the context of student involvement at Novi Sad and Zagreb, it is important to bear in mind the political turmoil and state of war of their very recent history. In Serbia, the Milosevic regime ended in October 2000. As one student at UNS put it:

“in that time everything was political, either for or against the regime” (31/786).

Croatia declared its independence from Yugoslavia in 1991, and this turned into a full-scale war until 1995. Until 2000 Croatia had a nationalist government led by President Tudjman. A student representative from Zagreb shared:

“I was disappointed, I didn’t think that politics was so deep in all the roots on every stage of Croatian society. I didn’t think that it was like this.” (6/219)

Comments from interviewees at Novi Sad and Zagreb echoed the political tensions inherited from this period:

Students from both institutions thought that there was a high level of student activity but they also felt constrained by distrust and “the political situation”. For example, students at Novi Sad explained: “The Student Union was formed in the 90’s when students started resistance against the Milosevic regime, but it couldn’t work at the university... After the changes in [2000] the Student Union came back to the university and started projects about reforming higher education.” (31/786). In 2005, there were **three main student organisations** at Novi Sad: the Student Association, the Student Union and the Students’ Right, the latter with a political orientation (31/786). **Other student associations⁷³ existed as NGOs** (31/811).

Students at Novi Sad (Interview 31, 6 participants) **noted that because of their history as political organisations, some of the student organisations were slow to integrate into the university structure** (31/786). As a result, their **efforts were dispersed and uncoordinated** (31/809). Although they had the support of the Rector or the deans, and were also given in-kind assistance such as office space and computers, the fact that they could not receive financial support from the university was seen as a hindrance (31/811). In the period November 2004—June 2006, the student section of the Novi Sad website did not change.

⁷³ <http://www.ns.ac.yu/stara/eng/prezentacija.html>

Students at Zagreb (Interviews 5 and 6) also reported that there were many student organisations, and that it was impossible to separate political activism from student activism (5/180, 5/182). 6_Stud 9 complained that there **was a proliferation of student associations for political reasons:**

“For example, if I lost in the elections for the Student Council, I can form a student association. If I have a minister who is in my political party, for example, and something [goes wrong at the faculty], the Student Council [may declare] ‘The Minister was wrong.’ [But] he can have the student association say, ‘No, the student association of this faculty agrees with the Minister.’ He doesn’t admit that this association has ten members, and the Student Council represents all students. In the media, student [organisations] do not differ too much.” (6/216)

Students were unanimous in their comments that the situation was different at each faculty and that support for student involvement was entirely dependent on the dean (5/164, 5/167, 5/169, 5/170, 5/191, 5/195, 6/206, 6/207). For example, a student led project—creating a Student Ombudsman—had been received quite differently at two faculties: the student-friendly dean of one faculty had given endorsement (3/126), while the administration of another faculty rejected the project (5/174).

Such inconsistencies in day-to-day practices discouraged students from becoming involved:

“You hear there are some 400 students in each department, on average about 10 of them are working very actively in the student organisations and they are not interested in having other students to be active, because a number of them have this monopolistic view - they are doing this because they think that they can have some benefit. And so they don’t want to have contacts with other students.” (5/203)

The comments of deans and administrators also suggested the influence of politics on student involvement. 23_Dean 9 at Novi Sad described the three main student organisations as “clearly politically oriented” (23/678). At Zagreb, according to 7_Admin 6, “the Student Council was the invention of the Tudjman government, in

the attempt to get the students close to Tudjman politics...They started to put a lot of money into this organisation.” (7/251). 10_Dean 6 reflected:

“To come back to the students – some of them are too much involved – they are mixing their political and ideological ideas and activities with academic matters. This is the reason they are not discussing enough with each other, or they don’t like much each other, because they have, not all of them, some political glasses through which they are looking at each other.”
(10/342).

Only three deans (one at Novi Sad and two at Zagreb), out of the 12 deans interviewed at both institutions, **suggested that student involvement was actively encouraged and welcomed at their faculty** (28/754,755,761; 8/278, 291; 9/298,299). **The attitude of the other deans was passive, leaving it to students to initiate requests** (1/39, 2/90, 23/692).

As 10_Dean 6 (Zagreb) reflected, all participants needed to be educated that “students are the first players of the game because we are here, buildings, teachers, facilities, for the students” (10/337-338). However, **an effort to change the perspective on students became apparent only in the official literature—by 2005, the language of various official documents referred to “students as partners”** (e.g. the Serbian HE Law of 2005, Article 22; Zagreb’s development strategy *Breakthrough 2001*, p. 5, 21, 26), **or to a “student-centred” teaching paradigm** (p. 23, p. 28). The Rector’s welcome in Zagreb’s *International Student Guide 2004/2005* spoke of **placing the student at the centre of the university’s activity**.

Babes-Bolyai and Debrecen

Both institutional documents and interviewee comments at Babes-Bolyai and Debrecen clearly positioned the role of students as partners and initiators. Interviewees emphasised the importance of good communication with the students, and of working with students as partners in the management of the university.

The former Rector of **Babes-Bolyai** recalled: “The Rector’s office has been continuously open. ... I asked the students – both individually and within

organisations – to assume the freedoms as well as the responsibilities, to deal with the social problems as well as with protecting the quality of studies and with generating performance” (Marga, 2004a, p. 42). Three of the five interviewed students at BBU confirmed that no action had been taken without consulting the students or involving them in the decision-making process (18/601, 18/602, 19/616). Similarly, the Rector’s formal address of 2004⁷⁴ spoke of students as important partners of the academic administration. 16_Dean 8 noted that students worked with the Academic Council to find solutions on academic support, scholarships, employment, involvement of local business, space for student activities, access (16/517), while 17_Admin 16 praised the good collaboration between the *EXPERT* Centre and the student organisations (17/561).

At **Debrecen**, Interviewee 32_Dean 15 acknowledged the role of the students in building a culture of mutual respect and cooperation. He particularly mentioned situations where the Student Government, which is responsible for allocating state scholarships and funding for the students, had decided to contribute the unused remaining funds to the university for the improvement of buildings and facilities (32/833). In his words, “we always had a very good contact with the students” (32/830,834). Two deans reported many informal discussions both at the faculty and the university level (32/840, 36/917-922). Although none of the students at Debrecen commented directly on student involvement, the very significant role of the Student Government could be traced in the recent developments of *Debrecen Campus*, the existence of the *Pont Iroda* Service Office, the Lovarda Cultural Centre, and in the level of independence given to the Student Government (section 4.6. – Cases of transformation).

Students at both institutions felt empowered to take a role in governance and management and expressed satisfaction with the support they received to do so. A comment from 16_Dean 15 at Babes-Bolyai that the administration had a good dialogue with the students (16/547) was confirmed by a student active in a department-based student association, who noted that the university is responsive to, and supportive of, student interests:

⁷⁴ <http://www.ubbcluj.ro/www-en/despre/mesaj-rector.htm>

“We could not do all these [activities] without the support of the university... the relation between the university and us is as though the university is trying to make us part of the decisions” (19/616).

My meeting with six members of the Student Government in Debrecen was organised as a formal dinner, and it was not possible to follow the format of the other interviews. For this reason, there are no student quotes. However, their informal comments did not contradict the observations of the deans: students had been given a high level of responsibility by the university, and my general impression was that they took pride in the work they were doing.

At the same time, **students from Babes-Bolyai remained critical of the level of communication and coordination between the university, the faculties and the students:**

“The problem is in Romania, and BBU is a traditional university, we do not perceive the university as a structure where the teachers and students are not in hierarchical position to each other. And this is the main problem because the professors must be like traditional professors, like in the 16th century, and the students are inferior.” (18/593)

Although the student acknowledged the freedom to initiate changes, he also noted that:

“the bureaucratic structure is so big that if you want to make a change, you have to make a huge process and it is really very hard to make a decision, or to have an idea and to make this idea work.” (18/586)

Another student, 20_Stud 18, felt that the university should be more proactive in creating awareness and open communication between professors and students (20/631, 20/632).

4.7.2. Student representation in university governing bodies

Formal student representation (see *Appendix XVII*), **ensured by legal provisions and/or university statutes, was in place at each university but with varying degrees of effectiveness and influence.**

Table 17. Frequency of Interviewee Comments on Student Government

	# of Interviews/ Total # of Interviews	# of Quotes (T404)	Deans	Administrators	Students	Others
Novi Sad	3/11	16	2/6	-/7	3/12	-/-
Zagreb	8/12	32	4/6	3/8	2/9	-/3
BBU	5/8	20	2/2	2/5	2/5	-/-
Debrecen	5/10	14	4/4	1/11	-/5	-/2
Total:	21/41	82	12/18	6/31	7/31	-/5

Novi Sad and Zagreb

In both cases, the actual role of the Student Union was precarious. In Novi Sad, for example, in the period November 2004 and June 2006⁷⁵, there were three official student bodies: the Student Association and the Student Union, and a Student Coordinating Body, established in 2002, which consisted of 18 members: Student Vice-Rector, Student Vice-Deans from each faculty and 4 members of the University Council - 2 from the Student Union and 2 from the Student Association.

Comments from deans and students focused on explaining the rather complicated system of student organisations and student representation at Novi Sad: while **at the faculty level** student representation was “clearly explained in the statute, it functions and they have a possibility for their voice to be heard.” (Dean, 23/692), **at the university level, it was subject to negotiation.** As one student explained, “the Student Union and the Student Association nominate students [to participate in meetings of] University Council, and then professors decide who will be [the student representatives]” (31/788), thus making **actual student representation the choice of the professors, rather than the students.**

⁷⁵ <http://www.ns.ac.yu/stara/eng/prezentacija.html>

A positive, and somewhat unusual, gesture of involving students in the university management was the establishment of a Student Vice-Rector (a student) as a member of the Rector's team, elected by the professors of the University Council. (31/781-782). Although the short term of service—one year—made the effectiveness of the position doubtful, the initiative was nonetheless important.

The situation was similar in Zagreb: from the perspective of the faculty administration, deans and administrators assessed student representation as being well developed at all levels, with each year electing a representative to the Student Council of the Faculty (2/83, 1/61, 1/71, 3/133, 6/204, 8/292, 9/297, 10/328) who participated at faculty meetings and committees and in the faculty's decision processes (2/82), and were in a position to communicate with the faculty management (2/83, 9/308).

However, the position of the university Student Council was weak (Interview 6). **An unusual situation had occurred during that academic year which further demonstrated the high level of politicisation of student organisations in Zagreb.** According to the law (Student Council Act of 1997)⁷⁶, “the Student Council obtains funds ... from the state budget.” At the same time, the act stipulated that “the programmes of the [student] associations can [also] be financed from the state budget, having obtained a prior opinion of the university's Student Council.” Under this caveat, the Minister of Education had actually withdrawn financial support for the university Student Council in 2003/2004 and distributed the funds directly to the associations. The Minister had justified his action on the grounds that the Student Council had become corrupt, a political tool of the government (7/251), and students of the university did not support it—only some 20% had voted for student representatives (7/256).

As 6_Stud 9 reported, the Student Council “was almost destroyed” (6/215). While the student explained at length the nature of the problem and the steps the Student Council had taken, none of the university deans, nor the other students, referred to this situation. Although 10_Dean 6 referred to the activity of the Student

⁷⁶ <http://public.mzos.hr/default.asp?ru=705&akcija=>, 10 June 2006

Council as “not as it should be” (10/335), the university leadership did not report any steps taken to bridge this problem with the Ministry.

Whether students could influence institutional governance and management in practice did not become apparent from the interviewee comments. However, some conclusions may be inferred from the EUA Reports of 2002: “The EUA teams were pleased to note the growing cooperation between student bodies and the university and faculty leaders ...however, much work is still needed...” (2002a, p. 11); “the involvement of students...should be further developed” (2002b, p. 14). Even in 2004, the *Salzburg Report* noted that “most of the student and academic organisations act as entirely independent entities. The lack of cooperation has made them extremely inefficient in their service provision, both in respect to activity at central level and the centre-faculty interface” (p. 21-22).

Babes-Bolyai and Debrecen

Deans and administrators at both institutions were consistent in their observations that students were able to participate at all levels of the university governance (14/440, 14/453, 16/514). One senior administrator at Babes-Bolyai reported that student representatives raised concerns all the time (16/526), at the highest levels:

“It is a good thing – opening of the university, they don’t need a special person to deal with that, it is a partnership” (16/519, 523)

In the account of 16_Admin 15, it was the Student Prefects who noted that the central services were uncoordinated (16/528) which led to improvement steps.

In Debrecen, in particular, the four deans and one administrator who commented on student representation were very positive, open and respectful (37/931, 41/975, 35/881). Student representatives were involved at every level of university and faculty governance and management, and had participated in the decisions on the changes that followed the university’s integration in 2000. As 32_Dean 15 recalled:

“The first thing which is very important, students’ representatives were sitting at every strategic planning and every important conversation about making these changes.”
(32/829)

This positive cooperation was present both at formal and informal levels:

36_Dean 16 reported that “before every university Senate meeting, I meet the student representatives, they already have the materials and we sit down, and they can ask questions and we can discuss the issues...we try to harmonise things, cooperate and find ways in which they can be connected” (36/926).

Students were involved in both making the rules and in their day-to-day administration (32/837). Employees at the *Pont Iroda* Service Office and *Debrecen Campus* reported that the university did not interfere in their activities and they were free to decide on programmes that best suited the needs of the students (34/870, 34/861, 34/866).

4.8. Theme 6: Institutional self-assessment

My research into the organisational development of the four universities was greatly enhanced by the fact that these institutions had opened themselves to international evaluations by the EUA Institutional Review Programme and the Universities Project of the Salzburg Seminar, or participated in EUA projects (section 4.3.3. - Key importance of international developments and the Bologna process). These projects had resulted in self-evaluation documents and project reports available in English, which the universities readily shared with me (see *Appendix XI*).

In the initial hypotheses, based upon my visits to universities in CEE, I anticipated that *most institutions operate with limited resources and hence the efforts to re-organise their internal structures to enhance the student experience compete with many other priorities* (1.3.6.); and *scarce resources do not easily reach the level of student support personnel for professional development needs; central or faculty-based student-support operations are administrative offices with narrowly-defined functions, whose outreach to students depends on the enthusiasm and personal dedication of individuals, but are rarely acknowledged as essential or critical for the university as a whole* (1.3.7.).

This section focuses on my findings related to organisational efficiency and the potential for student services to contribute to its improvement, the assessed need for qualified professional staff, and for further student involvement, drawing primarily upon the institutional self-evaluations, plans and reports.

4.8.1. Organisational efficiency

Issues of organisational efficiency, and especially duplication of tasks and staff, were present in all four institutions.

Due to their fragmented structures, Novi Sad and Zagreb had no established management mechanisms to reach out consistently to each unit of the university. The EUA evaluation reports on Serbia and Novi Sad (2002a, 2002b) noted several issues related to the institutions' capacity for management and change:

“poor internal communication” (EUA, 2002a, pp. 6-7); multiplication and possible contradiction of activities starting at the “grass-roots” level of the faculties (2000b, p. 9); and the need to improve transparency, especially in all dealings with students (by providing handbooks, course descriptions, expected outcomes, guidelines) (2002a, p. 13). Zagreb’s *Breakthrough 2001*, also identified as a weakness the inadequate infrastructure of the university with regard to information technology and the lack of a unified student enrolment policy to balance the existing enrolment capacities of the faculties with the students’ interests in different fields of study (2002, p. 7). Even in 2006, Vizek-Vidovic and Bjelis (p. 3) still comment on the underdeveloped support infrastructure, particularly regarding institutional research, quality assurance systems and student support services.

The EUA comments on duplication/multiplication of tasks and the number of people doing the same thing were valid for both institutions: “multiple layers of unnecessary and costly duplication in a number of fields (teaching, administration, services) resulting in wasted resources at all levels and a high degree of inefficiency” (2000a, p. 7).

In a similarly open and candid reflection on institutional efficiency, the *Strategic Plan* of **Babes-Bolyai** (2003, p. 4) noted the **“bureaucratic deficiencies” in communication** between the growing number of support activities (internal services): administrative, financial, supply, technical, social, library, international relations, image—“support activities tend to become autonomous, becoming a hindrance instead of a help for the main activities.” Administrative staff from the university shared the same experience (16/528). As the Salzburg VAP *Report on the Visit to the Babes-Bolyai University* (2002, p. 75) concluded, “there are a great deal of continuing structural adjustments that will need to occur if this organisational growth is to be integrated into the institution in a more effective way. **Despite the growing network of student support services at BBU (16/542), there was no single person responsible for their coordination and development.**

One of the deans (and Vice-Rector) at **Debrecen** also reflected on the fact that **many functions at the university were organised and many were still scattered** (36/908), creating a situation where **“everybody is doing it and nobody is doing it”**

(36/922). While the Student Welfare Office was reported to be coordinating many activities, it did not supervise the student services operated by the separate company, *Debrecen Campus* (36/924, 39/963). Although the whole arrangement appeared to be working well, these activities were completely left out of the day-to-day university management. The university (as a 50% owner of the company) had representatives on the managing board but the employees of the *Pont Iroda* Service Office, for example, did not know who those people were (34/864, 865). Within the university, at least two of the deans did not know of the activities of this office or the special support programmes, such as the Mental Health Programme (37/935, 37/936, 41/977).

Among the obstacles to organisational efficiency, the Debrecen *Recommendations for Best Practices in Student Support Services* (2002, pp. 29-32) to the EUA Quality Culture Project mentioned the lack of clear definitions, regulations, and agreement as to handling information on student services; clashing priorities and views; and lack of clear communication practice, **but it did not go as far as identifying the need for a professional appointment of a responsible person, for example, a Director of Student Services.**

4.8.2. Integrated student services as a means of improving organisational efficiency

The integration and better coordination of services was among the list of recommendations for improving organisational efficiency at Novi Sad in both EUA and Salzburg evaluations: “the integration of key common services and functions across the university, e.g. information, student aid, international cooperation, libraries, lifelong learning, regional collaboration, is a fairly obvious step, but accompanied by a network of ‘responsibles’ at faculty levels... The style of operations of these central common services is important, i.e. genuine ‘service’ culture rather than ‘control’ culture, so that these services operating at a high level of quality are wanted and valued rather than imposed” (Salzburg VAP *Summary Report on the Visit to the University of Novi Sad*, 2004, p. 23). Similarly, in the *EUA Report* (2002a, pp. 13-14): “an important number of centralised services (examinations, the centralisation and computerisation of student admission and records procedures) can

and should be offered by the university in order to ensure the efficient organisation of the whole institution.”

The institutional documents prepared by **Zagreb** showed **a gradual evolution in the awareness of the role of student services, from a discussion of various components which comprise student services to an explicit goal of creating Student Support Services**: Zagreb’s Development Strategy, *Breakthrough 2001* (2002, p. 16, pp. 36-42), and the *2004 Self-Evaluation* (p. 13), identified functions related to “the enrolment procedure” (i.e. university information system, institutional research, enrolment planning), and positioned them at the level of the university as a “unitary interactive system” between the enrolment procedure, courses of study, and student-related services, issues concerning the students’ standard of living, sports and leisure activities. In *Breakthrough 2001*, the establishment of several central offices is recommended, including an Office of Enrolment Policy (p. 16) and the design and implementation of a University Information System (UIS) connecting all organisational and administrative activities. Despite the lack of a clear definition, elements of student services functions (i.e. enrolment policy, student retention and graduation rates) were also included in the strategy’s section on quality assurance (pp. 36-42).

The leadership of both Novi Sad and Zagreb had a clear understanding of **the need for an integrated university information system** (7/238, 7/246, 27/740). Judging by the financial constraints faced by each institution, and by the example of Hungary where the *NEPTUN* system was developed at the national level and made available to the universities by the Ministry of Education, **these universities are more likely to achieve this goal if they formulate proposals to their respective Ministries of Education, and put their efforts into working out common definitions and performance indicators.**

4.8.3. Need for qualified professional staff

None of the universities had professionalised student services in an explicit manner—through professional appointments in the senior management to coordinate the work of the units, plan their development and take initiatives regarding all students of the university. In all four universities this was done on the basis of consultative or spontaneous actions, mostly in response to situations as they arose, specific student requests or complaints. Each university had an element of the “everybody is doing it and in the end nobody is doing it” phenomenon described by 36_Dean 16 at Debrecen (36/922).

The institutional evaluations and documents put a special emphasis on the fact that “universities (in Serbia) do not have trained and professional administrative officers capable of providing the essential core functions a modern European university now needs” (EUA, 2002a, p. 6): “doing these jobs at faculty or department level, as is currently the case, means countless repetition of this work across the university, often done in poor conditions by staff who have other priority tasks to achieve or who are not specialised in such jobs. **It also means that it is difficult, if not impossible, to have a university-wide perspective in these often key functions”** (2002a, p. 13). Vizek-Vidovic and Bjelis (2006, pp. 17-18) commented on Zagreb’s Statute as internalising the “importance of professionalisation of the support services essential for the implementation of the decisions and execution of administrative operations.

At Babes-Bolyai, the services within the Rector’s Office were reorganised as “a General Secretariat”. As Marga (2004, p. 52) explained: “the employee in the General Secretariat stopped being a clerk. We tried to create a group of experts and managers...” The *Strategic Plan* of the university (2003, point 6.4.2.) also reinforced the measures to improve the administrative staff. However, these and other efforts to streamline the administrative functions (*Universitas 2004*, p. 74) did not mention who was responsible for Student Services. In the existing structures, the employees at the Social Service Office, for example, were described by other administrators and students as “simple clerks, not involved in strategic planning and not prepared to take an active role in their work” (16/513) or “they don’t decide anything” (18/584).

Although the student support staff at Debrecen were given distinct status – employees of the Registry Offices, Director of Social Policy, Director of Quality Assurance, it was not clear who coordinated their work. Those who were most involved with the students at the faculty level were described as “overburdened, their capacity is low” (Debrecen Proposal to the EUA Quality Culture Project, pp. 24-25).

In three of the four institutions (Novi Sad, Zagreb and Babes-Bolyai), **the functions of the traditional student offices within the faculties and at the university level were delegated to low-level positions** (T312: 2/68; 16/513; 18/584,585; 26/723): department secretary, clerks in Student Offices, administrative support staff, described by Berryman and Drabek as “**conduits of policy, not actors**” (2002, p. 6). Despite the numerous recommendations and references in institutional documents to the need for good administrators, professionalisation, staff development policies, and improved interaction with students (Berryman and Drabek, 2002, p. 6; EUA 2002a, p. 12; Croatia’s *Education Sector Development Plan*, 2005, pp. 19-20), **this much-needed professionalisation did not appear to be reaching the student support administrative levels, and especially the “front-desk” type of positions which had the most frequent dealings with the students.** The fact that many of these positions were not considered proper professional jobs, and were most likely compensated at the level of junior unqualified positions, led to high turnover of staff in some institutions. For example, 11_Admin 8 in Zagreb complained that it was difficult to keep competent young people in employment in administrative jobs (11/370).

4.8.4. Need for improved student involvement

All students who participated in the interviews were elected student leaders of the Student Government/Union/Council, or were involved in associations, clubs or faculty-based projects. **These students reported that their institutions were open to student involvement but—although generally responsive to student requests—the universities left it to students to come up with initiatives and proposals.**

In Zagreb, in particular, a series of comments from deans, administrators and students (1/15, 1/16, 1/18, 1/21, 1/66, 2/81, 2/94, 2/109, 3/121, 3/121, 5/161, 5/165, 10/345), suggested that **student involvement was understood more in the sense of giving students the freedom to organise and act, rather than being an institutional responsibility**. As two students put it:

“Basically there is freedom, no pressure from above to limit student activism...” (5/161);
“There is great freedom in student organisations and activities/initiatives, but as far as the administration is concerned, you are on your own” (5/165).

As a result, there appeared to be **a lot of activity at grass-roots level**, many organisations and associations with small student membership, which led to frustration on the part of the students where too many small-scale projects were competing for attention, lessening their potential to make a difference.

Giving students the freedom to organise activities did not actually result in increased student involvement. Despite the assertion of one student at Novi Sad that “there are many student associations here, and their presence is significant.” (31/789), the number of student organisations listed on the institutional website⁷⁷ was rather small for a university with approximately 38,000 students. Further, as the information on this website did not change in the period 2004–2006, it could be inferred that the dynamics of student involvement did not reach formal levels of recognition. Students at Zagreb reported that the number of those actively engaged is low, some 20% (of 50,000 students) (5/203). At Babes-Bolyai, two students described a state of apathy among the majority of students (18/600, 20/647). 20_Stud 13 and 20_Stud 14 identified the problem as a responsibility of the university:

“We have identified such a problem and it is more related to the involvement of the university in our student projects. Although the university or the faculty want to help us, ... they approve our projects and they stop there.” (20/644)

⁷⁷ <http://www.ns.ac.yu/stara/eng/prezentacija.html>

The only university where this issue did not come up was Debrecen. Student involvement there was a matter of fact, not an objective.

Among the obstacles to student involvement, the reports identified factors such as:

- The perception that students had more nominal/formal, rather than real, responsibilities in the decision-making bodies of the universities (EUA, 2000a, p. 14, *Breakthrough 2001*, p. 27);
- The lack of centres to coordinate the work of the students and the lack of efficient mechanisms, as well as adequate social skills, that would enable students to “stand up for themselves” more successfully (*Breakthrough 2001*, p. 27). At Babes-Bolyai, for example, one student noted that “there is no single place” where students could go (19/613), and so the prospect of going from one office to another discouraged students from taking the initiative or doing anything that would involve a bureaucratic chase.
- The fact that students entered a faculty, not the university (Berryman and Drabek, p. 48), put an additional emphasis on their dependence on the faculty’s professors for extra-curricular support and guidance.

This dependence on individuals, rather than professionalised services, created many inconsistencies of practice (18/589, 18/593). The availability of professors to support student engagement was further exacerbated by the fact that professors frequently had additional teaching engagements at other universities and very limited time to spend at their “main” faculty (Zagreb’s *Self-Evaluation*, 2004, p. 15); “A common practice, which has had a negative impact on quality, has been that a professor would be employed by one university but would be a “guest” lecturer on a permanent basis in one or two others, which would entail “running” from place to place. This practice has had a negative impact on the quality of the work with the students” (Stankovic, 2003, p. 332).

At the time of the site visits, and based upon the reviewed institutional documents, the problems and needs were beginning to crystallise, but none of the

institutions had a clear plan with regard to further steps of implementation. The results of this research project will hopefully provide some guidance as to the role student services can play in strengthening both student involvement and organisational efficiency.

4.9. Summary of key findings

The findings presented in this chapter are based upon common developments identified in the four institutions, and are systematised in a comparative perspective. Findings relevant to this study, which were identified in at least two institutions, are treated with regard to nationally or regionally specific circumstances.

4.9.1. Period of transition and rapid development of HE legislation

Section 4.2. sets the context of higher education development in the region as one of rapidly evolving national policy and legislation toward the following priorities: clarifying the relationship between the state and higher education institutions; the role of the state in creating relevant higher education policies; the process of actual recognition of university autonomy and functional integration guaranteed by normative funding mechanisms; upgrading the efficiency of the higher education sector; and harmonisation within the European Higher Education Area through formal participation in the Bologna process, described as a “fundamental charter of change” (section 4.2.2.1. - Romania).

Key Finding: Since 1989, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe have experienced rapid changes in their national higher education legislations, intensified further by the formal adoption of the Bologna process in 1999 (Hungary and Romania), 2001 (Croatia) and 2003 (Serbia). The rapid pace of legislative change has created a context of permanently shifting agendas and demands.

4.9.2. Institutional change

The findings in section 4.3. (Theme 1: Factors of institutional change) provide an important context for the understanding of how universities are reacting to, developing, or neglecting, the provision of student services. The evidence suggests three factors determining the institutions’ ability to change and respond to new

opportunities: **national legislation, internal responses and international developments**, particularly those following from the *Bologna Declaration* of 1999.

Key Finding: The state of national legislation assumes the greatest importance in understanding each university's development along a continuum of the affirmation of institutional autonomy, self-management and flexibility for internal restructuring. As the most important factor of change, national legislation serves both as a pre-condition and an incentive for universities to plan their development.

Key Finding: The rapid succession of changes in national legislation has put the universities under pressure to act quickly, reducing their capacity for participatory management, and especially consultations with students.

Key Finding: A significant finding for this study is that no one mentioned the students as a factor of change.

Key Finding: Legislative change tends not to go in a simple direction of supporting reform: in parallel to its development, or in spite of the lack of development, the universities in this study have undertaken a number of activities and initiatives in trying to develop their own responses and strategies for coping with change.

Key Finding: All universities are being influenced by international developments and the Bologna process.

Owing to the fast pace of higher education reform over the past 15 years (*Table 5*), the four institutions have developed a sense of entrepreneurship in taking advantage of the possibilities offered within the changing national legislation, and a desire to move toward harmonisation with the European Higher Education Area. However, the strong elements of expecting policy and legal framework to take the leading role reinforced their dependence upon a bureaucratic model where changes have to be regulated top-down. There were no examples of middle management taking the initiative to generate bottom-up changes.

4.9.3. The role of student services

Key Finding: Despite the multitude of examples of institutional change, the awareness of the role and importance of student services is low. It is subject to a narrow interpretation as student support provision in the form of state subsidy, regulated by—and answerable to—the state. In all four case studies, there is an acknowledgement that this area needs improvement but it is given low priority: there are no examples of university-wide discussions or plans for development.

Key Finding: Surprisingly, competition among institutions and student expectations play no role in the provision of student support. Despite awareness of the low preparedness of students in terms of what to expect from their university experience, there is no perceived connection between the lack of adequate information and the lack of student services. A general acceptance of the fact that “students did not have high expectations” (section 4.4.3. - Student expectations) results in a passive attitude on the part of the universities and a sense of discouragement on the part of the students who are intimidated by bureaucratic structures and ‘traditional’ attitudes.

4.9.4. Assessment of student services

Section 4.5. (Theme 3: Assessment of student services) presents a complex network of administrative and support functions, found in all four institutions, but scattered at many levels of the institutional structure: at the level of the faculty; the university; and services provided by affiliated organisations.

Key Finding: Despite the significant recent growth in student numbers, the existing arrangements have not changed, except in the case of Debrecen: student academic administration is performed at the faculty level, while student welfare (provided by the state) is managed either by centralised service units or affiliated centres, independent of the university management.

As could be anticipated from the more advanced national legislations of Romania and Hungary, Babes-Bolyai and Debrecen have established new service units and implemented integrated information systems (section 4.5.2.2. - University services at Babes-Bolyai and Debrecen). A number of services are also provided by the Student Unions, functioning independently from the university.

Key Finding: None of the institutions has a central office, a senior person, or service unit to formally coordinate or plan the work of the different student support units. The individuals' knowledge of what services exist is limited. In fact, this study identified many more services and grass-roots activities than any of the interviewed individuals knew about.

Key Finding: In the absence of 'pro-active' institution-wide policies or plans, or staff leadership charged with the strategic development of student support activities, such services remain grass-roots activities, or the result of 're-active' decisions taken in response to specific needs (or critical situations). They continue to operate in an uncoordinated manner, mostly in the periphery of the faculty or the university.

4.9.5. Cases of transformation

Key Finding: Despite the lack of coordination and strategic planning for the development of student services, each institution presented cases of transformation and integration, such as the establishment of some new offices and programmes, expanding the activities of existing services, or delegating administrative functions to student organisations. Most of these cases were examples of grass-roots initiatives or in response to consequences and opportunities created by other activities.

4.9.6. The role of the students

The role of the students in university governance, management and general student involvement in university life varied considerably in the four universities, as a direct consequence of the national context, political situation, and organisational structure.

Key Finding: Although fully regulated through national legislation and university statutes, formal student representation in university governance does not lead to strong student involvement. Further, giving students the freedom to organise activities does not result in increased student involvement.

In Novi Sad and Zagreb, students felt constrained by “the political situation” and the fact that student organisations functioned as NGOs (not integrated within the university) and were therefore uncoordinated.

Students at Babes-Bolyai felt empowered to take a role in governance and management and expressed satisfaction with the support they received to do so, but remained critical of the level of communication and coordination between the university, the faculties and the students.

Only in Debrecen were there comments from all interviewees and documents which confirmed a partnership, both at formal and informal levels. The significance of this finding is related to the presence in the national legislation of a specific reference to students and the right of veto granted to the students by the 2005 HE law (section 4.6.6.). The Student Union and the university co-owned a non-profit company, which operated independently from the university, providing a number of services to the students in response to student suggestions and demand.

4.9.7. Institutional self-assessment

As mentioned in section 3.10. (Making choices and setting the limits – my development as a researcher), I was surprised by the openness of the institutions to

participate in this project, share their self-study and evaluation documents, and the candid reflections of the interviewees. This in itself is a significant finding confirming the opening of the region to analysis, critique and improvement.

Key Finding: The four institutions in this study demonstrate a high awareness of organisational deficiencies, duplication of work and lack of coordination. Although the professionalisation of service units is more apparent at Debrecen and Babes-Bolyai, none of the institutions have professionalised student services or made appointments in the senior management to plan and develop this area within the overall institutional structure. The reporting lines of such services remain scattered across the institutions: related to the deans, Vice-Rectors for Teaching, Vice-Rectors for International Relations, Economic Directors, the Rector's Office, or other managerial staff.

Key Finding: The staff members from traditional student offices remain "conduits of policy, not actors". Despite the acknowledged need for professionalisation, student services and 'front-desk' operations, which have the most frequent dealings with the students, are delegated to low-level administrative or secretarial positions, who do not have managerial influence in the organisation.

Key Finding: The low level of importance assigned to student services, and to the staff performing these functions, is also a reflection of the low level of student involvement in institutional management and university life.

Key Finding: Student involvement is understood more in the sense of giving students the freedom to organise and act, rather than it being an institutional responsibility. This, too, leads to uncoordinated and dispersed activities, dependent upon individuals rather than institutional support services. Inconsistencies of practice discourage students from becoming involved; freedom to become involved does not result in increased level of activity.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS: STUDENT SERVICES AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE UNIVERSITY CORE

5.1.	Research questions, propositions and findings
5.2.	Discussion of findings
5.2.1.	Factors of institutional change
5.2.2.	Pressures for change and responses within organisational cultures
5.2.3.	Puzzle over the role of the students
5.2.4.	Position and role of student services
5.2.5.	The university left out of the loop?
5.2.6.	The missing management perspective
5.3.	Closing reflections

CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS

STUDENT SERVICES AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE UNIVERSITY CORE

5.1. Research questions, propositions and findings

This research project—inspired by my professional experience of working with an active student body and creating and managing an integrated student services unit at the Central European University (CEU) since 2000—drew upon assumptions about changing student expectations and the role of students as a factor in planning organisational re-structuring and management processes with a view to influencing student services provision. The questions I formulated to guide my research in the assessment of student services as an integral part of the university core (section 1.3.- Research problem and hypotheses) were as follows:

- i) To what extent do changing student characteristics and expectations of their higher education experience influence institutional reform processes;*
- ii) What is the role of students in determining institutional priorities and responses to student support provision;*
- iii) How is student support provision organised to meet student demand?*

My experience of active student involvement at CEU led me to believe that in the 15 years of transformation of higher education in Central and Eastern Europe, the changes commencing immediately after 1989, and with the Bologna process in 1999, touched upon every aspect of institutional management, including the provision of support services for students.

The findings from the four case studies provide ample evidence of institutional change and introspection, innovation, achievement, as well as awareness and critical

analysis of weaknesses. However, my main expectation to find students as active agents in institutional change and in the improvement of the old and the provision of new services for students was not supported by the findings in this study. Although the four universities share the characteristics of an all-encompassing change process, students, and services for students, still play a marginal part in determining institutional priorities and in influencing the service provision and culture.

This chapter will examine the reasons for this and the circumstances which have brought about institutional changes along a continuum of on-going development. Bearing in mind the nature of this study as research into functioning and rapidly evolving organisations, the analysis will focus on a theoretical framework of the common characteristics of institutional progression from one stage to another, across the main themes of the chapter on findings. In this chapter, I will also return to the set of hypotheses I constructed on the basis of the literature review and the lack of sources on student services in continental Europe (section 2.3.2.5.). In view of the findings, my goal is to fill the gap in the literature by providing a set of suggestions on how integrated Student Services can be utilised to address the identified weaknesses in institutional organisation, enhance management efficiency and overall effectiveness.

5.2. Discussion of findings

5.2.1. Factors of institutional change

The findings of this study suggest three main driving forces of institutional change: national legislation, internal responses and international developments, particularly those following from the *Bologna Declaration* of 1999. Although rooted in specific national contexts, in their evolution the legislative frameworks of Serbia, Croatia, Romania and Hungary share common features of rapid legislative change designed to limit political control, transfer fiscal responsibility, tackle the fragmented or highly specialised structures of higher education institutions, and to divest and redistribute powers within the universities (section 4.2. - Setting the context). Two phases—pre-Bologna and post-Bologna—are clearly discernible in the continuum of transition from state regulation to institutional autonomy and self-management in the context of evolving national higher education policy and European harmonisation (Table 18).

Table 18. Stages of Development

	Phase I		Phase II
<i>International Level</i>	Pre-Bologna	→ 1999-2003 ⁷⁸ →	Bologna process
<i>National Level</i>	State Regulation	→ Coherent State Legislation →	Policy Definition European Harmonisation
<i>Institutional Level</i>	Defining Institutional Autonomy	→ Institutional Evaluations →	Self-regulation Self-management Bologna Study Programmes

The legislative frameworks of **Romania and Hungary** dealt with the issues of university autonomy and self-regulation in the pre-Bologna period, and since then the governments and higher education institutions of both countries have directed their efforts to implementing reforms aimed at institutional efficiency and quality assurance, national cohesion and international competitiveness (see Table 5 and the list of reviewed institutional documents in Appendix XI).

⁷⁸ Hungary and Romania joined the Bologna process in 1999, Croatia in 2001, Serbia in 2003.

Croatia and Serbia, which signed the *Bologna Declaration* in 2001 and 2003, are still faced with the implementation of institutional integration and self-governance. As stated in the *Conclusions and Recommendations* of the UNESCO-CEPES/EUA Conference on South-East European Higher Education (2003, pp. 2-3):

University autonomy is now legally protected. The values of academic freedom are embedded in everyday academic work. However, in terms of governance there are still many issues to be addressed. The current organisation of universities as weak federations of legally autonomous faculties hinders the effective implementation of the objectives of the Bologna process. Academic management and administration are still underdeveloped. Although students have a formal role in institutional governance bodies, they are, in practice, in many cases not actively involved.

Although the amendments of the Higher Education Laws in Croatia (2004) and in Serbia (2005) set a clear course of development in this regard, at the time of the site visits at Zagreb (2004) and Novi Sad (2005), the actual re-organisation at the institutional level was still pending.

The recent histories of the four universities in this study reflect their legislative environments and demonstrate a rapid succession of steps, both in anticipation of the changes to come (for example, initiating international institutional evaluations, strategic development planning), and in accordance with legislative amendments (such as revisions of university statutes, study programmes, and internal re-organisation):

- i) In the period 1995-2005, the national laws on higher education in each country were amended to guarantee university autonomy. Each institution has already taken steps in (Babes-Bolyai and Debrecen), or is in the process of (Zagreb and Novi Sad), reaffirming this status in practical terms, limiting political micro-management and interference in daily operations on the part of the government.

- ii) The four universities are operating with a higher degree of managerial freedom, found in their ability to initiate international institutional evaluations, prepare their own strategic plans, internal regulations, and in their ability to re-organise internal structures and administration, as demonstrated by Babes-Bolyai and Debrecen.
- iii) In the framework of European harmonisation and international cooperation, the universities are also able to utilise good practices (implemented through the central International Relations Offices) and compare against international benchmarks. The Bologna process and related national laws have provided clear objectives in this regard.

At the same time, the rapid succession of changes in national legislation has put the universities under pressure to act quickly, reducing their capacity for participatory management, and especially consultations with students, demonstrated by the fact that students appeared to be poorly informed (section 4.3.4. - Lack of student comments/views on factors of institutional change). Although able to take the initiative, the universities are also constrained by the continued state of flux and a sense of uncertainty, demonstrated particularly in the middle management levels (deans and administrative offices). In the context of continuing re-adjustment, there is a tendency to wait for the “new” law and top-down regulations, both as a pre-condition for internal re-organisation and as a reason for not being able to realise bottom-up initiatives.

Administration at the university and at the faculty levels, with the exception of Debrecen, does not feel empowered to amend its practices on the basis of actual service needs, but continues to operate on the basis of government or internal regulations. Although these are periodically adjusted, the process for doing so is slow and has traditionally come from the top. Institutional bureaucracy remains powerful and rigid, often discouraging those with ideas—and students in particular—in getting involved.

New projects and initiatives find an easier way of being realised in the periphery, such as faculty-based activities or student NGOs, but they remain limited

and suffer from lack of continuity and coordination, institutional commitment and funding. As a result, it is difficult for projects with good potential to reach the operations core or have relevant policy impact, a problem exacerbated by the fragmented university structure at Novi Sad and Zagreb, but also apparent in the decentralised structures of Babes-Bolyai and Debrecen.

5.2.2. Pressures for change and responses within organisational cultures

In the Literature Review Chapter, I proposed that (in Central and Eastern Europe) *the characteristics of the nation state university are not conducive to student involvement* (section 2.3.2.5, ii.), reflecting on the fact that the state exercises direct control over the function of the universities through national laws and specific regulations. Although it ensures the provision of the necessary operational support for professors and students for academic purposes (facilities, libraries, record keeping offices, student welfare and living conditions), this support is prescribed and regulated so that universities have no ownership of these functions. As a result, student support operations are seen as purely administrative matters, separated from the core processes of teaching and learning. Unless regulated by the state (for example, student representation in academic governance), student involvement in university affairs remains minimal.

Compared to analyses of the US, UK and West-European models of higher education vis-à-vis the state and the market (Clark, 1983; McNay, 1999; Braun and Merrien, 1999), this study suggests that higher education institutions in Central and Eastern Europe remain closely linked to the state, and dependent upon national legislation for strategic development purposes, including internal governance and management. McNay examined this influence of external policy environment on institutional cultures (1995, 1996 with Dopson, 1999), noting the change from “loosely coupled systems”, as defined by Weick (1976), to “more controlled, more tightly coupled models” (1999, p. 44). Adopting a matrix of loose/tight definition of policy and loose/tight control over activity or implementation of policy, McNay (1995) elaborated four models of organisational cultures in higher education

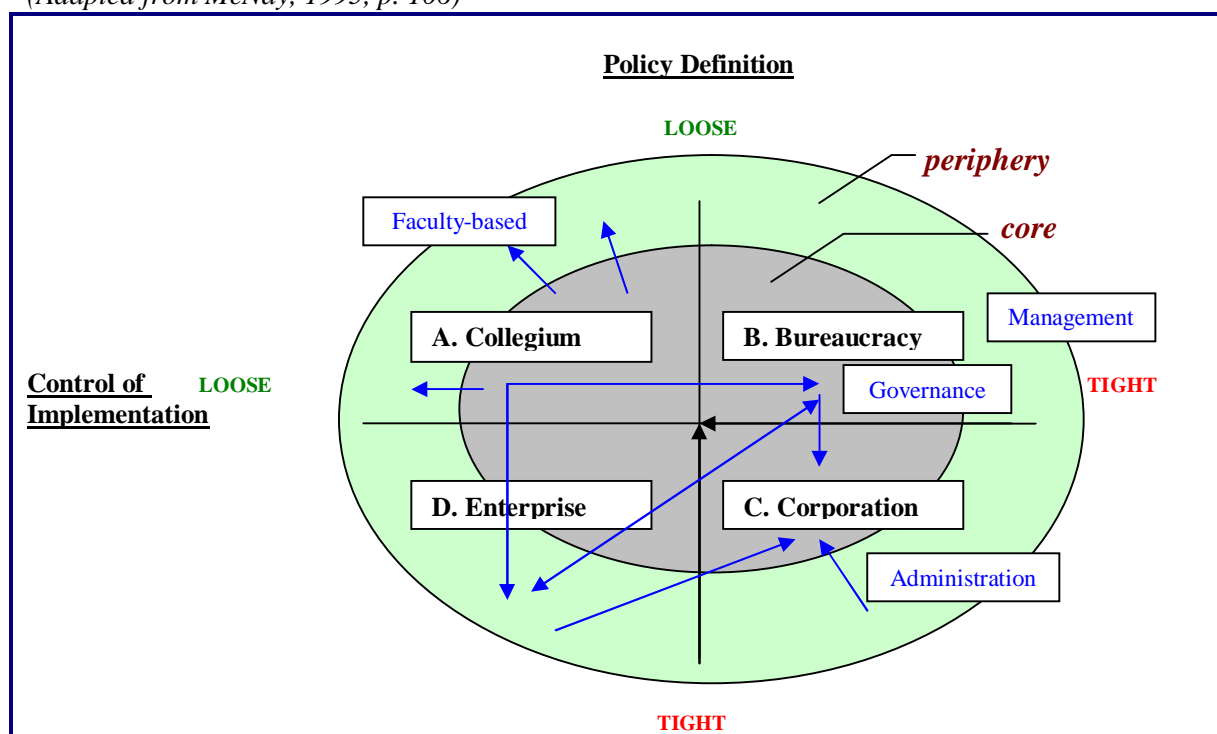
institutions: A. Collegium, B. Bureaucracy, C. Corporation and D. Enterprise. In his view, “organisations are rarely pure examples of these cultures, but there is usually a dominant cultural orientation” (1996, p. 24).

5.2.2.1. Oscillating pathways of change

Whereas McNay suggested a clockwise movement from quadrant A to B to C to D (1995, p. 111), applying this matrix to connect my stated hypothesis to the findings of this research project (*Table 19*), I observed that the pathways of change oscillate from the traditional collegium (fragmented/decentralised academic structures) in an environment of tight policy definition (laws) and tight control of implementation (external and internal regulations) but relatively weak corporate core (central administration). Particularly in the cases of fragmented Novi Sad and Zagreb, where the corporate identity of the university is still in the making, the pressures of laws and regulations have strengthened the culture of core bureaucracy, as well as resistance to core integration.

To explain the effect of this, I added a circle around the core activities to indicate the existence of a bulging entrepreneurial periphery. Although Babes-Bolyai and Debrecen have stronger corporate identities, in the context of high academic decentralisation the opportunities presented by national legislation are still dependent on the Collegium and the governing power of the Senate. In all four cases, the characteristics of change toward enterprise (looking outward, being tuned to the needs of the ‘client’ or the market, McNay 1995, p. 107), currently exist in the periphery of every quadrant rather than as part of the institutional core.

Table 19. Oscillating pathways of institutional change
(Adapted from McNay, 1995, p. 106)



A) The Collegium

At the individual faculty level, quadrant A, where policy definition and control of implementation is 'loose', my findings suggest a growing number of activities supported at the discretion of individual deans and student initiatives (section 4.5.1. - Services provided at the faculty level). However, the dependence on 'tight' legal and policy regulations has pushed such activities outside the core faculty operations where they remain project-driven, individual-led, faculty-dependent, resulting in inconsistent and uncoordinated practice.

B) The Bureaucracy

The formal structures of each institution represent a core bureaucracy in terms of governance (but not management) (section 4.3.2. - Key importance of internal initiatives and responses), operating within a 'tight' policy definition and control of implementation. As Dopson and McNay (1996, pp. 26-27) observe, the characteristics of this quadrant emphasise formal consent processes through committees and procedural power. Their comment that bureaucracy "rarely generates innovation from within itself" is consistent with my findings about the lack of discussion about student

services provision at these levels (sections 4.5. - Theme 3: Assessment of student services, and 4.6. - Theme 4: Cases of transformation). In fact, the tight policy definition factor (opposite to Dopson and McNay's original description) explains the perceptions found in this study that these structures are "rigid". This context renders management aspects constrained and therefore also pushed into the periphery: for example the relatively weak Rector's offices in the cases on Novi Sad and Zagreb, and the devolved management practices at Babes-Bolyai and Debrecen.

C) The Corporation

All four universities demonstrated a strong desire to strengthen their "corporate" identity, apparent in the post-Bologna phase also through national legislation regulating uniform degree programmes, funding mechanisms and self-management. In all cases, interview comments and documents confirmed the idea of a strong "brand" (section 4.4.2. on competition). As Dopson and McNay (1996, p. 27) explain, in this quadrant "image counts for a lot, internally and externally, so money is spent on power suites, not student support."

My site visits to each university confirmed this statement. However much corporate identity was emphasised through events and rituals, and in the case of Babes-Bolyai through publications and the institutional website, the link between core faculty (collegium) and corporation was weak, due to the lack of a strong (empowered) central administration (sections 4.6. – Cases of transformation, and 4.8.3. - Need for qualified professional staff). As Stankovic (former Rector of Novi Sad) (2006, p. 120) summarised: "for Rectors and deans it is often more comfortable to ask academic and governing bodies about how to take each small decision instead of taking individual responsibility and asking bodies only when it is obligatory by law." In all four cases, day-to-day academic administration was delegated to the faculties (section 4.5.1. - Services provided at the faculty level), while overall student support functions (for example) such as student welfare, information technology, student organisations and activities, existed outside the core in a variety of forms both inside the university and outside it (Novi Sad, Zagreb, Debrecen), (sections 4.5.2. - Services provided at university level, overseen by the university; and 4.5.3. - Services provided at university level, not overseen by the university).

D) The Enterprise

From his analysis of the clockwise movement of dominant features of internal cultures, McNay (1999, p. 46) predicted a shift to the enterprise culture in universities, quadrant D. “The enterprise culture may keep awareness of the market to the fore, and re-emphasise the tasks of the university: to serve its clients and communities” (Dopson and McNay, 1996, p. 27). Indeed, three of the four universities in this study have published detailed accounts of their approaches to ‘entrepreneurialism’: Miclea (2006) on Babes-Bolyai; Vizek-Vidovic and Bjelis (2006) on Zagreb; and Stankovic (2006) on Novi Sad, indicating a strong institutional awareness of the concept (based upon Clark’s *Creating Entrepreneurial Universities: Organisational Pathways of Transformation*, 1998).

However, here too it is possible to observe an oscillating movement from A to D, between B and D, and from D to C. For example, Miclea (2006, p. 106) defined the ‘market’ in the regional context in terms of teaching, research and services. The substantial increase in student enrolments—an expanding consumer market—led to an “exponential proliferation” of faculties, study programmes and delivery methods, i.e. growth in quadrant A. Miclea (2006, p. 110) and Stankovic (2006, p. 124) report a number of initiatives and projects, resulting from capacity within the faculties, to provide services to the external community (e.g. the *Expert Centre* at Babes-Bolyai—section 4.6.1 - Establishment of new offices/centres, and the activities of the Novi Sad Science and Technology Park).

Novi Sad (Stankovic, 2006, pp. 120-121) and Zagreb (Vizek-Vidovic and Bjelis, 2006, pp. 172-176) considered—from the perspective of the entrepreneurial approach—how to strengthen university management in itself and in its relation to governance structures (quadrants B and D). Both mention the increasing professionalisation and management roles of their International Relations Offices. Particularly in Zagreb, and also at Babes-Bolyai, these offices have also become major service providers (section 4.6.2. - Evolving roles of existing centres).

My own findings related to services provided at university level but not overseen by the university (section 4.5.3. - Services provided at university level, not

overseen by the university), and in the Cases of transformation (section 4.6.), indicate a bulging periphery of “enterprise” activities, seeking to develop and operate outside the university bureaucracy (quadrant B) and the corporation (quadrant C). As Miclea (2006, p. 108) put it, in terms of providing services “universities are still perceived as too bureaucratic, slow and unable to consider the practical aspects...”

For this study, the tension between the numerous activities in the periphery and the strengthening core bureaucracy is of particular interest. Both are positive developments: a strengthening core bureaucracy (the movement from A to B) implies professionalisation of services, streamlining of policies and procedures, and transparent administration practices; successful enterprise activities—both within the core (the movement from A to D) and in the periphery around all quadrants—eventually need better support and mechanisms to ensure their continuity, as well as their potential to influence core operations and governance. In an environment of rapidly evolving legislative and regulatory statutes, I anticipate that both B and D (and all other activities in the periphery circle) would need the stronger corporate presence embodied in the central (integrated) university administration (quadrant C). Such developments are illustrated by the creation of the Academic Council and the Centre for University Development at Babes Bolyai and the central administration offices in the Rectorate at Debrecen (section 4.5.2.2. - University services at Babes-Bolyai and Debrecen).

5.2.3. Puzzle over the role of the students

Contrary to my expectations to find students as a factor of institutional change, the level of student involvement in university affairs and ability to influence decision-making processes varied in the four universities, and was generally lower than I anticipated. At the same time, the level of student activity in NGO and other—mostly informal—structures was noticeably high. Despite the existence of formal student representation in the university governance (section 4.7.2. - Student representation in university governing bodies), the role of the Student Union was less evident in day-to-day management and operational considerations within the university core. Rather, the activities of the Student Union and other student organisations could be found in

the periphery where both administration and students found “freedom to act”. The findings in this study also suggest that neither deans and administrators, nor students, had high expectations of students being involved and able to participate in or influence institutional processes from within.

Bearing in mind the different national contexts, here it is important to make a distinction between the two countries of former Yugoslavia, and Romania and Hungary.

As noted in section 4.7.1. - Student involvement, the legacy of war and political instability **in Serbia and Croatia** was still present in the attitudes of the interviewed participants. As one informant summarised, the “political glasses” through which students saw each other, their professors and the university administration, distorted the focus on academic matters. The tendency to view student activism as politically motivated created an atmosphere of distrust, polarisation and resistance to integrating student organisations around common objectives. As a result, students at both Novi Sad and Zagreb organised around small faculty-based associations, NGOs, projects, clubs and informal groups, away from the formal channels for student representation. The proliferation of student organisations, the lack of funding and other forms of administrative support, left student initiatives to the level of grass-roots’ activities, and even more vulnerable to the suspicious attitudes toward “activism”.

The *EUA Report on the University of Novi Sad* (2002b, p. 8) noted:

When asked about the support received in their intellectual development, the students thought that they were not neglected. Considering the poor state of equipment and of libraries, observing the very low achievement of students (completion and drop-out rates) the review team wondered if this positive reaction was not due to the lack of comparisons with other (foreign) institutions.

Indeed, the students who participated in the interviews conveyed no hostility or antagonism toward their university, but rather a sense of confusion and resignation

to things as they were. Despite the rhetoric of the official documents referring to students as “partners”, this concept had not reached the level of day-to-day communication and practices. In an environment constrained by such political legacies, fragmentation of the universities, and lack of unified policies with regard to student involvement, the role of the students could be described as that of recipients, operating in a context where they have to ask and, depending on faculty or personalities, they may receive.

The findings from these two cases confirmed my proposition in the Literature Review Chapter (section 2.3.2.5.; iii) that *political events have led to disengagement of the process of teaching from student involvement*. As I anticipated, the wars in the former Yugoslavia and the uncertainties of politics in the newly-formed states continued to maintain strong political orientations within the universities of this region. The environment of mutual suspicion still influenced university teaching and operations to the extent that learning and student engagement remained two separate spheres, the latter being managed mostly by the Student Unions and not by the university.

The role of the students in the governance and institutional management of **Babes-Bolyai and Debrecen** was openly and positively acknowledged by the deans and administrators at both universities. Both institutions had a well-functioning mechanism of student representation in the relevant academic fora. Student representatives reported that the management sought their opinion on all important issues, and expressed satisfaction with the level of their involvement. With both institutions, I noticed a markedly positive attitude on the part of the interviewed senior university administrators, such as the Vice-Rectors, and in selected documents (for example, Marga, 2004a, p. 42).

At the same time, despite assurances that communication and cooperation were encouraged at all levels, student comments suggested that effectiveness deteriorated as problems and solutions moved down the chain of command. The presence of a stronger corporate structure meant that when students took their concerns to the top management—the Rector and the Vice-Rectors—they were met with a higher degree of responsiveness than that of middle management dispersed

throughout the hierarchy of decentralised schools, faculties and departments. As one student from Babes-Bolyai observed, trying to initiate a change in the big bureaucratic structure began a “huge process”, making it hard to reach a decision (section 4.7.1. - Student involvement).

Examples from both institutions illustrate this point:

At Babes-Bolyai, faculties and departments had a small administration under the dean or the department head. Student support, such as orientation, advising, activities and social events, was delegated to tutors, who were junior professors in the faculty. Organising student involvement in out-of-class activities was therefore primarily the duty of the teaching staff. Although a number of student support functions were already offered by separate units at the university level (for example, the Centre for International Cooperation, the *Expert* Centre, section 4.5.2.2. - University services at Babes-Bolyai and Debrecen), students commented repeatedly on the role of their professors, and complained of poor communication and lack of support and encouragement on their part (section 4.7.1. – Student involvement). The students’ main grievances were that the tutor system simply did not work given the high number of enrolled students, and that the rigid hierarchical attitude of the majority of their professors discouraged student interest.

Despite the presence at Babes-Bolyai of new service units (section 4.5.2.2.), students associated the concept of involvement with the role of their professors.

The small number of students who became involved in clubs or NGO-type associations noted that there was a lot of fluctuation and instability, and more disappointments than success stories. From the time when I planned the site visit to Babes-Bolyai University in April 2004, until August 2006, the “student organisations” section of the university website was “under construction”⁷⁹.

The University of Debrecen presented an interesting case related to the role of the students and the degree of operational independence given to the Student

⁷⁹ <http://www.ubbcluj.ro/studenti/organizatii-stud.htm>

Government (sections 4.6.3. - Students in administrative roles, and 4.7.1. - Student involvement). Rather than working through the university administrative structures, in 2002 the Student Union established an independent non-profit company, *Debrecen Campus*, which managed and operated a wide range of student services and facilities completely separately from the core university structure (section 4.6.4. - Student services provided by university not-for-profit companies). Other than university representation on the company's Board, there was no direct link or reporting line between the units of the company to the university administration.

Although a successful venture in itself, this type of “outsourcing” reduced the importance of the services it provided to students as something of little concern for the university. It was rather telling that none of the interviewed deans or administrators referred to the Student Service Centre (*Pont Iroda*), and when asked about it, they had limited knowledge of what it did. According to the interviewees from the Service Centre, the only university office which showed an interest in their operation was the Public Relations unit, for marketing purposes.

Both examples suggest that students at Babes-Bolyai and Debrecen had the ability and the initiative to carry out a number of projects but—intimidated by institutional bureaucracy—they preferred to operate on their own, outside this bureaucracy.

5.2.3.1. Student representation vs. student involvement

One of the key findings of this study is that formal student representation and giving students the freedom to organise activities did not actually result in increased student involvement (section 4.8.4. - Need for improved student involvement).

Although student representation in the university governance structure was a formal requirement, regulated by the higher education laws in each country and by university statutes, with mechanisms for student representation in place at all four institutions in this study (section 4.7.2. - Student representation in university governing bodies), the student activity at this level was limited. To enhance student participation in management, Novi Sad and Babes-Bolyai had also included student

representatives in the Rector's management teams; Novi Sad even gave the title of Vice-Rector for Students to the student representative on the Rector's team.

However, there did not seem to be a clear distinction between governance and management issues. It was assumed that student representation in the University Senate and Faculty Councils provided formal channels for students to participate in decision-making processes at these levels and voice their concerns. I see problems with this position: setting the agendas for Senate and Council meetings is subject to scrutiny from the senior university administration, preparation of reports and proposals, prior reviews and consultations, and often internal lobbying. For student issues to reach the highest levels of university governance, much perseverance and preparation is required, both in time and professional skills which students often lack.

As my own experience has shown, discussing student concerns at the academic fora often leads to stand-offs, documents being returned for re-drafting or further reviews, making the process laborious and time-consuming (at CEU, some proposals brought forward by the students have taken more than a year, and several amendments, to reach consensus).

The findings from this study suggest that the existence of formal channels for student representation did not necessarily translate into active student involvement in all four institutions. Students acknowledged that they were being consulted, but there were no examples of student initiatives being carried out as a result of Senate or Council decisions (section 4.6. – Cases of transformation). The fact that the majority of student activities were taking place at the faculty-level or in separate NGO-type associations indicated that students tended to become involved outside the formally established channels.

Another contributing factor was the low level of expectations both on the part of the institutions and on the part of the students (section 4.4.3. - Student expectations). In part, these attitudes were attributed to “traditional views” that learning took place in the classroom and that the rigid authoritarian manner of the professors resulted in good discipline and student compliance (EUA Report, 2002b, Zagreb's *Self-Evaluation*, 2004, Babes-Bolyai student comments in section 4.7.1.).

Student enthusiasm for out-of-classroom activities was therefore not perceived as a learning tool but rather as a means of social development, which deans and professors did not see as part of their duties in the university. They expressed concern about the fact that students did not attend classes but made no comment on how the department or faculty proposed to motivate student attendance. As one dean from Novi Sad noted, the university was still too “permissive” and not concerned with raising standards and expectations of the students.

Similarly, the interviewed students felt constrained by rigid boundaries and were shy to comment on the question about their expectations. While some students thought that no one cared, others found explanation in the fact that already there were too many problems at their university and they did not want to add to these.

The introduction of student fees (Novi Sad, Zagreb and Babes-Bolyai) had not changed the situation. Although one interviewee stated that students did not have high expectations because they did not pay fees, none of the other interviewees acknowledged any link between the introduction of fees and the need for improvements (section 4.4.3. - Student expectations). The analysis of student responses from Novi Sad suggested that, in the circumstances of extreme financial difficulties, students were satisfied with very little: they wanted to see their teachers get paid, and accepted basic improvements to the library, a few extra computers, or having a coffee machine in the corridor, as sufficient.

5.2.3.2. Emphasis on the role of the professors

In the Literature Review Chapter, I examined the dominant characteristics of the German/Humboldtian university model (sections 2.3.2.1.- 2.3.2.2.), tracing the history of university-student relations in continental Europe (sections 2.3.2.3. - 2.3.2.4.). My review of the literature sources led me to the proposition that *student development is seen primarily as a cognitive process guided by individual professors* (section 2.3.2.5., i). Attributing this to the legacy of the German university tradition, in which professors assumed the central role in teaching and student guidance, I developed an explanation that student development was interpreted as a pedagogical approach to teaching and research training, rather than the overall psychological and

social development of the student as an individual. The resulting focus on student activities in the classroom, under the guidance of the professor, minimised attention to student life outside the subject, the specialization, and the faculty in which the student was enrolled. Cognitive development took precedence over the cultivation of non-cognitive characteristics.

The findings of this study indicated a strong sense of ownership, on the part of the deans, of the responsibility for all student affairs (section 4.5.1. - Services provided at the faculty level), except for social welfare. The strictly faculty-based student academic administration meant that all arising matters, both academic and non-academic, were dealt with inside the faculty. With the exception of Debrecen, the staff of the Faculty Secretariat/Student Office did not have a meeting forum at the university level to share information or discuss particular problems. As a result, the process of identifying student needs, working to meet student requests or solutions to problems, was limited within the faculty, without a channel to reach higher levels for policy discussion, overall planning and evaluation of these services.

As one key informant put it: “[the students] raise their problems to all of us; they come to the college of the Senate once a week. There is quite an active communication. It’s very good. And it’s a kind of partnership. They [the students] don’t need a special person” (16/522, 16/523). While the opening up of channels of communication was perceived as a positive development, the ability to raise concerns at all levels did not necessarily lead to more efficient management and decision-making regarding the students. As another key informant commented, “there are so many people who are responsible—the Rector, Vice-Rectors, Deputy Chairs, Academic and Teacher Education Affairs, ... but you have to build it up systematically so it’s not just that everybody is doing and nobody is doing it” (36/922).

The need for a systematic approach was acknowledged fully in the institutional self-assessment reports on organisational efficiency (section 4.8.1. - Organisational efficiency): there was a clear awareness of the resulting duplication of tasks and staff; communication deficiencies among the various units; the lack of clear definitions, regulations, and agreement as to handling information on student services;

clashing priorities and views; and lack of clear communication practice. However, the growth in structures, programmes and student organisations apparent in all four institutions had not yet resulted in a proper inventory or institutional planning. None of the institutions had a single person or an integrated unit responsible for coordination and strategic development of student support services.

5.2.3.3. Support for student involvement

Returning to the definitions and concepts presented in the Introduction and in the Literature Review chapters, a key element in the understanding of student involvement is the recognition that the university experience is a process of “comprehensive development of the student” (section 1.7., *Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education*, 2006, p. 34). The explicit role assigned in this document to student support services as “an integral part of the educational process” and as “a well-organised and appropriate programme” suggests that student involvement is not something that happens spontaneously or by itself (i.e. giving students the freedom to organise) but should be the result of a well-thought out institutional programme that goes beyond the teaching and operational side to focus on all aspects of student development.

In a comparative perspective, using the literature review across US, UK, continental Europe, and Central and Eastern Europe, here it is important to re-emphasise the evolution of research on student development and its impact on professional practice (*Table 20*). When analysed in conjunction with developments in the United States, the fact that support for students, and student services, remains marginal in continental Europe is related, among other historical and political circumstances, also to the absence of such research or the lack of connection between educational psychology, organisational behaviour studies and student services practice.

*Table 20. Evolution of ‘Student Development’ concepts in a comparative perspective
(Based upon sections 2.2.2.; 2.2.6.; 2.4.; 4.6.)*

United States:	Student Development <i>(Focus on the integrated whole)</i>	Student Affairs/Student Services <i>(Integration into the core)</i>
1950- 1990s:	Student Development Theories <i>(Focus on the individual)</i> <i>e.g. Chickering (1969, 1993), “Seven Vectors of Development”</i>	Student development (support) programmes and services <i>e.g. Chickering (1987), “Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education”</i>
1980-1990s:	Student Involvement <i>(Focus on the learning environment)</i> <i>e.g. Astin (1984, 1993 and 1997) “theory of student involvement”</i>	Student affairs professionals as key partners <i>e.g. Astin (1993) equal emphasis on academic and non-academic activities, student interaction and peer group relations in housing, counselling, student government, student activities, and student organisations</i>
1990-2000s:	Student Engagement <i>(Focus on the interaction between individual and environment)</i> <i>e.g. Kuh (1994, 2000), National Survey of Student Engagement</i>	Supportive Campus Environment <i>e.g. NSSE 2000 Report: “Students perform better and are more satisfied at colleges that are committed to their success and cultivate positive working and social relations among different groups on campus.”</i>
UK: 19 th -20 th c.	The Concept of Pastoral Care	Residential College Campus
1990-2000s:	The Student Experience	Dearing Report (1997); QAA; <i>Enhancing the Student Experience</i> (The 1994 Group, 2007)
Continental Europe:	The Social Dimension of higher education	Bologna process: “the social dimension” of higher education (2001, 2003); Quality Assurance: <i>Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in EHEA</i> (2005); <i>EUA Quality Culture Project</i> (2002-2006)
Central and Eastern Europe:	Students as Partners	Bologna process (2001, 2003); Hungarian HE Law of 2005

Among the most important factors influencing the development of student services in the United States is the substantial body of research on student development since the 1950s (section 2.2.2. - Student development theories). Beginning with educational psychology and student development theories, studies have moved from focus on the individual to the examination of environmental

characteristics and the interaction among these. The combination of student development theories and the effect of “institutional characteristics, programmes and services, students’ experiences, faculty members” (Pascarella and Terenzini, 1991, p. 18) is a long-standing contribution to the evolution, and explicit recognition, of the role of student support services.

As *Table 20* illustrates, in Europe the focus on the “student experience” (section 2.2.6. - Summary of trends in the United Kingdom), on “the social dimension” of higher education (section 2.4.1. - Student support services – a factor in supporting international student mobility), or on “students as partners” (section 4.6. - Cases of transformation), is very recent, resulting from external factors such as quality assessment, quality assurance guidelines, policy studies, legislation and the Bologna process. In the *EUA Quality Culture Project, Round II – 2004*⁸⁰ (2005, pp. 25-26) student support services emerged as an essential management tool in student recruitment, admission and retention, emphasising academic support, social integration, academic and regulatory structures, and data management.

However, because of the voluntary nature of the Bologna process, dependence on diverse national accreditation standards and legislation, and institutional decentralisation or fragmentation, such external guidelines have not been absorbed in institutional management, especially in environments where deans and professors retain the overall responsibility for student affairs and believe that “*students don’t need a special person*” (16/522, 16/523). As section 4.8.2. (Integrated student services as a means of improving organisational efficiency) summarised, although the EUA and Salzburg evaluations of Novi Sad and Zagreb’s Development Strategy have consistently recommended the integration and better coordination of services, none of the institutions in this study has reached consensus on how to achieve this. The lack of trained personnel (section 4.8.3. - Need for qualified professional staff), dispersed supervision (section 4.5. - Theme 3: Assessment of student services), and low recognition of the role of student services (section 4.4.1. - Institutional awareness of the importance of student services), exacerbated the difficulties in internalising the meaning of student involvement as an institutional responsibility to be accomplished

⁸⁰ *Developing an Internal Quality Culture in European Universities: Report on the Quality Culture Project, Round II – 2004* (2005)

through a structured and systematic approach to student support services. Deans, in particular, had no awareness of the role student services could play in this regard.

Returning to Astin's theory of student involvement (1984, 1993 and 1997), (section 2.2.2. - Student development theories), and the importance of a learning environment where students are actively encouraged—both by their professors and by institutional structures—to spend time at the university, interact with each other, and participate in activities designed to support this involvement, the puzzle over the role of the students becomes less surprising. Despite the good intentions and slogan-type statements (sections 4.4.1- Institutional awareness of the importance of student services., 4.6. – Cases of transformation and intergation, and 4.8.4. - Need for improved student involvement), the case studies demonstrate that little can be achieved without institutional programmes and structures whose purpose is to integrate and bring the numerous activities from the enterprise periphery into the core.

As long as the universities remain content with the formal aspects of student representation as a fulfilment of student involvement, this study claims that student organisations and student-run services will tend to exist as an enterprise periphery of little consequence for the organisational culture or for creating a “service” culture.

5.2.4. Position and role of student services

Consistent with the findings grouped under section 4.7. (The role of the students), the findings on the position and role of student services (section 4.5. - Theme 3: Assessment of student services) confirmed my expectation to find this area of institutional management overlooked and underdeveloped, both in the relevant national legislation and in the context of all other ongoing institutional reforms (hypotheses 1.3.6. – 1.3.8.).

The four universities in this study admit and enrol tens of thousands of students, and yet the concept of student services has not made its way into institutional cultures and practices. As seen from the history of student movements and higher education traditions in Central and Eastern Europe (section 2.3.2. - Attempt to construct a history of student support services in continental Europe.),

public universities in this region do not subscribe to the idea of a service-oriented culture. Not surprisingly, I did not find a comprehensive student services office at any of the four universities in this study. This term had to be explained to the majority of interviewees, some of whom even understood it to mean services performed by students.

Regardless of the terminology, the study identified a number of core administrative functions related to the students' admission, enrolment and progress toward graduation, student welfare and advising for special programmes, which existed at various levels of the organisational structures. As these functions were largely dispersed and decentralised, the analysis of their position and role examines the links, or the absence of links, between the separate units as a pre-condition toward organisational change in this area.

These administrative functions fall into two main categories, with a third one emerging. The first category comprises all functions related to student academic administration: enrolment and fees, registration for classes, examinations and grades, and progress toward graduation (in other words, functions performed by the Registrar in the US, or the Academic Registrar or Student Records offices in the UK). The second category includes functions related to student welfare administration: accommodation, financial aid, and—in some cases—dining facilities. Both have a distinct position and could be identified in all four institutions. The third category, related to student life and student activities, is less specific in its location in the organisational structure, and comprises functions and services which have emerged as a result of special projects, student requests, partial reorganisation or external influences. Unlike the first two, which were part of the traditional structure and static, the latter were dynamic, coming into existence as a response to emerging student or institutional needs.

5.2.4.1. Student Academic Administration

In all four universities, student academic administration was located at each faculty, under the supervision of the relevant Dean. Depending on the size of the faculty, the routine administrative functions were performed by a Student Office (Registry Offices at the University of Debrecen) within the faculty or by the faculty secretary. All student matters which were not prescribed in university or faculty regulations were dealt with by the Dean, or the Vice-Dean for Teaching/Students, through individual consultations or at the Faculty Council meetings. As one dean described, the Student Offices at the faculty “had a very concrete task” (28/752) and performed a strictly clerical role with varying degrees of computerisation and automation. At Novi Sad and Zagreb, faculties operated their own student information systems ranging from paper-based/minimal automation to more sophisticated but not integrated computer programmes. At Babes-Bolyai and Debrecen, all functions of the academic administration were automated through integrated university information systems, the most advanced of which was the *NEPTUN* system operated by the University of Debrecen.

Despite the assumption that university and faculty regulations ensured consistency and similarity of operations in a decentralised setting, the findings from this study suggest that faculties had high discretionary powers to make internal decisions (section 4.5.1. - Services provided at the faculty level). Over time, the accumulation of discretionary decisions over clerical functions has influenced the internal culture and operational dynamics leading to the perception, conveyed by the majority of interviewees, that each faculty was different: the strong, or weak, personality of the dean(s), rather than policies and procedures, dominated decision-making especially with regard to student issues and administration.

The description of the staff members responsible for student academic administration as clerical staff who execute but have no decision-making power enforced these perceptions which, in turn, pre-determined the attitudes toward these functions and the role that they could assume in practice. This problem was exacerbated by the fact that the staff members of the student offices, or the secretaries performing these duties, had no contact among each other across the faculties. They rarely participated in Faculty Council meetings, and had no organised forum for

cooperation or information exchange with colleagues from other faculties. The student academic administration performed within the faculties was therefore a limited and isolated activity, also described by student interviewees and evaluation reports as rigid.

For this study, this situation also suggests that student academic administration is input-oriented, looking to collect rather than manage information, which reduces its capacity to support enrolment planning, student retention and monitoring of students' progress toward graduation.

One exception to this conclusion is the network of Registry Offices of the faculties at the University of Debrecen. Heads of the Registry Offices from different faculties were reported to have periodic meetings, and although the person who commented on this did not assign a special importance to such meetings, the fact in itself suggests an emerging specialization and professionalisation of the administrative services in this area. In addition, the central administration under the Rector included an Office of Academic Affairs and an Office of Informatics, which managed the integrated student information system. The latter was in direct contact with the registry offices at each faculty. Although the Head of the Registry Office at each faculty reported directly to the Dean, and there were no other reporting links between these offices and central administration, this example also illustrates a pathway of change toward informal coordination.

5.2.4.2. Student Welfare Administration

The study identified two models of student welfare administration, which were country-specific. In Serbia and Croatia this administration was delegated to separate legal entities, in effect non-profit companies, regulated by the so-called Student Standard of the higher education law. The Student Centres of Novi Sad and Zagreb were direct recipients of state subsidies for student scholarships, housing and dining, and operated the student residence halls and dining facilities completely separately from the university administration. In the case of Zagreb, the Student Centre was also responsible for social and cultural activities, and was the home of the Student Government. In Romania and Hungary, state funds for student scholarships were

allocated to the universities, and were administered by central university offices: the Social Service at Babes-Bolyai University, and the Student Welfare Office at Debrecen.

In all four cases, the units responsible for student welfare administration operated on the basis of strict government and university regulations. As a result, their role could be described as that of gateway keepers and “conduits of policy” (Berryman and Drabek, 2002, p. 6). Although the functions of these units came closest to the services sphere, my observations from the site visits indicated a lack of service culture, especially if one thinks of the Student Centre from a student-oriented point of view.

In Novi Sad, the Student Centre was located in a separate building on the university campus, together with the largest student cafeteria. Despite its central location, it was not a meeting place; the facilities were basic and impersonal suggesting a clinical-type efficiency rather than a place designed to enhance the student experience. The staff of the centre were able to quote statistics of the number of students that were housed in the residence halls or fed in the cafeterias, the grams of student meal portions, almost in an army-camp fashion, but could not answer questions about cooperation with the students or student life activities.

In Zagreb, the Student Centre was also centrally located, but the building was in a poor condition; upon entry in the student cafeteria heavy iron bars directed the flow of the queue to the serving counter; the centre was sparsely furnished, there was no decoration on the walls to suggest that this was the home of student life.

The Social Service Office at Babes-Bolyai was located in the main academic building, as part of the ‘Economic Directorate’ (Budget, Finance and Facilities Management), but it was rather difficult to find and was also surprisingly small (four-five staff members seated behind computers in one room, within a university of 45,000 students). For this type of front-desk, face-to-face nature of the service, the office space and its arrangement also seemed inadequate. None of the staff of the Student Centres or the Social Service had been consulted or invited to participate in strategic planning meetings at any level of the university administration.

The situation at Debrecen again offered an insight into different dynamics. The Student Welfare Office (more recently renamed to Office of Quality Policy and Development) was among the central administrative units under the direct supervision of the Rector. The Director of the office was a member of the senior management team, responsible for the implementation of government norms and for designing university policies and procedures based upon consultation with the heads of the schools and faculties. Located in a separate building, in close proximity to the offices of the Student Government, the Student Welfare Office had a coordinating role for the various committees responsible for the distribution of scholarships and spaces in the residence halls.

Judging from the symbolic significance of the illustrations above, the role of the student welfare administration in three out of the four institutions was seriously neglected. For the students, these services were of great importance—one student from Babes-Bolyai admitted that when she prepared for the interview, her first thought about student services was related to the Social Service Office. For the university management, however, these functions took place at a distance, and were perceived as the responsibility of other entities.

The emphasis on top-down regulations and the absence of formal or informal links, resulting from the rigid separation of student academic administration from student welfare administration, suggest that the academic experience of the students was viewed as a different matter from that of their social experience of the university, and the two were not connected.

5.2.4.3. Special Projects / Other Activities and Emerging Services

While the traditional administrative functions offered limited opportunity for student involvement and the development of a service culture, numerous other activities have emerged in the ‘unregulated’ organisational periphery.

At the level of the faculties, some were using internal funds to make improvements to their study facilities, to open information centres or student common rooms with additional computers, to diversify the communication channels through

printed materials and electronic noticeboards, or to support student activities and participation in international exchange programmes. These improvements and special projects were at the discretionary decision of the dean, and varied significantly from faculty to faculty. In two cases, faculty-initiated projects, such as the psychological counselling centres at Zagreb and Babes-Bolyai (section 4.6.1.- Establishment of new offices/centres), had achieved broader recognition and were functioning as university-wide centres.

At the university level, the International Relations Office at each institution had expanded its scope of responsibilities to include advising and practical assistance for students participating in international exchanges (section 4.6.2. - Evolving roles of existing centres). The interviewees from Zagreb and Babes-Bolyai referred also to the coordinating role of their offices and the establishment of an informal network of contacts from each faculty. Indeed, deans across the visited faculties consistently reported that student involvement in international exchange programmes was one the “best services” provided to students. Unlike other institutional publications, the information packets and advising services offered to incoming and outgoing students, as well as promotional materials prepared in English and other foreign languages, offered a comprehensive description of the institutions and a description of support functions (services), combining academic advising and practical assistance, which were prepared and organised by the staff of the International Relations Offices.

Unfortunately, none of the interviewed students referred to the international programmes or to the level of services in this area. As two interviewees from the International Relations Offices at Zagreb and Babes-Bolyai explained, the number of students involved in these activities was still quite low. For example, at Babes-Bolyai 420 students—or less than 1%—participated in Socrates and Erasmus exchanges in 2003/2004 (15/472). This suggests that despite the positive examples set by the International Relations Offices in creating an integrated form of advising, orientation and practical assistance, the number of students who benefited from these services was so low that this form of ‘good practice’ simply could not achieve a broader impact on institutional management.

The consolidation of services and the coordinating role of the International Relations Offices as a ‘one-stop-shop’ for student enquiries were oriented primarily to meeting the special needs of incoming international students and helping them navigate the institutional structures, on the assumption that regular students received this type of support from their departments and faculties.

Three universities (Novi Sad, Babes-Bolyai and Debrecen) also reported recent efforts to organise student recruitment activities in the form of education fairs, professors from faculties visiting local schools, increasing numbers of printed brochures, and information for prospective students on the university websites. These events were still rather spontaneous in nature and uncoordinated as a continuous activity. For example, at Novi Sad the education fair and developing the website to include admissions statistics were suggested by the Rector; at Babes-Bolyai the main focus was on printed materials and information on the website, and professors who travelled on professional assignments, such as school inspections, combined their travel with specific presentations about their faculties; the Education and Career Fair at Debrecen was an initiative of the students. Although the interviewees acknowledged that these were important activities, none of the universities had assigned this task to a particular person or office to be organised on an on-going basis.

At the University of Debrecen, the non-profit companies established by the Student Government, and co-owned by the university, offered a unique example of a student initiative which had resulted in an integrated student life service outside the formal university structure. The two entities, *Universitas* and *Debrecen Campus*, employed professional staff (many of whom were former students of the university) and managed real estate, facilities, dining services and a Student Services Centre. The recently renovated (and very impressive) Lovarda Building served as a multi-purpose Student Common for social events, conferences, exhibitions, and dance parties. The Student Services Centre (*Pont Iroda*) provided practical information on renting accommodation in the city, travel and entertainment, as well as information about job opportunities, career guidance, and specialised presentations, published a student calendar, a university newspaper, and a variety of other materials.

The interviewees from the two companies and the employees of the Student Services Centre commented positively on their independence from the university management and mentioned their ability to react quickly to student interests and market opportunities. The comments of one interviewee, however, that “The university was offered these opportunities by students, and not the other way round. The university had to be convinced.” (36/961), and “the university gave its consent but it did not come up with the idea...now students do not have to fight for it” (39/956) suggest that students perceived the university structure as unresponsive, and took the opportunity presented by the law and the university re-organisation to set up their activities outside the university structure.

5.2.4.4. Position in the Organisational Structure

Following the theoretical model developed in *Table 19: Oscillating Pathways of Institutional Change*, the position of the existing student services is unevenly spread across the quadrants of organisational settings and cultures, which has a direct impact on the role and perceptions of the management capacity of these units.

Student academic administration (section 5.2.4.1.) can be located within the Collegium and Bureaucracy quadrants, with extension to the Corporate quadrant in the cases of Babes-Bolyai and Debrecen, where the integrated student information systems provide a vehicle for centralised reporting and monitoring. At Novi Sad and Zagreb, **the student welfare administration** (section 5.2.4.2.) is located in the periphery of the Bureaucracy quadrant, since the two centres are not formally part of the university administration; at Babes-Bolyai it is located inside the core Bureaucracy quadrant, and at Debrecen this function can be located in the Corporate quadrant. Apart from the specialised services offered by the International Relations Offices—an example of diagonal positioning between the Collegium and Corporate quadrants—**other activities and services** (section 5.2.4.3.) take a position in the periphery around the Collegium, the Bureaucracy and the Enterprise core.

From an institutional development perspective, in the absence of an integrated student services programme across the four core quadrants, the four case studies of predominantly Collegium-type universities display similar characteristics:

i) Functional silos—student-related administrative functions are formally separated and located in different parts of the organisational structure, which are not directly connected and report to different positions in the institutional hierarchy. **No one single person or unit has complete overview of the processes, the links between functions, or control over consistency of implementation.**

ii) Focus on administration bureaucracy rather than the student—in a tight regulatory environment the separate functions fulfil specific duties with a limited scope. Amendments to prescribed duties depend on changes in the laws or by the highest university governance body, so that the individuals who are responsible for the student-related administration have **limited flexibility to make adjustments based on experience or student needs.**

iii) Bulging pockets in the periphery—innovative projects and diversification of offerings work their way into the unregulated space around the core functions, assuming informal roles or NGO-type operations in small pockets around the faculties, the central bureaucracy or as enterprise activities outside the university structure. The majority of such activities lack continuity and remain small-scale, with **limited capacity to influence their integration as university services.**

iv) Duplication of effort and low achievement, resulting from the **lack of a coordinating body and specialised channels for information dissemination.** As one interviewee vividly put it, dispersed activities under the supervision of different officers led to the “everybody is doing and nobody is doing it” phenomenon (36/922).

For the purposes of this study, the existence of discrete administrative functions, and their uniformity across the four institutions, is an important factor in identifying the building blocks toward creating a student services programme. The introduction of integrated student information systems at Babes-Bolyai and Debrecen

has led to systemisation of data processing, a pre-condition to effective enrolment planning, and monitoring of retention and graduation rates. Although Novi Sad and Zagreb do not have integrated student information systems, there is a strong awareness of the need to create or integrate such systems. In my view, this is a matter of time and adequate financial resources.

Various types of informal student life initiatives, counselling assistance, special services, and NGO associations exist at each university. While the majority are faculty-based and frequently one-time events, these initiatives indicate awareness of the gaps in the formal structures and interest in optional programmes. At each institution, there was at least one example of a new continuous service, such as the services provided by the International Relations Offices, the Association for Students with Disabilities in Novi Sad, the Student Ombudsman Project at Zagreb, the psychological counselling centres at Zagreb and Babes-Bolyai, or the Student Services Office at Debrecen operated by *Debrecen Campus*.

Although all four universities subscribe to the notion of a “student-centred” environment, and to the idea of students as “partners”, phrases which now appear in higher education laws and official institutional publications and websites, the meaning of this concept is not fully understood. None of the institutions in this study has actually held a university-wide discussion on this topic and its practical implications. The only exception I found is Debrecen’s participation in the EUA Quality Culture Project in 2003 (section 4.6.4. - Student services provided by university not-for-profit companies), in which the university prepared a comprehensive inventory of its student support services. However, my research into the actual student support structures within this university suggested that this thorough and thoughtful document of student services (*Appendix XVI*) had not made its way to the level of strategic planning or institutional implementation. Where institutional management is concerned, consulting students, including them in decision-making, and delegation of responsibilities, are part of this, but a student-centred approach also requires a change of culture in the administration of all student-related tasks. Functional silos present an obstacle to such a change. None of the administrative units I visited saw itself explicitly as a “service”.

Functional separation, rather than integration, is still the predominant model of institutional organisation in the four universities. Discrete administrative functions are supervised by different officers: Deans, Vice-Rectors for Teaching, Vice-Rector for Process Control, Vice-Rectors for International Affairs, Economic Directors, Directors of Academic Affairs, Director of Student Welfare, Directors of Student Centres, Directors of IT and Information Services. These officers are unevenly—or not at all—represented in the senior university management teams. Normally, the Vice-Rector for Teaching and Students is responsible for degree programmes and academic policies, but has no overview of procedural matters delegated to the deans, or over practical student life arrangements delegated to Economic Directorates or, in the case of Novi Sad and Zagreb, to the Student Centres. As a result, the coordination of student-related functions depends on negotiation and tends to be centred on problem-solving rather than forward planning.

Functional separation also means that students deal with different offices and entities, and have to collect information rather than being able to obtain it from one contact person or office. This might involve multiple inquiries and visits, especially given the absence of printed university (as opposed to faculty) handbooks or orientation materials. The Faculty Handbooks I collected during the site visits contained information about the professors, courses, credits and examination schedules. Although some practical information was available on the university websites, finding it pre-supposed prior knowledge about the existing programmes.

Because of the lack of coordination and absence of designated system-wide information channels special programmes, projects and new services are poorly utilised. The inventory of such projects, compiled in the findings of this study from interviewee comments, documents and web sources, suggests that, in fact, there are more services than any of the interviewed deans, administrators or students knew about. And while the staff of the *EXPERT* Counselling Centre at Babes-Bolyai or the Student Service Centre at Debrecen, for example, were actively looking for ways to increase student participation and feedback, their efforts were hindered by the fact that the main source of information for the students was their faculty—deans and professors simply did not see it as their task to know about or refer students to any activities outside of the faculty.

5.2.5. The university left out of the loop?

Based upon the reflections in the preceding section, I wonder whether core university functions have become so taken-for-granted and rigid, that the university is allowing itself to be left out of the loop of enterprise activities beneficial for all students and essential for student involvement. If deans and professors do not perceive ‘the social dimension’ of student involvement, and ‘student welfare’, as part of their direct responsibility, is tight ‘policy control’ (laws and university regulations) enough to ensure consistency of implementation across the institution? If the university does not have an office(r) responsible for overall coordination, how can it obtain comprehensive knowledge of what goes on and integrate student initiatives, faculty-based projects, and all other NGO-type activities, in order to create a ‘supportive campus environment’ for the benefit of the entire community?

As Clark (1998, pp. 4) explained, “university transformation, for the most part, is not accidental or incidental”, “groups of faculty and administrators (and sometimes students!) can fashion new structures, processes, and orientations whereby a university becomes biased toward adaptive change.” Such change—reacting to external pressures, internal responses, and taking opportunities—is evident in all four cases of this study, contributing to Clark’s concept of “the expanded developmental periphery” (1998, p. 6). However, this author also noted that “traditional European universities have long exhibited a notoriously weak capacity to steer themselves. As their complexity has increased and the pace of change accelerated, that weakness has become more debilitating, deepening the need for a greater managerial capacity” (1998, p. 5).

In section 4.6. (Cases of transformation) I summarised some ‘new structures, processes, and orientations’ related to student services and student involvement, with a comment that in the absence of ‘pro-active’ institution-wide policies or plans, or staff leadership charged with the strategic development of student support activities, such services remain the result of ‘re-active’ decisions, taken in response to specific needs (or critical situations), which continue to operate in an uncoordinated manner. At the same time, my findings under section 4.8. (Institutional self-assessment), indicated that participants in this study demonstrated a high awareness of

organisational problems, particularly with regard to institutional management and efficiency. Their open acknowledgement and willingness to engage in a substantive discussion on institutional limitations were complemented and corroborated by institutional documents, such as strategic plans, self-evaluations and external reviews, which key informants did not hesitate to share.

Building upon Clark's "minimum elements" (1998, pp. 5-8) necessary for entrepreneurial action (which I refer to as enterprise periphery) to lead to transformation, here I will argue for the need for a "strengthened steering core" with regard to student services, that is, integrating student services as part of the university core, based upon findings in section 4.8. (Institutional self-assessment).

5.2.5.1. Filling the communication gaps

Among the common problems for all four universities was the institutional capacity for internal communication. At Novi Sad and Zagreb, poor communication was attributed to easily identifiable factors, such as the fragmented organisational structure and the inadequate information technology infrastructure, particularly the lack of a university information system. However, in my view overcoming these obstacles does not immediately result in efficient communication. At Babes-Bolyai and Debrecen, internal communication suffered from a more subtle deficiency of information exchange. It could be described as a mismatch of goals and levels of understanding among the participants involved and how they responded to institutional tasks.

At Babes-Bolyai, for example, this problem was identified as a "bureaucratic deficiency" (*Strategic Plan*, p. 4), where separate middle management units saw their tasks as applying top-down policies and regulations in an autonomous manner, internalizing operations according to their own definitions and interpretation. Similarly, at Debrecen, where many functions of the university still remained scattered, communication deficiencies resulted from the lack of clear definitions and an inconsistency of priorities at the different levels of the organisational structure. As one of the deans noted, from a technical point of view, information was distributed to

all professors and staff members, but how it was understood by the different recipients, and whether it was acted upon in the manner expected, remained unclear:

“in case of our faculty, ok, the information system works but this doesn’t mean that everything is ok concerning this type of problem. Formally all colleagues can know everything. [Professors and staff] get e-mail letters that a student organisation organises a good programme... They ask me that I write a letter to staff members, and so on. That is, formally this problem is solved, but practically does not work efficiently enough.”
(41/979)

In response to this concern, an integrated student services unit can assume the role of a central point for information collection and distribution, adequate explanation and positioning of activities in the anticipated context of student-related organisational and operational matters. According to Miller (2005, pp. 1-2), universities have an obligation to convey to all students the institution’s expectations of student performance; they usually produce codes of conduct, rules and regulations, complaint procedures and various other information booklets and handbooks, and expect students to become familiar with these documents. At the same time, universities seem to put considerably less energy into “determining what students expect of institutions.”

Student Services can fill these communication gaps by maintaining a central repository of policies and procedures (for example via the institutional website or Intranet), institutionalising a process of dissemination and discussion of such documents through centrally-organised orientation programmes and various counselling services. Through direct contact with the majority of the students, student services can also be responsive to student needs and convey student expectations to the university management.

5.2.5.2. Need for professional services

The second common concern was the level of professionalisation of middle management and administrative support staff. A condition to building institutional management capacity, the need for qualified professional staff was explicitly stated in

the EUA *Institutional Evaluation of Universities in Serbia* (2002a, p. 13), in Zagreb's development strategy and Statute (Vizek-Vidovic and Bjelis, 2006, pp 17-18), and in Babes-Bolyai's *Strategic Plan* (2003, p. 29). For higher education institutions in Central and Eastern Europe, formulating this goal in itself demonstrates an innovative approach and a growing awareness of the complexities of university management. However, in the absence of preparatory programmes in this region for a career in higher education administration, staff members learn "on the job" from other staff members in their units.

Despite the good intentions of the institutional documents, none of the four universities had actually started an in-service training programme for its middle management and administrative staff to enhance their skills and develop a perspective on university-wide operations. Many of the "front-desk" positions which had direct dealings with students and other constituents were in fact delegated to clerks and secretaries, the majority of whom spent many years (or their entire working life) in the same office. Younger employees looking for upward mobility were more likely to leave for professional jobs in other sectors, as the Director of one International Relations Office complained.

Integrating student services into a distinct professional division offers the possibility for adequate job training and cross-training in all spheres of student-related support. In a unit dedicated explicitly to services for students, it becomes easier to internalise concepts such as "customer service" and the use of technology for operational efficiency based upon market practices outside of the university. A professionally trained and dedicated staff is much more likely to understand and respond to the new characteristics of students as quite advanced users of technology and instant service provision (for example, internet banking). As Blustain et al. (1999, p. 54) put it, "when students can get cash at 2 a.m., download library materials at 3 a.m., and order [DVDs] from [Amazon.com] at 3 a.m., it is only [institutional] inertia that keeps them convinced" that they must go from office to office to collect the information that they need. An integrated and professionally trained student services unit will know more about institutional policies, operations and facilities, the university calendar, and will be able to advise on 'where to find' and 'how to' go about most matters related to the students' life in the institution.

Professionalisation of student services is also required as the student-university relationship takes on a more legally explicit and contractually bound dimensions. Admissions offers, data protection, intellectual property, discipline matters, suspension, probation, fees, ‘the students’ right to know’, are all matters which require carefully and clearly formulated policies and documents to ensure transparency while maintaining the necessary confidentiality.

5.2.5.3. Enhancing student involvement

The third common concern was the ability of the institution to interact with students in a manner that would stimulate student involvement. In three out of the four universities (all except Debrecen) the interviewed students indicated that their institutions did not give much attention to stimulating student involvement in out-of-class activities. Although students did not feel constrained in their ability to organise projects, clubs, or special events, and acknowledged that they had freedom to come up with ideas and proposals, many of their initiatives suffered from being left “on their own”, without technical or financial support from their faculties or the university.

In the absence of professional student support units, students tended to rely on their professors and were disappointed when encouragement was not forthcoming. Students complained about their professors’ lack of availability and hierarchical attitude, which created an intimidating distance between them and resulted in apathy toward any forms of student involvement which were not considered as mandatory. Although students from Debrecen made no comments on this topic, the staff of the Student Services Office (*Pont Iroda*) noted that students were reluctant to give feedback or take part in new programmes which required their active involvement. In their experience, this was not a tradition for this region.

The institutional documents and evaluations of Novi Sad (EUA, 2002a, p. 14), Zagreb (*Breakthrough 2001*, p. 27) and Babes-Bolyai (*Strategic Plan 2004-2007*, p. 4) acknowledged the fact that student motivation and the level of student involvement in university activities were low. Particularly in the cases of Novi Sad and Zagreb, institutional fragmentation meant that the students’ main affiliation was with a faculty; the lack of university centres to coordinate the activities of the students

limited the scope for cooperation across the different entities, increasing further the students' dependence on support from within their faculty and their professors.

However, as the EUA Report (2002a, p.7), Zagreb's *Self-Evaluation Report* (2004, pp.15-16) and Agachi (2006) noted, a common problem for the three universities was the unregulated situation with regard to university teaching staff taking up multiple teaching engagements across several institutions, which resulted in excessive workloads for the professors, undermining their commitment to one university and to other duties, such as research or attention to students outside the classroom. In these circumstances, the contact between the professor and students was limited. At Babes-Bolyai, students found the practice of assigning junior professors as tutors in pastoral roles to be inadequate due to the high number of the students (for example 200-300 students in a class) (18/589). It was not surprising, therefore, that the attitude of some professors was described as uninterested (10/353), hierarchical (18/593) or hostile (28/760).

For two out of the four institutions—Novi Sad and Zagreb—the integration and centralization of common services and functions at the university level have been consistently recommended by the external evaluation reports as a means of improving transparency toward the students, and achieving institutional integration at the practical level. Although these documents do not focus on the specific procedure for doing so, elements of an emerging student services concept were elaborated in Zagreb's Development Strategy, *Breakthrough 2001*, and *Self-Evaluation Report* (2004). Both identified objectives such as enrolment policy and coordination of services connected with student recruitment, enrolment procedures, student retention and graduation through the establishment of a university information system and central offices. By 2004, the *Self-Evaluation Report* already used the term 'student support services' at the university level.

Although centralised at the university level, support services at Babes-Bolyai and Debrecen were organised as separate functions under different offices and management units, coordinated mostly through management meetings. Interviewees from both institutions reported that student concerns were discussed frequently at these meetings, but no particular plans had been made to integrate some of the

student-related functions as a result of this. The *Strategic Plan* of BBU (2003, p. 4) and Debrecen's *Recommendations for Best Practices in Student Support Services* (2002, pp. 29-32) noted that the autonomy of these operations was becoming a hindrance, especially in the context of competing priorities and the lack of university-wide student services regulations. While both institutions acknowledged the need for further structural readjustments, neither had considered the integration of student services as a possible solution.

Possibly the most persuasive argument in favour of integrating student services into the university core is their role in supporting student involvement in order to enhance student motivation for learning and success. While student services provide operational convenience and institutional efficiency, the role they can play to support the “learning imperative” (section 2.2.5.2.) has been explicitly acknowledged in *Learning Reconsidered* (2004) as a means of institutional effectiveness (i.e. student retention and completion). Support for student involvement in out-of-class activities, in residence halls, for students with special needs, liaison with the Student Union, student activity programmes related to study habits, methods of exploration and interaction with professors and other students, all contribute to the educational process, bringing academic, institutional and social contexts in service of the interconnectedness of student learning.

Following from the argument of *Learning Reconsidered* (2004, p. 3) for the “integrated use of all of higher education’s resources in the education and preparation of the whole student”, “transformative education” requires “university transformation” (Clark, 1998, p. 4) that is all inclusive, in which every component of the university operations, and student services most of all, is brought into the loop.

5.2.6. The missing management perspective

Reflecting on the enormous increase in student enrolments in Central and Eastern Europe since the 1990s, Frenyo and Rozsnyai (2004, pp 56-57) also noted the inability of the “entire higher education sector, both at system and at institutional levels, to meet the requirements of the new challenges, the result of an outdated structure and an inadequately prepared teaching staff.” This problem, in their view, was exacerbated by “inefficient governance and administration, as well as a lack of strategic vision at system and institutional levels.”

In the context of an expanded mass higher education system (Trow, 1973; Scott, 1992, 1995; Teichler, 2001) and increased diversity of students (section 1.5.2. - Services for all students), “higher education undergoes a very confusing process of diversification [in itself]. Structures are restructured quickly, and a continuous fight between strengthening and weakening of horizontal diversity can be observed along a continuous growth of vertical diversity” (Teichler, 2001, p. 5). My reflections on the oscillating pathways of change (section 5.2.2.1.) illustrate the uncoordinated, frequently spontaneous, process of expansion of activities beyond the traditional core functions.

However, the growth in student numbers and the diversification of student characteristics require changes and innovations in the institutional structures designed to provide student support and services as a matter of urgent necessity. Surprisingly, apart from Debrecen, none of the other three universities reported any significant changes in the university organisational structures in this regard. Despite the fact that student-related issues appeared regularly on the agendas of management meetings, the majority were dealt with as a matter of faculty or departmental business, without further policy or procedural implications at the institutional level. In the absence of a discussion or action at the governance or senior administration levels, innovative student support activities tended to remain isolated in the enterprise periphery while traditional student support functions, such as the Student Centres at Novi Sad and Zagreb or the Student Welfare Office at Babes-Bolyai, continued their existence as passive bureaucracies reliant on externally set rules and regulations.

The tension between these two became apparent in the number and variety of grass-roots activities, the majority of which had been introduced at the faculty level of the university, or outside the traditional organisational structures. Why is it the case then that despite increasing awareness of the lack of regular and consistent communication between central administration and the student body on student needs, and critical self-assessment (section 4.8. - Theme 6: Institutional self-assessment), student services and support programmes remain neglected and underdeveloped?

Here I would like to return to my proposition (section 1.3. - Research problem and hypotheses) that the professional upgrade *and integration of services for the benefit of the students would affect the overall institutional effectiveness and ultimately enhance institutional performance in serving the needs of all stakeholders, both inside and outside the university*. Student services, in my view, serve two major constituents: the students and the university. While the students benefit from an organised and efficient information and support structure, for the institution itself student services present a comprehensive management model for its largest member group. Student services are much more than a ‘front-desk’ service: if this is understood and acknowledged, student services can become a core partner in institutional planning and management processes, serving the needs of institutional integration as well as quality assurance and strategic planning.

From a management perspective, the missing link is the recognition that all services for students play a role in translating the mission and policies of the university into effective and consistent support programmes, serving multiple roles. They:

- enable knowledge about, and communication with, students that go beyond the classroom to improve overall operations;
- foster individual, cultural and social development leading to active student involvement;
- enhance the institutional capacity to provide responsive and reflective support programmes by serving as a two-way communication channel;

As a key point of interaction between student expectations and institutional needs, student services contribute to the overall student experience as an integral part of the educational process.⁸¹

Student services also support institutional effectiveness and development. The Tempus Output Programme Handbook on *Institutional Management of Universities* (1997, p. 7) sets out the need for a strategy as a “deliberately devised pro-active approach to the planning and management of universities”, a means to empowering staff to “operate and take decisions with due regard for changing circumstances. If so, higher education institutions will probably be more enterprising on their own behalf in the pursuit of excellence, rather than responding passively to external forces.” This discussion about an integrated student services programme is about setting out a strategy for the functional integration of all operations and services centred on the students, which—as this section will argue—offers a management solution to the structural fragmentation of Novi Sad and Zagreb, and to the problems arising out of decentralisation at Babes-Bolyai and Debrecen.

This strategy is based upon another case in the field, the Student Services Programme at the Central European University (section 1.6.), which was the first institution in the region to adapt an American-style student services approach to the needs of an international student body and to management needs. Elements of this programme can already be found in the support functions assumed by the International Relations Offices at the four universities in this study. However, student services as a management strategy goes beyond the needs of international students to a comprehensive integrated approach to institutional effectiveness. As such, the proposition (section 1.7. - Definitions) elaborated in this dissertation is a first of its kind for higher education institutions in Central and Eastern Europe.

5.2.6.1. Centralisation and Integration of Functional Flows

As this study of four selected institutions in Central and Eastern Europe has demonstrated, services to students are provided at many levels of the university

⁸¹ Bateson (2007): <http://www.ceu.hu/studentlife>

structure (sections 4.5. - Theme 3: Assessment of student services; and 5.2.4.- Position and role of student services). Although incorporated under different units, functions such as student recruitment, admission, orientation, registration, student records and graduation, discipline, financial aid and student welfare, student counselling, and other support services, exist in various forms in the four case studies, and in most institution of higher education in the region.

While these constitute an essential link between academic and non-academic operations, the main problem identified in the four institutions is the separation of operations by function and the absence of channels for their coordination and planning from an institutional perspective (section 5.2.4.4. - Position in the organisational structure). As one key informant from Debrecen noted,

“[Student services] do not appear as a big network or organisation but it is invisibly there, everywhere in the campus. Scattered but maybe that’s the way it should be [so] that any student who has no sense of where to turn to at the university level could find someone close by.” (36/917)

However, I would argue that it is because of their “**scattered**” and “**invisible**” status, that essential core operations that support student admission, enrolment, and progress toward graduation, remain undervalued and, to a large extent, underused in streamlining institutional management processes and effectiveness (section 4.8.1. - Organisational efficiency).

A centralised and integrated model of student services (for example, *Appendix II*) makes explicit the functional flows, responsibilities and links between the separate units, and enables efficient communication and planning across the entire sequence of operations, both in top-down policy implementation and bottom-up learning from actual practice. Such an approach takes into account overall student needs and specific information relevant for the students in their progression from one stage to the next, summarising institutional policies and procedures along the chronology of student recruitment, admission, enrolment and completion.

As stated in section 5.2.6. - The missing management perspective, the aims of an integrated student services programme are two-fold:

For the students it provides a “deliberately devised” institutional support infrastructure centred on their needs, interests, and on special support, rather than on operations as an end in itself;

For the institution, this model sets out the complete cycle of operations, and serves as a designated communications channel to and from students, enabling institutional management in a pro-active, consistent and forward-looking manner.

5.2.6.2. Redefining the role of deans/professors in favour of professional units

In sections 5.2.3.2. - Emphasis on the role of the professors and 5.2.5.3. - Enhancing student involvement, I outlined the emphasis on the role of the professors as central to student development, with its resulting focus on student activities in the classroom, and some problems associated with the reliance of students on their professors’ engagement. Further, the predominantly faculty-based student academic administration, under the supervision of each dean, meant that tasks and staff assignments were duplicated across different faculties, suffered from communication deficiencies, different priorities and lack of agreement as to the handling of student services. Although it is not my intention to undermine the role of the deans in student affairs, the findings of this study suggest that existing practices are neither consistent nor effective across the universities’ structures (sections 4.4., 4.5.1.- Services provided at the faculty level; 4.7.1. - Student involvement, 4.8.4. - Need for improved student involvement). With the increase in student enrolments, the expectation that deans and tutors are able to handle all aspects of the student experience is no longer practicable (section 4.8.4.). Similarly, having ‘keen enthusiasts’ in some faculties and departments is no longer an adequate basis for student services: the lack of coordination and variable quality do not provide efficient delivery.

In a mass higher education context, the management of students and services for students require new competencies: extensive knowledge of regulations,

institutional policies and procedures, and legal implications; awareness of diverse student needs; support for students with special needs; and the ability to make adjustments in institutional administration. While many such competencies exist at the faculty level, the handling of student services within these bounds is not sufficient for the purposes of institutional management. As the complexities of student administration, enrolment and facilities planning deepen, it becomes necessary to bring the entire process of identifying student needs, working to meet student requests or solutions to problems to the higher levels of policy, planning, and management decisions. Professional units and integrated student services offer this channel of communication across the institution.

I would therefore argue for the separation of the student services functions from the formal duties of the deans and their upgrade to professional services within the university core.

5.2.6.3. Student services and integrated student information systems

As can be seen from the case of Debrecen, the introduction of an integrated student information system had a direct impact on the professionalisation of the Registry Offices within the faculties and the formation of their (still informal) network across the university (section 4.5.1.- Services provided at the faculty level). In a setting where it is no longer possible to recall every student's name, academic progress or personal circumstances, the utilisation of information technology is both a practical necessity and an impetus toward the recognition of special competencies and the role of student services. In my own institution, for example, the development of the integrated student information system went hand in hand with the integration of student services.

A functionally integrated student information system (SIS) may include a variety of modules to support recruitment (for example, number of inquiries per programme and prospect management), admissions (data on all applications, offers of admission, and admissions yield), financial aid allocations and administration (scholarships management), student fees, student records (registration, course grades, academic progress, monitoring of fulfilment of degree requirements) and class

scheduling, student data management (for example, accommodation, health insurance, emergency contacts, employment within the university, special needs), student activities (signing up for events and event planning), and an alumni database. The SIS network provides a number of on-line and automated services to students, faculty, departments, and staff, forming the backbone of academic and operations management. The student services offices are normally responsible for data input and maintenance.

The information stored in the SIS is also the basis of institutional and student research: it generates statistical reports on all activities and operations, longitudinal comparative studies per degree programme, department and faculty, and enables analyses of performance, efficiency and any other study drawing upon student or faculty data. As such, the information maintained by the student services units provides the reports necessary for enrolment planning (number of students per programme, applications, offers, actual enrolment), enrolment management (students per course, transfers, cross-disciplinary enrolments, progression toward graduation), completion rates and actual faculty teaching loads. This is valuable management information on the basis of which institutions make budget decisions, decisions on appointments, programmes and overall planning.

Indeed, the list of uses of an integrated SIS is a long one as it also has many applications in day-to-day administration. Of particular interest for this study is the connection between SIS student data, student services and student retention. With expanded access to higher education, the focus of university operations is shifting from attention to input characteristics (for example, the number of students ‘getting in’) to concern for output performance (number of students ‘getting through’ and actually completing the degree programmes) and employability of graduates.

In the United States, this shift gave rise to “enrolment management” (section 2.2.5.3.) as an integrated approach to a comprehensive, holistic “cradle-to-endowment” continuum, including instructional management and delivery, student services, information technology and institutional research (Henderson, 2001, pp. 35-36). The growing concern for student retention and completion involves the positioning of every unit of the institution (academic departments, academic support

services and student support services) in an integrated network of structures of equal importance to the institutional goals and outcomes.

5.2.6.4. Student services and publications/institutional website

Another important management role for student services is their involvement in the preparation of student-related publications, such as promotional and admissions booklets, handbooks and the maintenance of the institutional webpages. Such information is normally gathered from every academic department, academic support unit, facilities, and student feedback. While the task of writing up introductory descriptions, institutional mission and history, may not be a student services one, for the purposes of student recruitment, admissions, and enrolment, the meaning of all relevant policies and procedures must be set out in a consistent and comprehensible manner. For example, the thought that goes into presentation for recruitment purposes is, for many universities, an institutional task shared by almost all internal constituents.

If properly coordinated by the recruitment office and the admissions office (student services units), the preparation of institutional information becomes one of the regular internal mechanisms for quality control, evaluation and integration of institutional development that generates adjustments, change and further planning. In this process, student services partner with all academic units to play the role of an institutional facilitator and think-tank.

In summary, the incorporation of a management perspective in the organisation and implementation of intergraded student services provides a powerful channel for institutional integration, while preserving the academic autonomy of the faculties. This approach provides an alternative solution to the problem of functional integration of institutions such as Novi Sad and Zagreb, while still maintaining the decentralised academic structure of the university.

5.3. Closing Reflections

In some final reflections on the role of student services from a management perspective, this chapter returns to the consequences of the transition from ‘elite’ to ‘mass’ higher education. Trow (1973), Scott (1992, 1995) and Teichler (2001) distinctly underline, among other main features of this process, the qualitative and quantitative diversification of the student populations, and with it—the growing concerns for equity, access, and equal opportunity. As Trow (1973, p. 21) points out, “the expansion of student numbers seems to precede other institutional changes in almost all cases.” Institutions are therefore often in the situation of having to respond to unanticipated consequences in a symptomatic manner, thus increasing layers of managerial complexity and the need for professional staff. Both Trow (*ibid*, pp. 8-11) and Scott (1992, p. 2) argue that increased student diversity has transformed the student experience, giving rise to new and different student needs, expectations and demands. Similarly, Duderstadt (1999, p. 22-24) speaks of the “shift from faculty-centred to learner-centred institutions” and “ubiquitous learning—learning for everyone, in every place, all the time” that call for “a new paradigm for delivering the opportunity for learning.” However, as Teichler (2001, pp. 5-6) notes, higher education is not finding it easy to cope with changing learning behaviours and student competencies.

Despite these insights into the student experience in the context of mass higher education and ever-increasing student diversity, there seems to be a general reluctance in continental Europe to acknowledge their implications for institutional management. The summary of Bologna-related documents (section 2.4.) demonstrates how very recent the discussion on student services is (beginning with the EUA *Salamanca Declaration*, 2001; *Trends II*, 2001; and the *Lourtie Report*, 2001). The Bologna process publications also provide the first cross-European references to student services as a missing element in institutional management and connect it to internal quality assurance systems.

Moreover, as defined by van Vught (2004, pp. 97-98), the classical European academic culture and key university characteristics tend to present serious obstacles. In his view, the fundamental organisational and governance features of European

universities—strong emphasis on the professional autonomy of academic experts, extensive organisational fragmentation, and wide distribution of decision-making authority—do not easily open themselves to the notion of non-academic ‘professions’ and management delegated to professional non-academic staff (van Vught, 2004, pp. 99-101). This study found similar characteristics in Central and Eastern Europe.

A Special Interest Group on the Student Experience, attending the annual forum of the European Association for Institutional Research (EAIR) in August 2007⁸², attempted to define the ‘student diversity characteristics’ and discussed the question whether diversity is an ‘academic’ or an ‘institutional’ issue, noting the differences in national approaches. The puzzle remained, however, as to whose role it is to fill the gaps in the student experience and in the desired student academic and social integration. Both the roles of academic staff and of support services were mentioned.

While the students’ academic experience remains of paramount importance, teaching and learning take place in a broader institutional context. A supportive institutional environment is one which recognises the needs of diverse student populations and seeks to enhance the student experience with the help of additional tools, a key component of which are student services.

⁸² 29th Annual EAIR Forum, Innsbruck, 26-29 August 2007: <http://www.eair.nl/innsbruck/timetable.asp>

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

6.1. Research problem, questions and main findings
6.2. Contributions of this study
6.3. Student services – diversity continued
6.4. The “Bologna” momentum
6.5. Further research questions

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

6.1. Research problem, questions and main findings

This research project examined the role of students services in enhancing the student experience in four higher education institutions in Central and Eastern Europe, drawing upon theory and practice, and a number of assumptions about changing student characteristics, expectations, and their influence in institutional reorganisation, at a time of rapid transformation of the higher education sector in this region. Examining the evidence of multiple change, innovation and institutional introspection, this study focused on the particular problem of the role of student services in organisational management, as an area which has remained unrecognised, neglected, insufficiently developed and peripheral to the public policy debates, legislation and institutional reorganisation in CEE.

Guided by the main assumption that changing student characteristics lead to increased student expectations, the research questions of this study (section 1.4.) sought to provide evidence of the active role students play in the planning of organisational transformation and re-structuring of management processes, more specifically in student services and various types of student support. However, the findings and analysis of this research project did not support the main expectation to find students as active agents in institutional change, and in the improvement of the old and the provision of new services for students. In fact, students, and services for students still play a marginal part in determining institutional priorities and in influencing the services provision and culture.

The overwhelming evidence of key findings (Chapter 4) suggests that the absence of an institutional philosophy with regard to student services and support programmes continues to affect practices, and limits institutional development in this area. The four universities in this research project lack an explicit institutional policy or programme to guide the planning and strategic development of student services as a university-wide objective.

Indeed, the findings of this study at the institutional and at the national levels may appear to be discouraging: in the highly regulated higher education sphere in Central and Eastern Europe, it would also appear that without national policies and guidelines toward an integrated student management practice, the implementation of student support services remains subject to fragmented institutional cultures and ad hoc symptomatic decisions.

However, **in answer to research question (i): *to what extent do student characteristics and expectations of their higher education experience influence institutional reform processes***, the findings and analysis of the emergence of a bulging periphery of “enterprise” activities, related to students and student services⁸³, make it conceivable that greater efforts to address student needs, and introduce professional services, are likely to occur⁸⁴. Both the cases of Babes-Bolyai and Debrecen indicate that some institutions are taking up student issues in a more comprehensive manner.

In answer to research question (ii): *what is the role of students in determining institutional priorities and responses to student support provision*, as predicted in section 5.2.2.1. (Oscillating pathways of change), the tensions created between the numerous student activities on the periphery and the strengthening core bureaucracy are likely to result in the gradual integration of such activities, and the needed institutional support, into the university core, or to challenge the university to respond.

In answer to research question (iii): *how is student support provision organised to meet student demand*, despite the overall discouraging nature of the findings at present, there are signs that student services will receive more attention in Central and Eastern Europe: the occasional institutional efforts and student-organised activities, still on the periphery of the universities, are now the focus of attention of public policy at the international level through the development trends of the Bologna process which, as noted in section 4.3.3. - Key importance of international developments and the Bologna process, was considered as the third most important factor and impetus for institutional change.

⁸³ Sections 4.5.3.; 4.6.; and 5.2.2.1.

⁸⁴ Section 5.2.2.1.

The Bologna process is providing a reform framework, both for organisational learning, and for individuals—who seek to create and implement changes—to rationalise and justify these changes. In this context, student services in Central and Eastern Europe (as well as continental Europe) are on the brink of extensive further development, as a result of the impact of the Bologna process as an overarching reform strategy for the creation of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

6.2. Contributions of this study

Defining student services as an underdeveloped and unexplored area of institutional management across continental Europe—the basis of formulating this research project (section 1.2.) and in the Literature Review chapter (section 2.3. - Perspectives from continental Europe)—this study offers the first comparative detailed analysis of the role of student services in enhancing the student experience, and the role of students in institutional development in Central and Eastern Europe. This research project is also the first attempt to examine and explain the broader historical reasons for the lack of attention to student services in the region.

Guided by the belief that innovation in higher education institutions may occur at all structural levels, and in addition to its traditional association with research and scholarship (Farrington, 1999, p. 79), this study contributes to the recently published reports (EUA's Quality Culture Project 2002-2006, 2006; Kelo, 2006; and *Trends V*, 2007) by deepening knowledge on the topic of student services as a theoretical and management concept, with the aim of stimulating further developments in policy and professional practice.

Following from the research problem and the main research questions, on a theoretical level, the objective of this study was to contribute to the understanding and the interpretation of the role of student services in relation to the changing role of the students, the student experience, and institutional management needs.

In this sense, the most important contributions of this study are related to its:

- Justification and definition of student services for all students;
- Offer of a model of integrated student services as a minimum provision;
- Key findings and analysis of student services in Central and Eastern Europe;
- Summative review of published sources and guiding concepts;
- Positioning of student services as a priority area for development.

6.2.1. Justification and definition of student services for all students

As the results of this research project overwhelmingly demonstrate, student services remain a neglected area of institutional development in Central and Eastern Europe. Despite considerable increases in student enrolments and growing awareness of organisational shortcomings in making the adjustment to a larger, and more diverse, student body, the four institutions in this study retain the traditional model of student administration. The absence of a strategic discussion about the role of students and student services provision is reflected in the general lack of understanding of the definition and scope of student services, and reliance on government regulations and procedures for the execution of the variety of student support functions. Moreover, the study found that senior university administrators and deans do not believe in the need for professional student services: a strong sense of the students' self-reliance and of pastoral care historically embedded in the role of the dean and the professors still permeates the thinking about student needs and support.

Nevertheless, in all four large and decentralised (or fragmented) universities studied, similar problems persisted: poor or inefficient communication; poor or insufficient student involvement in university affairs; lack of professional services for students; and lack of a clear management perspective on what student services can do to address these problems.

By offering a definition of student services and a detailed list of the minimum services that could be provided for the benefit of all students (section 1.7. -

Definitions), this study attempts to clear the existing confusions related to the understanding of the concept of services provision (section 4.4.- Theme 2: The role of student services - institutional awareness, student expectations). Through elaboration of the multiple roles of student services (section 1.8. - Multiple roles of student services), it is a step towards engaging policy-makers, university leaders, deans and students in a dialogue on the role of student services in enhancing the student experience, as an integral part of the university core.

6.2.2. A model of integrated student services as a minimum provision

This study builds upon institutional evaluations and recommendations made by EUA visiting teams (for example, EUA 2002a, 2002b), and takes further the argument for the integration of student services (section 5.2.6.1.). Through examples of successful implementation of a student services programme at the Central European University (section 1.6.), this project offers an integrated model of minimum provision for all students (section 1.7. - Definitions). In doing so, **this study develops the ideas** mentioned in institutional strategic plans, self-evaluations, international institutional evaluations, and the Bologna documents mentioned in section 6.3.2., while at the same time it contextualises these ideas in concrete institutional settings by demonstrating how integrated student services may meet student needs and enhance organisational effectiveness (section 5.2.6. - The missing management perspective).

As both Kelo (2006, pp. 128-135) and *Trends V* (2007, pp. 48-50) reported, some student support services have been widely adopted in continental Europe, but integrating them for all students was found to be less common. In section 5.2.4. (Position and role of student services), I analysed the disadvantages of devolved student administration, noting its inability to keep up with all individual projects and initiatives, and hence utilize them for the benefit of the community, concluding that the lack of coordination and the absence of designated system-wide information channels are key obstacles to the development of special programmes, projects and new services.

In view of the existing literature sources—EUA’s Quality Culture Project 2002-2006, 2006; *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*, 2005; Kelo, 2006; and *Trends V*, 2007—this study is the only document, in addition to the Quality Culture Project, to argue for further innovation through the integration of student services.

6.2.3. Key findings and analysis related to Central and Eastern Europe

Although it may have broader implications, this study is of special relevance for institutions in Central and Eastern Europe, where the concept of student services is least developed. In a period of transition and rapid development of HE legislation (section 4.2. - Setting the context), the four higher education institutions chosen as case studies share common priorities: clarifying their relationship with the state and the role of the state in creating relevant higher education policies; the process of actual recognition of university autonomy and functional integration guaranteed by normative funding mechanisms; upgrading their efficiency; and harmonisation within the European Higher Education Area through formal participation in the Bologna process. Despite emerging entrepreneurialism (section 5.2.2. - Pressures for change and responses within organisational cultures), the evidence found in this study suggests that higher education institutions in Central and Eastern Europe remain closely linked to the state (section 4.3.1.- Key importance of—and dependence upon—national legislation).

The consequences for institutional capacity for change and innovation reflect the progress of national legislation (section 4.3.2. - Key importance of internal initiatives and responses) in an oscillating movement of change from the core to a bulging periphery of “enterprise” activities (section 5.2.2.1.), particularly evident in the development of student services and activities (sections 4.5.3. - Services provided at university level, not overseen by the university, and 4.6. – Cases of transformation). However, this study found that despite the multitude of examples of institutional re-organisation, there was no intent for strategic change in the core student administration functions: the awareness of the role and importance of student services

was low; it was subject to a narrow interpretation as student support provision in the form of state subsidy, regulated by—and answerable to—the state.

As a result, in all four institutions student services remain a complex network of administrative and support functions scattered at many levels of the institutional structure. None of the institutions has a central office, a senior person, or service unit to formally coordinate or plan the work of the different student support units. In the absence of ‘pro-active’ institution-wide policies or plans, or staff leadership charged with the strategic development of student support activities, such services continue to operate in an uncoordinated manner, often the result of ‘re-active’ decisions, taken in response to specific needs (or critical situations).

In all four cases, there was an acknowledgement that this area needed improvement but it was given low priority: there were no examples of university-wide discussions or plans for development. This explains the emergence in the ‘unregulated’ enterprise periphery of a small but significant number of cases of transformation and integration as grass-roots initiatives or in response to consequences and opportunities created by other activities.

Related to the role and position of student services, this study found that student involvement in university governance, management and university life varied considerably in the four universities, and was lower than anticipated. Despite the formal provisions for student representation in university governance, the findings and analysis overwhelmingly suggest that formal student representation and giving students the freedom to organise activities does not result in increased student involvement (sections 4.8.4. - Need for improved student involvement and 5.2.3.).

6.2.4. Summative review of published sources and guiding concepts

My search for literature sources on the topic of student services in continental Europe yielded few results, thus identifying a major gap in research and publications (section 2.3. - Perspectives from continental Europe and historical background). The review of the Bologna process documents (section 2.4.- The role of the Bologna

process) suggested that this topic is very recent, having gained attention initially in the context of international student mobility (as of 2001). While four documents have now positioned the importance of this topic in an explicit manner (EUA's Quality Culture Project 2002-2006, 2006; *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*, 2005; Kelo, 2006; and *Trends V*, 2007), they remain imprecise as to guidelines on implementation and possible models of organisation (integration). More importantly, these documents remain focused on the institutional responsibility toward the students (one-way communication); none of them elaborates on the management perspective and the value of student services for the institutions. In this respect, my case for student services as an integral part of the university core and the analysis offered on student services in sections 5.2.5. (The university left out of the loop?) and 5.2.6. (The missing management perspective) are possibly the first assessments (considering published sources in continental Europe) of the dual nature of student services as serving both the needs of the students and the needs of the institution.

Drawing upon my experience in designing and managing an US-style integrated student services programme at the Central European University, for the Literature Review (Chapter 2), I turned to sources published in the United States, tracing the major influences of educational psychology research on higher education policy and practice with regard to student support and services. While section 2.2. (Perspectives from the United States) touched upon several other factors, such as the evolution of student services as a professional field in higher education management, concern for the outcomes of undergraduate education in the United States, and enrolment management, the review of literature sources in the United States provided a comprehensive list of the authors and trends that have influenced the development of this field over the past 50 years. In my view, research in the United States, publications, policy and practice remain the leading sources on theory and implementation in the area of student development, student affairs and services.

Puzzled by the lack of literature on student services in continental Europe⁸⁵, I decided to look into the history of universities in Europe and attempted to construct an explanation of the lack of student support services in Central and Eastern Europe (section 2.3.2. - Attempt to construct a history of student support services in continental Europe). My conclusion from this review—that the lack of student support services is rooted in history and politics—led me to formulate a set of hypotheses in lieu of literature sources (section 2.3.2.5.) which I tested in my research.

In taking a comparative perspective—literature review of sources from the United States, the United Kingdom, continental Europe, and Central and Eastern Europe—I compiled a brief anthology of major works and influences which, to the best of my knowledge, is a first of its kind.

6.2.5. Positioning of student services as a priority area for development

With an acknowledged element of advocacy, this study set out to respond to the interest expressed by other higher education institutions in the region in the concept and practice of student services, and to raise awareness of the role of students and of the need to provide or improve services for students in the context of the comprehensive higher education reform in Central and Eastern Europe.

This study is an argument that student services have been seriously neglected, both in terms of understanding their role in fulfilling institutional priorities and in meeting student needs, supported by comparative qualitative research findings. The position it promotes through the analysis of these findings is about institutional innovation: the professional upgrade and integration of services for the benefit of the students would enhance the overall institutional performance and effectiveness. In taking the view that student services are better organised and delivered through an integrated approach focused on the students, this study is the first attempt to promote

⁸⁵ As acknowledged in section 2.1., I was able to review only the sources published in English. It is possible that publications in other European languages exist; however, the lack of references to such publications in the reviewed bibliographies suggests that they do not represent a substantial body of literature contributing to the topic of student services in continental Europe.

the idea of student services as part of the university core operations in Central and Eastern Europe, serving both the students and the institution.

In this regard, I am grateful to be able to report a project initiated in 2006 by the University of Zagreb, one of the case studies in this research, to develop university counselling and advisory services in Croatian universities. The principal grant coordinator—a key informant during my research—attributed the idea about this project to my site visit in Zagreb in 2004 and the lengthy discussion we had about the role of student services. Having suggested a number of the literature sources that I was reviewing at the time, I am pleased to see the adoption of the concepts I have argued for in this dissertation. In the grant proposal (Tempus application – DUCAS, 2006, pp. 22-23), the project is formulated as follows:

The main aim of the project is to contribute to the process of implementing a quality culture through developing a model of integrated support services for students. The project will address the wider need for the development of an enhancing educational environment that would yield high achievements both in teaching and learning across Croatian higher education sector. ...

...

The introduction of the Bologna system in 2005/06 [Bologna degree structures] across Croatian higher education and its emphasis on student-centred approach to teaching and learning showed that considerable additional adjustments both for teachers and students are necessary. In addition to that, the entrance to the higher education coincides for quite a few students with a critical developmental period in their lives.

...

Being sensitised to these problems, the legislator has included the issue of student services in crucial legal documents...The University of Zagreb strategy document *Breakthrough 2001* (section 2.3.3.) mentions the establishment of the system of psychosocial support as one of the measures which can promote students' healthy lifestyles and well being. The provision of counselling and advisory services is also explicitly stated in the new Statute of the University of Zagreb (article 56/2). Although the establishment of student support services is foreseen in those documents, a systematic institutional approach is still lacking.

In addition to the involvement of all Croatian universities, this Joint European Tempus project includes the Universities of Southampton, Strathclyde, Groningen (Netherlands) and Goteborg (Sweden). My supervisor, Professor John Taylor is a partner in this project and through Southampton's participation, I will have the opportunity to present the findings of my research at a national conference in Croatia in October 2008.

6.3. Student services - diversity continued

In 2005, the Academic Cooperation Association (ACA), based in Brussels, was commissioned by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) to conduct a study of student services in the framework of support for international students in higher education, of which I was a collaborator and presenter in the concluding seminar "Meeting student expectations: from minimum provision to pampering talent"⁸⁶. The findings of this study were published by Kelo (2006), who introduced the topic as follows:

The expectations and demands of the changing student body call for re-considering the support structures in place, reviewing their appropriateness both for the institution and for the student, and setting up new. Regardless of the timeliness of the issue, little has been written on this subject so far. (p. 7)

Reviewing practices across several continents, the study found that universities in English-speaking countries—North America, the United Kingdom, Ireland, and Australia, which have a long tradition in attracting fee-paying international students—utilize student support services from a very early stage, beginning with student recruitment and admission, as well as a host of preparatory programmes before the students' entry into degree programmes. For continental Europe, the study found that, at present, support services for international students are emerging mainly in the context of the new Bologna-type Master's programmes which attract a higher number of non-traditional and non-national students than the Bachelor's programmes.

⁸⁶ ACA Seminar "Meeting student expectations: from minimum provision to pampering talent", Brussels, 30 March 2007. [<http://www.aca-secretariat.be/08events/Seminars/March2007.htm>]

Other than support services for international students, the ACA study concluded that interest in, or awareness of, the need for student support services does not translate into consistent institutional practices: “many institutions have not reached the level of awareness and commitment to services; in many cases they are seen as an add-on [e.g. specifically for international students], to be addressed only to the minimum required level by the institutions themselves and often ad hoc” (Kelo, 2006, p. 15). As a result, organisational practices have evolved in two models (*ibid*, pp. 128-135): separate and specific services for international students, based upon identified needs or upon income collected from international students’ tuition fees, while the integrated model for all students was found to be less common:

Institutions do not always have a thought-through services strategy, and if there is one it is not necessarily linked to other institutional aims or goals. The status quo is often arrived at through uncoordinated individual initiatives of dedicated members of staff across the institution, and activities are not always designed with overarching strategic aims in mind. (*ibid*, p. 135)

As noted in section 2.3.1. (Student support in the European public higher education sector) of this dissertation, the provision of services to national students in continental Europe is subject to state funding and regulations, which at present are not sufficiently flexible or extensive to accommodate the needs of international students. This fact may explain the reason why continental European universities tend to organise support services for international students separately. However, Kelo (2006, p. 131) suggested that in addition to enhancing institutional competitiveness and facilitating the growing internationalisation agendas of higher education in continental Europe, student services are an important tool to improve student retention, performance, and success rate. As such they are of benefit to all students.

6.4. The “Bologna” momentum

The Bologna process is now in the eighth year of its implementation—with 45 signatory countries—having achieved its main goals of restructuring degree cycles, introducing the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) and the diploma supplement, and initiating in-depth discussion and reforms, across all participating countries, related to qualification frameworks, quality and recognition. As *Trends IV* (2005, p. 6) anticipated, for many institutions the Bologna process also became an “opportunity to address problems which have long been known to exist.”

The completion of this dissertation coincides with the publication of EUA’s *Trends V* (2007), which I purposefully mention in the concluding remarks as a document that reinforces my optimism for the future of student services in continental Europe. *Trends V* is the first formal assessment on the Bologna impact on a wider range of institutional development processes (p. 6). Of great importance to the value and contribution of this research project is the report’s key finding that “across Europe, there is no longer any question of whether or not Bologna reforms will be implemented but rather a shift to considering the conditions in which implementation is taking place” (p. 18), which opens the door for further focused discussion on the methods and practices that will deliver Bologna’s expanded goals of student-centred learning, students’ employability and the responsiveness of higher education institutions to the needs of a changing society and labour market, quality, student mobility, lifelong learning and international attractiveness of the EHEA (pp. 6-10).

Trends V (2007) is the most recent publication to confirm that “the topic of student support services has been largely neglected in European policy debates” (p. 47). Following up on the previous report’s suggestion (*Trends IV*, 2005, p. 20) that “in re-designing more student-centred curricula, institutions must foresee that students will need more guidance and counselling to find their individual academic pathways in a more flexible learning environment” and the *Bergen Communiqué* (2005) which stated that “the social dimension includes measures taken by governments to help students, especially from socially disadvantaged groups, in financial and economic aspects and to provide them with guidance and counselling services with a view to

widening access”, this report considered it “essential to pay strong attention to student support services and to developments in student participation” (p. 47).

Consistent with the arguments in sections 1.5.2. (Services for all students), 1.6.2. (Integrated student services), 5.2.6. (The missing management perspective) and 5.3. (Multiple roles of student services), *Trends V* (2007, p. 47) sets out the need for student support services as follows:

As the Bologna reforms begin to take root within HEIs, students across Europe are experiencing important changes in matters such as degree structures, study programmes, teaching and learning methodologies, as well as the range of academic choices and progression routes open to them. Any change process brings uncertainty, and it can be anticipated that students will routinely need explanation and advice in such a context—hence the need for effective services. It is also an aspect to democratic society that those who are the users of services should provide feedback on their quality and have a stake in their development. This is particularly the case when a shift in educational paradigm is from teacher to student-centred learning.

Student services such as academic guidance, career services, accommodation, psychological counselling and welfare services play an increasingly important role when it comes to enhancing the attractiveness and the competitiveness of the EHEA. They provide national and international students with the infrastructure to assist each individual student to navigate through higher education in the best possible way, and ideally should be adapted to each student’s goals, objectives and personal circumstances.

Such services are also crucial in realising the aspiration of widening access to higher education to more diverse groups of learners, especially those currently under-represented in the student populations who may need greater levels of support. Student services therefore form a vital part of the infrastructure required to support the lifelong learning mission of institutions and are also crucial when attracting international students.

As the quoted sources in this section (and in section 2.4.) demonstrate, in continental Europe the shift of attention to student services and student involvement in the provision of student services is very recent. *Trends V* (2007, pp. 48-50) suggests a growth in the provision of student services such as language training, information on study opportunities at other institutions, guidance and counselling, career guidance services, but indicates some uncertainty as to whether institutions participating in the survey answered the question “more in the context of mobility rather than with the whole student body in mind” (p. 48), echoing the findings of the ACA study (Kelo, 2006) related to the two identified models of organisational practice: services for international students and the less common integrated model (section 6.1.). Moreover, in parallel to the findings of this research project (section 5.2.5. - The university left out of the loop?), *Trends V* identified similar concerns related to “the key issues of how these services are staffed, the level to which they are funded and whether or not there is any evidence that they are delivered effectively” (p. 48).

Given the diverse landscape of higher education institutions, the absence of national policies and guidelines on the establishment and coordination of integrated student services programmes, and the very recent discussion on the role of student services, these findings are not surprising – confusions and misunderstandings are quite possible. What is encouraging is the explicit presence of the topic on the future Bologna reform agenda. Recalling the findings in section 4.3. (Factors of institutional change), and the key importance assigned to international developments and the Bologna process in Central and Eastern Europe (section 4.3.3. - Key importance of international developments and the Bologna process), I see the “Bologna” momentum continuing its role as a “fundamental charter of change” (*Country Report, Romania* 2003, p. 5) that will bring about reform in the area of student services.

6.5. Further research questions

As *Trends V* (2007, p. 19) indicates, European universities are steeped in the implementation of comprehensive reforms resulting from the adoption of the Bologna principles in national legislations and institutional cultures. Consistent with the findings of this research project, the report suggests that questions and problems of implementation most frequently touch upon institutional relationships with national authorities: “The issues most often identified here concern insufficient institutional autonomy to implement reforms in the way in which they would be most effective, and insufficient government support for reform” (for example, no additional financing, insufficient dialogue, legislative changes without adequate involvement of the key stakeholders).

While this study focused on higher education institutions in Central and Eastern Europe, the importance they assign to the role of national authorities and legislation suggests that further research on this topic ought to include representatives at the policy-making level. Having identified key problems of implementation in the area of student services and student involvement, and offered a set of ideas for their development—from an institutional management perspective, this research project may be taken further by involving key agents who set the strategy at the national level (for example, experts from Ministries of Education, statistics agencies, and advisors on HE policy). In particular, it would be helpful to review questions such as: the extent to which the legally defined ‘institutional autonomy’ is embedded in the process of setting government regulations for student support; the role of the university in implementing these regulations in relation to actual services provision—for example, is institutional autonomy a sufficient prerequisite, or is there a need for some combination between local initiative and acting in response to external requirements; what are the consequences of defining “students as partners”; and how can accreditation and quality assurance procedures in a post-Bologna Europe be linked to the student experience? Judging from the findings of my research, the absence of university-wide discussions on the role of student services in enhancing the student experience may be connected to the absence of a policy discussion

altogether, an example of “governments more interested in the rhetoric of reform rather than providing genuine support to institutions” (*Trends V*, 2007, p. 19).

As I noted in section 3.10. (Making choices and setting the limits – my development as a researcher) , one of the most interesting aspects of this study has been the multitude of findings it has yielded and the deliberation on which findings to include as the key results of this investigation. In this sense, it lays the foundations towards more extensive research on student involvement and services across continental Europe. Of particular interest would be a longitudinal comparison of those findings that contradicted my expectations: for example, the influence of student expectations on the provision of student services (section 4.4.3) and the role of the students (section 4.7.).

Further, three topics—which the literature sources discussed but were not researched in this study—are the understanding of the relationship between massification of higher education, student diversity, and student mobility in the context of internationalisation of higher education. From the findings of this research project, I suspect that there has been little discussion on the implications of mass higher education in Central and Eastern Europe: universities continue to function with minimal adjustments to their student support infrastructure.

Similarly, while student numbers have increased, student diversity may be understood in very different terms from the descriptions in the United States and in the United Kingdom. In the CEE region the number of adult learners is still relatively low—lifelong learning is yet to be implemented in a manner than would attract mid-career professionals to take up part-time studies or specific training programmes offered in a university context. There are indications that student diversity in Central and Eastern Europe is more likely to occur in the form of traditional age students working while they study ‘full-time’, with the implication of ‘full-time’ programmes being extended to evening and weekend hours. In addition, higher education laws in the region allow for ‘full-time’ enrolment in more than one degree programme, in two or more institutions. Increasingly, students take up simultaneous enrolment in two degree programmes, which *Trends V* (2007, p. 50) attributes to the lack of interdisciplinary degrees and the students’ desire to improve their employability.

Further research on the possible future changes in the student body could examine national statistics on student enrolment patterns, what is the nature of part-time studies, and what are the trends in providing services to a more mature student body.

Student mobility within Europe—supported explicitly by the European Commission and the Bologna process—and beyond, is another topic to be examined in relation to student support provision. The introduction of the Bachelor's, Master's and doctoral degree cycles is expected to result in a much higher mobility across institutions and countries for postgraduate studies. How market forces are likely to influence student choices, and what support services might be required to sustain these new multinational, multilingual and multicultural postgraduate student enrolments is yet another potential area of research.

From a methodological perspective, this project utilised the strength of the case study approach (Punch, 1998, pp 155-156) to understand the “important aspects” of a new research area in the context of complex social behaviour. In this first study on the topic of student services in Central and Eastern Europe, my goal was to “discover the important features and develop an understanding of them”. As possible new directions, it would be interesting to include a larger number of participants and to make use of focus group discussions and questionnaires.

In closing, reflecting on the research process itself, I sought to identify and advise on a set of conditions which influence the provision of student services in a region undergoing extensive transformation, examine how these conditions are—or might be—changing, and come up with some suggestions about how institutions can use new opportunities in sustaining internal reform. Although my suggestions and conclusions are by no means exhaustive, I think that I have accomplished the goal of raising awareness of, and provoking self-reflection on, an important institutional responsibility. I hope to find in future research that student services are no longer neglected, but taking hold as a professional area in the university core.

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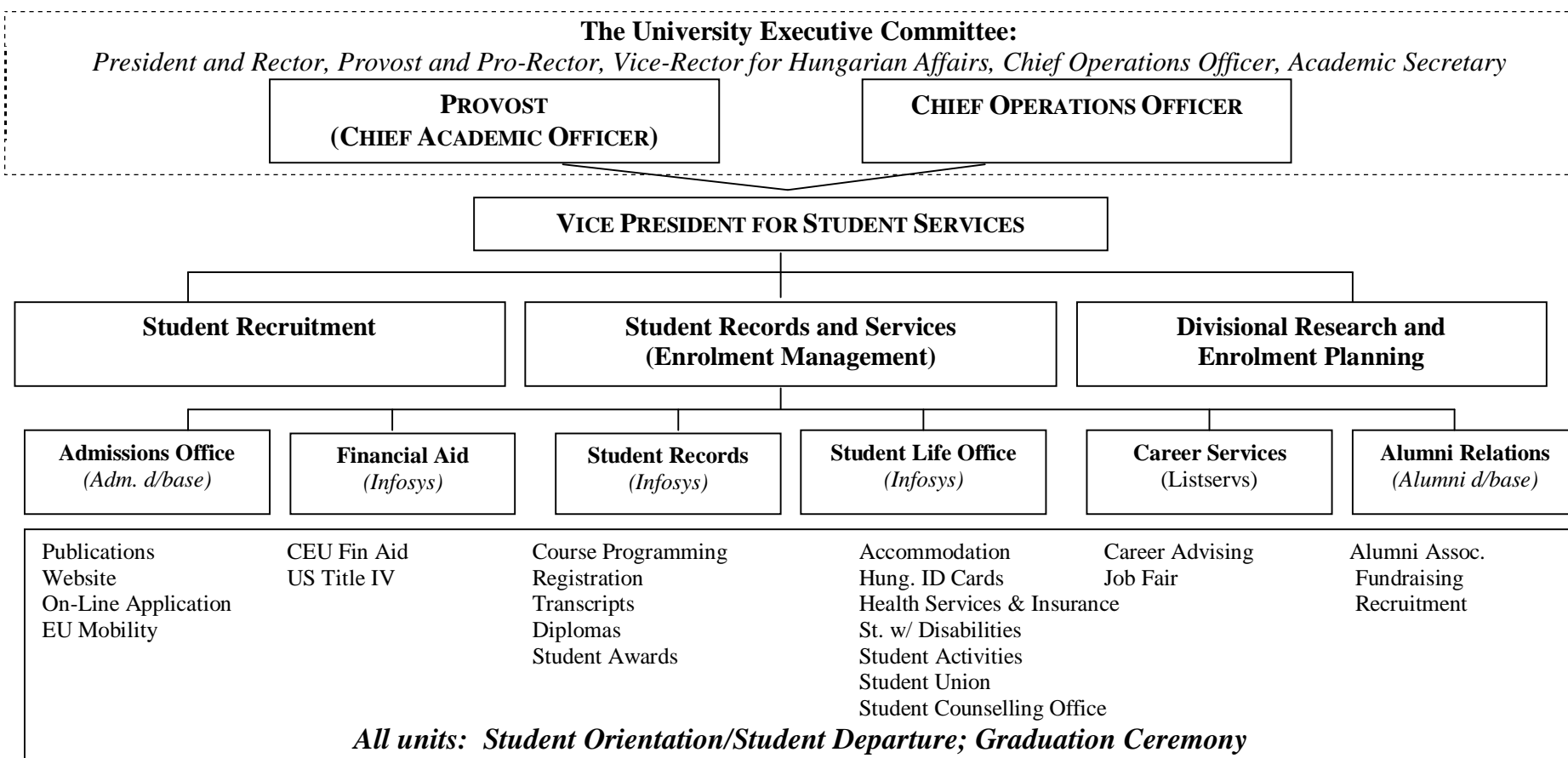
APPENDIX I

R. Bateson: List of Papers, Presentations, Workshops

- Bateson, R. (2007). "Overview of student support services in the context of HE reforms in Europe – services for some or services for all?" (I); "Integrating student support services: who do 'student services' serve? The case of the Central European University." (II). Lectures delivered at the training course programme *Support services for international students in Italy and policies related to post-graduate placement*. MIP Politecnico di Milano.
- Bateson, R. and Taylor, J. (2007). "Encouraging Student Expectations: a Task for Institutions in Central and Eastern Europe." Paper presented at the European Association for Institutional Research (EAIR) Annual Forum, August 2007, Innsbruck, Austria
- Bateson, R. (2007). "Preparing a Student Recruitment Strategy". Presentation to International Relations Officers of the Danube Rector's Conference, June 2007, Budapest
- Bateson, R. (2007). "Integrating student services into university management - who do 'student services' serve?" Presentation at the Academic Cooperation Association (ACA) Seminar "Meeting student expectations: from minimum provision to pampering talent", Brussels, March 2007.
- Bateson, R. (2006). Student Services Module of the Higher Education Management Workshops at the Central European University: 8-11 November 2006
- Bateson, R. (2006). "Student Services at the Central European University: Learning from Practice and Student Needs". Presentation at the European Association for International Education (EAIE) Annual Forum at the University of Basel, Switzerland, September 2006.
- Bateson, R. and Taylor, J. (2004). Student Involvement in University Life - Beyond Political Activism and University Governance: a view from Central and Eastern Europe. *European Journal of Education*, Vol. 39, No. 4, pp. 471-483
- Bateson, R. (2003). Workshop on Student Services for a Delegation from Smolny College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, St. Petersburg and European University of St. Petersburg, Russia, at the Central European University, 8-10 December 2003
- Bateson, R. (2003). "A case for Student Services as an integral part of the University Core." Paper presented at the European Association for Institutional Research (EAIR) Annual Forum, August 2003, Limerik, Ireland
- Bateson, R. (2003). "An introduction to the theoretical and methodological framework of institutional research in higher education: a case for the professionalisation of research on institutional effectiveness at the Central European University, including an evaluation of research methods, data collection and analysis." Assignment paper, July 2003.
- Pennington, K. and Bateson, R. (2003). "Student Services: Enhancing Customer Service Culture." Workshop for CEU staff organised in cooperation with the US National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), May 2003, Budapest
- Bateson, R. (2002). "Professionalisation of administrative services in higher education: a case for "change agents" outside the core." Presentation at the Rectors' Roundtable "The Epistemology of Universities", organised by the Central European University and the Higher Education Support Programme, Budapest, November 2002
- Bateson, R. (2002). "Institutional Change and Evaluation: a Case Study of Student Services in the Central European University." Assignment paper, August 2002.
- Central European University Website: <http://www.ceu.hu/>
 Prospective Students: <http://www.ceu.hu/about>; <http://www.ceu.hu/admissions>
 Online Orientation: http://web.ceu.hu/online_orientation.html
 Current Students: <http://www.ceu.hu/studentlife>
 Alumni Affairs and Career Services: <http://www.ceu.hu/alumnicareer>

APPENDIX II

Organisational Chart of Student Services at the Central European University (2007/2008)



APPENDIX III

List of journals
consulted in the literature review
for non-US and non-UK sources on student services

<p><i>Active Learning in Higher Education</i> The Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (York) (no electronic source)</p>
<p><i>Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education</i>, Publisher: Routledge University of Bath. School of Education. Sample – aspects of teaching and student assessment Student support – 145 entries Nothing on Student Services</p>
<p><i>European Journal of Education</i>, Blackwell Publishing Institute of Education (European Cultural Foundation) Student services – 169 entries: ‘students’, ‘learning’, ‘student life’, ‘student roles’ Student support – 210 entries: ‘loans’, ‘mobility’, ‘choice’, ‘pedagogy’, ‘learning’ Sample – very international, broad topics</p>
<p><i>European Journal of Education</i>, Vol. 39, No. 4, 2004 – Special Issue on Students’ Attitude Towards the University, Student Role (Editorial Roberto Moscati)</p>
<p><i>Higher Education</i>, Springer Netherlands Student services – 24 entries: ‘students’, ‘social/psychological counselling’, ‘services in the context of internationalisation – US’, Japan, Korea, Cyprus, Israel Student support – 72 entries: ‘student financial support’, ‘IT support’, ‘students with disabilities’, ‘psychology studies’, ‘research support’ Sample – very international, broad topics</p>
<p><i>Higher Education in Europe (UNESCO-CEPES)</i>; Publisher: Routledge Student services – 53 entries: ‘1 on student services – Vol 19’, articles on CEE, Bologna, private HE, entrepreneurial univ, broad topics on continental Europe Student support – 71 entries: ‘student perspectives’, ‘ethnicity and student life’... Sample – very international, broad topics</p>
<p><i>Higher Education in Europe</i>, Vol. 19, No. 3, 1994 – Special Issue on Counselling and Orientation of Students in Higher Education.</p>
<p><i>Higher Education Management</i>, OECD (1990-2002)</p>
<p><i>Higher Education Management and Policy</i>, OECD (since 2002) (hard copy only), few articles: Temple, Taylor</p>
<p><i>Higher Education Quarterly (SRHE)</i>; Blackwell Publishing Student services – 152 entries: ‘recruitment’, ‘employment’, ‘first year learning’, ‘disabled students’, ‘marketisation’, ‘non-completion’, ‘performance indicators’, ‘widening participation’, ‘equal opportunities’, ‘access’, ‘university admissions’, ‘choice’, ‘adult learners’, etc.</p>
<p><i>Higher Education Research and Development</i>, Routledge (Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia.) Student services – 34 entries: ‘first year learning’, ‘student perceptions’, ‘non-traditional students’, ‘plagiarism’, broad range of topics, international, but not explicit on student services.</p>
<p><i>Higher Education Review</i> (no electronic source, not searched)</p>
<p><i>International Journal for Academic Development</i>, Routledge (International Consortium for Educational Development.) Student services – 14 entries: not explicit on student services.</p>

<i>Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management</i> , Routledge Journal of Association for Tertiary Education Management (ATEM) Student services – 51 entries: not explicit on student services, except for students with disabilities; exit from university, GATS, choice, plagiarism, etc.
<i>Quality in Higher Education</i> , Routledge Published in association with INQAAHE Student services – 34 entries: not explicit on student services, ‘student satisfaction – role of services’, ‘students as customers’, ‘holistic model for quality’, ‘quality assurance’, ‘quality assessment’,
<i>Studies in Higher Education (SRHE)</i> , Routledge Student services – 36 entries: not explicit on student services, ‘disabled’, ‘internationalisation’, ‘social support’, ‘learners and learning’, Student support – 126 entries: very broad range
<i>Tertiary Education and Management (EAIR)</i> , Springer Netherlands References on institutional research, case studies
<i>Perspectives: Policy and Practice in Higher Education</i> (Association of University Administrators, UK) No entries on student services
<i>International Review of Education</i> (Kluwer)
<i>Research into Higher Education Abstracts (SRHE)</i> ; Routledge Student services – 19 entries

**European Higher Education Associations
which have included the topic of Student Services in
Conferences and Publications**

Academic Cooperation Association (ACA), Belgium [http://www.aca-secretariat.be/]
European Association for Institutional Research (EAIR), The Netherlands [http://www.eair.nl/]
European Association for International Education (EAIE), The Netherlands [http://www.eaie.nl/]
European Universities Association (EUA), Belgium [http://www.eua.be/index.php]
European Forum for Student Guidance (FEDORA), Belgium [http://fedora.plexus.leidenuniv.nl/]
Heads of University Management & Administration Network in Europe (HUMANE), Spain [http://www.humane.eu.org/]

APPENDIX IV

Major Proponents of the Strategic Enrolment Management Movement in the United States

(In Chronological Order)

Hossler, D. (Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies and Vice-Chancellor for Enrolment Services at Indiana University, Bloomington)

- Hossler, D., Bean, J. and Associates. (1990). *The Strategic Management of College Enrolments*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass
- Hossler, D. and Hoeze, L. (2001). Conceptual and Theoretical Thinking about Enrolment Management. In: Black, J. ed. *The Strategic Enrolment Management Revolution*. pp. 57-72. Washington, DC: American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO)

Dolence, M. (independent consultant)

- Dolence, M. ed. (1996). *Strategic Enrolment Management: Cases from the Field*. Washington, DC: American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO)
- Dolence, M. (1997a). *Strategic Enrolment Management: A Primer for Campus Administrators*. 2nd ed. Washington, DC: American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO)
- Dolence, M. (1997b). Strategic Enrolment Management. In: Swanson, R. and Weese, F., *Becoming a Leader in Enrolment Services: A Development Guide for the Higher Education Professional*. pp. 107-133. Washington, DC: American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO)

Whiteside, R. (Vice President for Enrolment Management and Institutional Research at Tulane University)

- Whiteside, R. (1996). An Evolving Enrolment Management Programme at Tulane University. In: Dolence, M. ed. *Strategic Enrolment Management: Cases from the Field*. pp. 54-74. Washington, DC: American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO)
- Whiteside, R. (2001). Moving from Theory to Action; Models for Successful Change. In: Black, J. ed. *The Strategic Enrolment Management Revolution*. pp. 75-108. Washington, DC: American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO)

Huddleston, T. (Vice President, Student Development and Enrolment Services, University of Central Florida)

- Huddleston, T. (2001). Building the Enrolment Organisational Model. In: Black, J. ed. *The Strategic Enrolment Management Revolution*. pp. 125-148. Washington, DC: American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO)

Black, J. (Associate Provost for Enrolment Services at the University of North Carolina)

- Black, J. ed. (2001). *The Strategic Enrolment Management Revolution*. Washington, DC: American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO)
- Black, J. (2003). SEM White Papers. AACRAO 13th Strategic Enrolment Management Conference: Defining a Profession. [WWW] <http://www.aacrao.org/sem13/whitePapers.htm> (18 May 2007)
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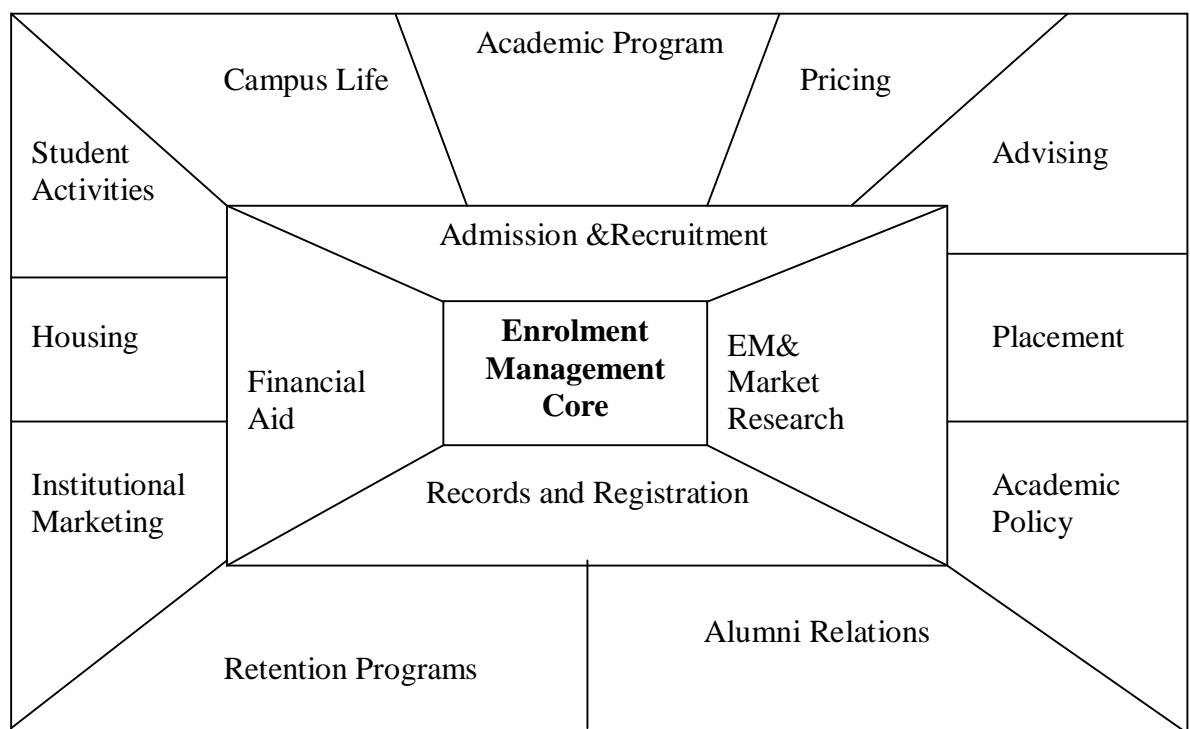
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APPENDIX V

Enrolment Management as an Integrated Internal Continuum (Tulane University)

Whiteside's concept of the evolving enrolment management model provides an example of the integrated internal continuum (1996, p. 67):



Reference:

Whiteside, R. (1996). An Evolving Enrolment Management Programme at Tulane University. In: Dolence, M. *Strategic Enrolment Management: Cases from the Field*. pp. 54-74. Washington, DC: American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO)

APPENDIX VI

Definition of Student Services

(1) *Developing an Internal Quality Culture in European Universities 2002-2003* (2005). The European University Association

Main Themes:

- Research Management
- Teaching and Learning
- Student Support Services**
- Implementing Bologna
- Collaborative Arrangements
- Communication Flow and Decisions-making structures

Student Support Services (excerpt, pp. 27-29)

The Student Support Services report provides a holistic view of this area, based on the notion that students are more than learners and that all aspects of their well-being must be considered.

Student Support Services offer programmes and activities designed to increase student academic performance together with student personal well being, offering members of the University community a range of services that complement the university experience and contribute directly to the welfare of individuals. There are four categories of services:

1. Advice and Guidance: Psychological assistance Health promotion Career planning and Job Centre Mentoring and Tutoring Legal and procedural advice	2. Material Support Services: Financial Aid Student Health Services Disability Support services Accommodation and catering Non-traditional student support
3. Academic Support Services: International student support Academic technology assistance Libraries, databases, electronic resources Self-assessment, basic skills and study methods Linguistic Centre First year orientation Educational Equity Office Tutor's training	4. Non-academic services Sport and recreation Religious groups, Racial and Ethnic cultural support Socio-cultural centre Transport Security inside the campus

(2) Developing an Internal Quality Culture in European Universities Report on the Quality Culture Project, Round II - 2004 (2005). The European University Association

Student Support Services (excerpt, pp. 25-26)

Academic Support

The cycle of academic support starts with the process of enquiry through to application, induction, on-programme and graduation. The management of academic support is as essential as the support itself, in order to ensure a consistent and holistic student experience.

All institutions expressed a desire to attract more students and a number identified that these students would be increasingly drawn to research, post-graduate and lifelong learning programmes, and increasingly originate from other countries or backgrounds traditionally not associated with higher education study. Consequently, as student numbers grow and the intake mix becomes more diverse, it is critical that the institution manages the student experience.

How this would be achieved differed and perhaps revealed differing institutional pressures, i.e. the focus of institutions to attract:

- more students
- students that better fit the institutional profile
- more students to programmes in which they were likely to succeed

In all cases, the provision of accurate pre-entry information was seen as critical; not only in attracting students but also in managing their expectations.

Once admitted, improving student success was seen as essential and the key driver identified by institutions was improving students' employability and preparation for professional careers, although specific measures of employability were not noted.

Social Integration

Social integration comes about through strategies that enhance student commitment to the institution and help them to form strong social networks. An institution that conducted a Student Satisfaction Survey mentioned that the importance of social integration was evident in the results, which highlighted the value students placed on relationships with both fellow students and staff. Other suggestions included:

- Enhancing the web based information
- Developing more room for common non-curricula activities
- Developing mentoring schemes for new students by more senior students as a way of orientation
- Providing appropriate conditions to improve social integration of students with different needs or students with disabilities

Academic and Regulatory Structures

A clear thread through all of the institutional plans was the need for clarity in the roles and functions of all services and departments. Activities implemented by the network institutions included:

- To establish focus groups and questionnaires to see views from students. These vividly captured the bewilderment of a student who may recognise that there are differences in functioning between different support units but cannot understand the differences and nuances between each unit's individual function.
- To transform the structures and processes by prioritising students' needs over institutional custom and practice.

Data Quality Management

All institutions had data management systems. One used web-based systems as its primary student support input. This was viewed as a strength, although it was recognised that the consequent reduction in human student contact with student was viewed negatively by some students.

The challenge for all institutions was two-fold:

- Systems were generally not integrated into a single database which meant that students and staff had to source and search a number of diverse areas to seek information and that the information on some occasions was contradictory or unclear.
- There was diversity in what data should be collected and for what purpose. These ranged through providing information for the diploma supplement through tracking engagement with learning and gathering demographic and other data to know students better and therefore more effectively respond to their needs.

APPENDIX VII

Negotiating Access

(In Chronological Order)

Babes-Bolyai University, Romania

1. ----- Original Message -----

From: "Rositsa Bateson" <Batesonr@ceu.hu>

To: <MirceaMiclea@psychology.ro>

Subject: From CEU - Via Liviu Matei

Date: Mon, Mar 1, 2004, 12:37

Dear Professor Miclea,

Hello from Central European University. My colleague and friend, Liviu Matei, wrote to you about me and my request for an introduction to a contact from Babes Bolyai University. I am very grateful that you have agreed to correspond with me and thank you for your cooperation. I hope this exchange may become useful for you in some way too.

Perhaps Liviu already told you some of these details, but I am working at CEU as VP for Student Services. I have been here six years. In 2002, I started the University of Bath DBA in Higher Education Management programme which, I understand, you may be familiar with through your contact with Dr. John Taylor (who is the director of studies and my supervisor). Having completed the first phase of the programme, I am now developing my research proposal and project for the dissertation. Dr. Taylor is very keen for me to turn this into a comparative study of several institutions in the region and this is why I am looking to identify 2, possibly 3, universities with whom I could cooperate in my research.

The broad topic is institutional responses to the changing role of the students as stakeholders in the higher education process. In particular, I am interested to interview faculty and senior university administrators in order to glean what the institutional attitudes are. Then I would like to examine how the university is organised to meet student needs outside the classroom - what services and support are offered, how they are organised and what importance is given to these by both the university and the students. Finally, I would also like to interview some students about their own perceptions.

This is still a very fluid plan. I will be meeting Dr. Taylor next week in the UK and I hope that after our discussions I will be able to proceed, incorporating also his concrete recommendations and guidance. If you find that you can assist me in my research and help me to organise some meetings at your university, I could plan to visit you in the later spring for several days to conduct the interviews. Of course, I will do all the preparatory work, but it would be wonderful if you could make some informal introductions and suggest the names of the people I could talk to.

My theoretical base comes primarily from US sources on student support programmes and services. I have been reading about developments in Europe and CEE in the last few months, though I must admit that other than direct references to students as customers I have not found much to support the idea that there is substantial research on this topic in Europe. Perhaps you can advise me on this matter.

I look forward to your reply and thank you, again, for your kind help. If you would like to see some of the things that we do here at CEU in terms of student services, you will find information at: http://www.ceu.hu/vp_students_services.html
With best wishes,

Rositsa Bateson

~~~~~  
Rositsa Bateson, Vice President for Student Services  
Central European University  
Nador u. 9, H-1051 Budapest, Hungary  
Tel: +36-1-327-3212; Fax: +36-1-327-3211; Email: [batesonr@ceu.hu](mailto:batesonr@ceu.hu)  
Visit CEU Open House: [www.ceu.hu](http://www.ceu.hu)  
~~~~~

2. ----- Original Message -----

>> "Mircea Miclea" <MirceaMiclea@psychology.ro> 03/08/04 11:38 AM >>

Dear Mrs Bateson,

I was away for a while; tomorrow or a day after I will give you the contact persons. mircea

>> "Mircea Miclea" <MirceaMiclea@psychology.ro> 3/12/2004 3:49 PM>>

the contact person is oana negru; please contact her at oananegru@psychology.ro
mircea miclea

3. ----- Original Message -----

>> <oananegru@psychology.ro> 04/12/04 05:35PM >>>

Dear Ms. Rositsa Bateson,

I hope you've been having sunny and happy Easter Holidays. First of all, as an introduction, I will tell you a little bit about me and my workplace. I am a Psychologist and I work at the "Expert" Centre, Babes-Bolyai University. The "Expert" Centre offers psychological services (counselling, workshops, training, etc., career counselling) for the Babes-Bolyai students and also for the entire community.

Regarding your visit at the Babes-Bolyai University, I would like to know, as precise as possible the persons and/or departments you would like to visit and talk to. Also, it would be very helpful to send me a short statement about your research, which I could present to my colleagues and a list of questions. I will be able to send you more information regarding the your visit to our university after I receive this information to you. Because students and the teaching staff are on Easter vacation till the 19th of April, I will be able to talk to most people only after this date. I will be happy to help you, in order to exchange examples of best practices and share professional

experiences. My mobile phone number is 0742.757.668, where you can contact me for more information.

With best wishes, Oana NEGRU

4. ----- Original Message -----

From: Rositsa Bateson [<mailto:Batesonr@ceu.hu>]

Sent: Wednesday, April 28, 2004 7:17 PM

To: LSalat@edrc.osf.ro

Subject: from CEU - via Liviu

Dear Levente,

Thanks to Liviu, I am glad to be in contact with you again. I remember we corresponded some time ago when your work covered CEU as well, and I hope we will, at long last, meet! Liviu mentioned that you would be coming to Budapest quite soon, please be sure to let me know when and I hope there will be a little time to see each other.

Perhaps Liviu has mentioned that I am trying to make arrangements to visit BBU and conduct some interviews as part of my doctoral research project. So far I have been in contact with Oana Negru. My preliminary plans are to be in Cluj between 20-22 May, but the schedule is not finalised yet. In fact, I am just finishing the list of questions and an outline of my research project which I will send to Oana, so that she can see if these dates will work out.

If it is not too much to ask, I would be very grateful for a chat with you and for any guidance you could offer. I am doing a part-time professional doctorate in higher education management at the University of Bath in the UK, and this is part of my research of universities in Eastern Europe. If you are interested, I will send you my questions as well. In the meantime, I am looking for a place to stay while I am in Cluj, and to seeing some old friends too.

With best wishes, Rositsa

5. ----- Original Message -----

>> Levente Salat <LSalat@edrc.osf.ro> 05/02/04 11:56AM >>

Dear Rositsa,

First of all, I apologise for the delayed response, I have been very busy lately. It is Sunday morning, seemingly the only day of the week when I can spend time on my personal correspondence. I was happy myself, when I learned from Liviu that you are interested in the Babes-Bolyai University and you plan to visit us soon. Since I have been elected as one of the Vice-Rectors recently, I am not only interested personally in your research, but its is my official duty to help you with what I can.

The problem is that I will have to travel quite a lot in the near future: according to the plans I will be out of Cluj during May 10-15 and May 16-22, which means that you would leave exactly upon my arrival. Though I would be sorry personally for being unable to meet you, I am sure that thanks to Oana Negru you will have all the assistance you need in your research. I would appreciate still if you could send me your topics, I could recommend you perhaps further meetings or sources. I look forward to hearing from you, and, perhaps, meeting you soon, too.

Best regards, Levente

University of Zagreb, Croatia

1. ----- Original Message -----

From: "Rositsa Bateson" <batesonr@ceu.hu>

To: <vvizek@unizg.hr>

Sent: Monday, April 05, 2004 9:36 PM

Subject: from Rosie Bateson at CEU

Dear Vice-Rector Vidovic,

Hello from Central European University (CEU) in Budapest. My name is Rositsa Bateson, Vice President for Student Services at CEU, and I write to you in follow up to your correspondence with Dr. John Taylor from the University of Bath.

First of all, let me thank you for your very kind agreement to help with my research. I am glad to take this opportunity to visit the University of Zagreb and, hopefully, interview you as well as other senior administrators, faculty and students. This will allow me to expand my research beyond CEU and test some of the ideas I have developed here, in a different context and organisational structure. I also hope that these meetings may be of professional interest to you and some of your colleagues, and that a longer relationship may result from this research. I would be happy not only to ask questions but also to share experiences and our own practices in the field of student support outside the classroom.

A few words about CEU and to introduce my research project:

Perhaps you already know about CEU - a graduate level, US-style international institution in the social sciences and humanities. CEU was established in 1991 and is funded primarily by George Soros, but for the last few years we have been seeking ways to increase our revenue by charging tuition fees. Compared to the national universities in the region, CEU is a small institution. Several years ago, the university applied for accreditation in the United States and, in organising itself to meet the US accreditation requirements, it established a special unit called "Student Services" - an integrated student support division, responsible for student recruitment, admissions, financial aid, student life, student records and registration, student counselling, orientation programmes, and alumni affairs. The whole programme follows US practices, adapted to our needs in the region. I came on board in the beginning of 2000 and have been the Vice President for Student Services, developing this internal organisation and its management, as well as the various support programmes we offer to students.

In 2002 I enrolled in the DBA (HEM) - Doctor of Business Administration in Higher Education Management - a part-time programme that was started by the University of Bath. Having completed the taught (and probationary) part of the programme, I am now developing my research project. My main interest is to examine whether there is a change in the role students play in institutional management in HE in our region, what are the institutional perceptions and attitudes toward students as stakeholders, and how does the university organise itself to meet student development and needs outside the classroom. In Western Europe, there is now a lot of discussion about students as customers of higher education and student satisfaction, whereas in the US,

there is a whole body of literature about student learning and development in "college". It identifies a variety of needs that students have as they go through college which are the basis for creating very focused and integrated student affairs and services programmes.

CEU itself is one such example although in our case the formation of student services resulted from the need to meet external requirements, rather than an internal philosophy about student needs. Over time, as students have become more vocal in expressing their expectations and needs, we have developed such a thinking - work in progress. To compare our own experiences with students, I would like to see if other universities in the region are facing similar situations, and what do they do.

This is why I would be grateful for the opportunity to spend a few days at the University of Zagreb, and to speak with you, heads of departments, heads of administrative support services with special responsibility for the students, and representatives of the student government. I understand that the structure is more decentralised and that each faculty has made its own provision. This, I think, is very interesting from the university management perspective and I would like to visit - if possible - the social sciences, law, arts and humanities, and perhaps one of science faculties.

I will be able to travel any time after April 26, please let me know what dates would be convenient for you and I will make my arrangements. I would be happy to stay in the student dormitory - this will be part of my research experience and will give me a chance to speak with the students. If you like, I will prepare a short statement about my research, which you can forward to your colleagues. At this point, I would like to learn more about the university management structure and how student support is organised. I might be able to send a list of questions in advance, so that people will have some time to think about these topics.

Please forgive me for this long email, I know your days are busy. To make things easier, I would be happy to call you and discuss the travel plans over the phone. Just send me your contact information. Thank you again and I look forward to meeting you. I also hope I may host you at CEU before long.

With best wishes, Rosie

~~~~~  
 Rositsa Bateson, Vice President for Student Services  
 Central European University  
 Nador u. 9, H-1051 Budapest, Hungary  
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 Visit CEU Open House: [www.ceu.hu](http://www.ceu.hu)  
 ~~~~~

2. ----- Original Message -----**From: "Larisa Korsic" <lkorsic@unizg.hr> 4/14/2004 11:19 AM**

Dear Ms Bateson,

I apologise for not having replied sooner. Professor Vizek Vidovic has forwarded me your e-mail but it has been very busy around here lately and I was unable to reply sooner.

When would you like to come to Zagreb? Could you please let me know the exact dates so that I can book the dormitory for you. Also could you please take a look at all the Faculties and programmes on our website at <http://www.unizg.hr/guide/index.html> to get an idea about which faculties you would like to visit. Some of the faculties are more developed in the sense of IT and some less. When you have decided please send me the list and I will arrange the meetings with the representatives of those faculties (or with the people you would like to meet there). Thank you in advance.

Sincerely,

Larisa KOrsic

Larisa Korsic, B.A.
International Relations Office
University of Zagreb
Trg m. Tita 14
HR - 10 000 Zagreb
Croatia
Phone: ++385 1 456 44 50
Fax: ++385 1 483 06 02
e-mail: lkorsic@unizg.hr

3. ----- Original Message -----**From: "Rositsa Bateson" <Batesonr@ceu.hu>****To: <ajelic@unizg.hr>****Sent: Monday, May 03, 2004 9:29 AM****Subject: Further list of names**

Dear Andrea,

You should have received my research questions on Friday, I hope everything is clear and that you will not have any problems in setting up as many meetings as you can. Please feel free to ask me any additional questions if there is need. If you like, I will call you in the course of the week to see how you are doing. Just send me your phone number.

On Friday I forgot to mention that I am also in touch with Nino Skukanec from the Student Information Center, with which we cooperate institutionally in student recruitment and admissions for Central European University. Nino is also willing to assist with my research, and I should like to leave some time (possibly Friday afternoon) to visit the SIC and interview him as well. This is just to bear in mind, as the schedule takes shape. Nino will be away till May 10 but he left me the name of Ms. Daniela Dolenec (ddolenec@sic.hr) for further contacts.

Nino also suggested the following names from the University of Zagreb - some of them are already on my list by virtue of their title (!):

- Neven Budak, Dean, Faculty of Philosophy, nbudak@ffzg.hr
- Gvozden Flego, Former Minister of Science, Faculty of Philosophy, gvozden.flego@zg.htnet.hr
- Branko Smerdel, Dean, Law School, dekanat@pravo.hr
- Ivan Vickovic, Dean, Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, dekanat@dekanat.pmf.hr
- Ognjenka Manojlovic, student, Law School, ognjenka.manojlovic@zg.htnet.hr

I hope all is well, and look forward to hearing from you.

Regards, Rositsa

4. ----- Original Message -----

From: " Andrea-Beata Jelic " <ajelic@unizg.hr> 5/4/2004

Dear Rositsa,

just to let you know that I received both of your messages but I could not answer you because we have problems and viruses on our server so we temporarily cannot use internet. We have made a schedule for you and I am now contacting the people to set up meetings. So far, everything goes well. I will send you the details as soon as the majority of meetings will be set up. My phone number is below, so you can contact me if you wish. Our office hours are 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. I think that you should also book a hotel. We made the programme for Thursday and Friday.

Best regards, Andrea

Andrea-Beata Jelic, M.A.
International Relations Office
University of Zagreb
Trg marsala Tita 14
HR - 10 000 Zagreb
Croatia
phone: ++385 1 456 44 50
fax: ++385 1 483 06 02
e-mail: ajelic@unizg.hr

University of Novi Sad, Serbia

1. ----- Original Message -----

From: "Rositsa Bateson" <Batesonr@ceu.hu>

To: "Ladislav@uns.ns.ac.yu" <Ladislav@uns.ns.ac.yu>

Subject: from Central European University

Date: 26/11/04 16:29

Dear Professor Novak,

I write to you from Central European University (CEU) in Budapest. My name is Rositsa Bateson, Vice President for Student Services at CEU, and I believe that Dr. John Taylor from the UK was in contact with you about me. I am one of his doctoral students from the University of Bath-and now at the University of Southampton-who is pursuing a PhD in Higher Education Management on a part time basis.

I understand from John that you have very kindly agreed to allow me to visit your university and assist with my research project. Let me first thank you for this. I would be glad to take this opportunity and visit the University of Novi Sad to conduct interviews with you as well as other senior administrators, faculty and students. My doctoral research project is based on several case studies, including CEU, the University of Zagreb, Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj, the University of Debrecen and, hopefully, your university.

Knowing that such a visit takes time to prepare, now I just wanted to introduce myself and suggest some tentative options for my trip. As soon as I hear back from you, I will send you a more detailed description of my research project, a list of interview questions and a suggested list of individuals from the university whom I think would be important to interview (I will research your university's website for this purpose). Of course, you could add and change this list as you think suitable. After that I hope that someone in your office could help set up the meetings - each interview takes about 30-40 minutes, to be conducted in English.

I wonder if I could visit the university in mid January (when the students are back from the holidays) and when institutional life is hopefully more quiet. I could travel to Novi Sad on a Wednesday evening and spend two full days (Thurs and Friday). Alternatively, I could arrive on Sunday evening and be there on Monday and Tuesday. I would be prepared to make arrangements as is most convenient for you, so please feel free to suggest the dates.

I should say that John has spoken so warmly of you- I am very much looking forward to meeting you, not just as doctoral researcher but professionally as well! Thank you again, and I am looking forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely, Rositsa Bateson

~~~~~

Rositsa Bateson, Vice President for Student Services  
Central European University



**2. ----- Original Message -----****>> "Ladislav" <[ladislav@uns.ns.ac.yu](mailto:ladislav@uns.ns.ac.yu)> 11/26/2004 8:41 PM>>**

Dear Rositsa,

you are more than welcome to visit our university ... I am happy to provide for you a full assistance in organising interviews with university, faculty and student leaders, senior administrative staff and academics.

Mid January is fine for me.

Should you want any further information, I will be happy to supply it.

I look forward to meeting you in Novi Sad.

Best wishes,

Ladislav Novak

President of the University Committee for Strategic Planning

**3. ----- Original Message -----****>> "Ladislav" <[ladislav@uns.ns.ac.yu](mailto:ladislav@uns.ns.ac.yu)> 1/13/2005 11:19:13 AM >>**

Dear Rositsa,

Thank you for the mail and kind wishes. As I promised, I will try to arrange meetings with people you requested. It will not be easy to organise all interviews in two days but I will try my best. Maybe it would be a good idea to visit University of Belgrade as well if I manage to arrange meeting with the rector of the University of Belgrade and the Head of UNESCO Chair for university management (former deputy Minister for HE). I will try to book for you an apartment in our University guesthouse. I will keep you informed in due course.

Best,

Ladislav

## University of Debrecen, Hungary

1. ----- Original Message -----

From: "Rositsa Bateson" <Batesonr@ceu.hu>

To: TEK Elnök <[tekelnok@admin.unideb.hu](mailto:tekelnok@admin.unideb.hu)>

Subject: To Dr. Abady Nagy Zoltan

Date: 26/11/04 17:30

Dear Dr. Abadi,

We met in Cluj in September, at the Danube Rector's Conference hosted by the Babes Bolyai University. I recall how happy I was to hear you speak about student support needs in our contemporary university, not only because of my own professional preoccupation but also as a doctoral researcher in this area. I hope that you will remember me.

I am now writing to re-introduce myself and to ask you whether you would be willing to host me for a visit at the University of Debrecen. In addition to my professional position as Vice President for Student Services at Central European University (CEU) in Budapest, I am also pursuing a PhD in Higher Education Management at the University of Southampton in the UK. This is a special part-time programme for working professionals in higher education, with a strong international profile.

My research project is about student support in higher education institutions in Central and Eastern Europe, and I am developing it as a series of case studies, including CEU, the University of Zagreb, Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj, the University of Novi Sad and, hopefully, your university. My research is based on a series of interviews at each host institution, with senior administrators, faculty members and students. My ultimate goal is to advocate the role of student services as an integrating institutional management model but at present I am allowing the series of interviews to guide me in my conclusions. I have also been researching the influence of the German university tradition on our region and the concept of *Bildung* as opposed to student development theories in the United States.

I would be especially interested to hear your own perspective on such a topic, given your experiences in the United States and in Hungary. It is perhaps not by accident that your university is very highly regarded by an American contact of mine: I am speaking of Dr. Karen Pennington, President of the US National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), who visited CEU last year and also visited Debrecen. It was she who originally suggested to me to visit your university.

If you would be interested to participate in my research and allow me to visit the University of Debrecen, I would be very glad to take this opportunity and conduct a series of interviews with you, as well as other senior administrators, faculty and students.

Knowing that such a visit takes time to prepare, now I just wanted to re-introduce myself and suggest some tentative options for my trip. As soon as I hear back from you, I will send you a more detailed description of my research project, a list of

interview questions and a suggested list of individuals from the university whom I think would be important to interview (I will research your university's website for this purpose). Of course, you could add and change this list as you think suitable. After that I hope that someone in your office could help set up the meetings - each interview takes about 30-40 minutes, to be conducted in English.

I wonder if I could visit the university in late January or early February when institutional life is hopefully more quiet. Ideally, I would like to spend two full days at the university, and would be happy to work around the time that is most appropriate for you and your colleagues, so please feel free to suggest the dates.

Thank you again, and I am looking forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely, Rositsa Bateson

~~~~~  
 Rositsa Bateson, Vice President for Student Services
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 Visit CEU Open House: www.ceu.hu
 ~~~~~

## 2. ----- Original Message -----

>> TEK Elnök <[tekelnok@admin.unideb.hu](mailto:tekelnok@admin.unideb.hu)> 12/2/2004 2:42:09 PM >>

Dear Rositsa Bateson,

I received with thanks your email concerning your research in the area of student support in higher education institutions. Of course, I do remember meeting you at Babes-Bolyai. We would be happy to receive you on 7th and 8th February, 2005 and arrange for your accommodation. The following officials of the University of Debrecen have competence over the issues involved and will be delighted to give an interview to you:

- Dr. Éva Bakosi, Director, Student Social Affairs, on 7th February, Monday
- Dr. Emilné Varga, Director, Quality Assurance, on 7th February, Monday
- Péter Körösparti, President, Student Government, on 7th February, Monday
- myself, on 8th February, Tuesday

Please indicate whether the time and arrangement are acceptable to you.

Yours sincerely,  
 Zoltán Abádi-Nagy

## 3. ----- Original Message -----

From: "Rositsa Bateson" <[Batesonr@ceu.hu](mailto:Batesonr@ceu.hu)>  
 To: TEK Elnök <[tekelnok@admin.unideb.hu](mailto:tekelnok@admin.unideb.hu)>  
 Subject: To Dr. Abady Nagy Zoltan  
 Date: 07/12/04

Dear Professor Abadi-Nagy,

Thank you for your kind message and invitation to visit the University of Debrecen. The dates of February 7-8, 2005 will be fine with me and I shall plan this visit accordingly. Thank you also for speaking with your colleagues and for their agreement to meet with me. For you and your colleagues whom I shall be interviewing, I have prepared a brief summary of my research objectives and a list of the questions I would like to ask.

I wonder, would it be possible to meet also with some professors (deans of faculties) and with a wider group of students? I should also be grateful to talk with some more members of staff from the student support units. In the attached paper, I have listed some more possible interviews - depending on availability and interest. My overall aim to have around 15 interviews.

Thank you once again for your very kind agreement for these meetings and your assistance in organizing them. Unless there are further questions, I shall contact you again toward the end of January to confirm the arrangements.

Until then, with my warm regards and best wishes for the New Year,

Rositsa Bateson

4. ----- Original Message -----

>> [nattila@detek.unideb.hu](mailto:nattila@detek.unideb.hu) 2/1/2005 12:00:14 PM >>

Dear Rositsa Bateson,

I am writing you on behalf of Prof. Dr. Zoltán Abádi Nagy about your visit to Debrecen to carry out interviews on the subject of student services. Dr. Emilné Varga, director for quality assurance at the university will be in charge of coordinating the interviews (she receives a copy of this email). Professors Zoltán Abádi Nagy and István Gaál confirmed the time when they are available for the 45-minute interview as follows:

- Dr. Abádi Nagy Zoltán, Chair, School of Independent Faculties: 8<sup>th</sup> February, 9 am to 10 am, main building room 228
- Dr. Gaál István, Deputy Chair for Academic Affairs and Teacher Education (instead of proposed "Vice Rector for Students"), School of Independent Faculties: 7<sup>th</sup> February, 10 am to 11 am, main building room 17, ground floor.

Prof. Abádi Nagy is in Budapest today and will be abroad for the rest of the week.

Yours sincerely, Attila Nagy  
Chief of Staff, University of Debrecen  
School of Independent Faculties

## APPENDIX VIII

### Definition of Research Objectives

(Submitted to each institution selected as a case study prior to the site visit)

**UNIVERSITY OF ZAGREB, CROATIA**

May 13-14, 2004

#### **Research Objectives**

This research is being carried out for the purposes of a doctoral dissertation to be submitted to the University of Southampton (UK), Centre for Higher Education Management and Policy at Southampton, as part of completing a doctoral programme in higher education management. It is supervised by Professor John Taylor, Director of CHEMPaS. The dissertation will be organised as a comparative study of the practices in several universities in Central and Eastern Europe with regard to student support services, and an assessment of the role that is assigned to them in the overall institutional management structure.

#### **Research Topic (Working Title)**

**An assessment of student services in higher education as an integral part of the university core: cases of transformation (integration) and centralisation in Central and Eastern Europe**

The research project I am undertaking is based on my professional experience in the area of student services as a centralised institutional support unit of the Central European University (CEU), a US-style graduate research-intensive university in Budapest, Hungary. In the course of my experience, I have observed that CEU students have become more demanding and vocal in their expectations of the quality of support services they receive from the institution, ranging from a variety of customer-oriented flexible support to a higher degree of student involvement in the governance and decision-making processes within the institution.

For a broader understanding of the role of student services in institutional management in the context of regional developments, I would like to select several institutions in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) where similar trends have been consciously identified within those institutions, and develop my research in the form of parallel case studies of evolving student expectations and institutional responses. My goal is to design a comparative study of institutional change and re-organisation in relation to student expectations, analyse the benefits and disadvantages of centralisation of student support, and finally develop a model of integrated student support services which could be used by small and large institutions in this region.

While many studies of the transition of educational systems in this region have focused on educational policy and priorities for developing critical skills suited to the emergent market economies, on how to strengthen the faculties and innovate academic capacity, and on financial sustainability in the context of dramatic decreases of state support, there is relatively little research done on how institutions of higher education can and should re-organise their internal structures to enhance the student experience. Often scarce resources do not reach the level of student support personnel for programme or professional development purposes, and I am interested to find out to what extent services (functions) such as recruitment and admissions, student records, student life, residential support, advising and counselling, career planning and other, are acknowledged as essential or critical for the university operations.

I would therefore like to focus my research on the changing role of the student, examine the concept of the student as a “customer” and how, whether universities acknowledge that or not, the student-customer influences student service provision and institutional organisation. In the process of my study, I will also examine how the integration of services for the benefit of the student-customer affects the overall institutional effectiveness and, as my experience suggests, ultimately enhances institutional performance and serves the needs of other stakeholders, both inside and outside of the university.

### **Objectives of the Visit to the University of Zagreb**

The purpose of this visit is to acquaint myself with the existing management and student support structures within a large comprehensive university, and to test my own assumptions about student support – both in terms of institutional attitudes and management structures. I am especially interested in finding out whether the inherited Humboldtian model of education, with its focus on academe, is in the process of transformation toward a more student-centred approach, what are the factors which have prompted it, and what are the institutional responses to these changing circumstances. Is student support seen as a practical necessity only for international students, or are support structures being created for the benefit of all students, to enhance student learning and engagement with student life?

This is a preliminary visit to gain experience in the field, outside my own institution, and to assess—and adjust as necessary—my research project. I would be very grateful for the time and insights of the university’s officials, while at the same time observing all requirements of the research protocol in terms of data collection, verification and obtaining permission to use the findings.

### **Preliminary Research Questions**

**(Definition:** Under *Student Support Services* I include student recruitment and admissions, financial aid (as applicable), orientation, course registration and academic counselling, student academic records, student life (student activities outside the classroom, clubs, non-political organisations), student union (or government), counselling programmes (pastoral care in terms of individual and social development), career advising, dining services, sports services, and alumni services.)

1. Description of the institutional and faculty (department) management structure. Has there been a re-organisation of this structure in the last ten years? If so, what were the objectives?
2. What is the current thinking (understanding) about student support services? Have there been any changes in the views of deans/professors and staff about the provision of such services and why? Were such changes discussed in the academic and management fora of the university?
3. To what extent do universities see themselves in competition for students, or for the best students, and to what extent does this influence the provision of student services?
4. Where are the student support services located in the institutional/faculty management structure? Who is responsible for them?
5. What student support services are offered and do they relate to each other? Are they internally connected at the level of the individual faculty or are they offered across the university structure?
6. Which university body or individual is responsible for developing the university programme(s) for student support? To what extent are they influential in the university management structure?
7. Have students participated in any discussions about the provision of support services? In what circumstances and what has been the outcome of such discussions?

8. Is the provision of student support a factor in the students' choice of an institution or a given course?
9. Are students encouraged to take the initiative to organise activities other than student representation in the university governance structure? If so, how? Is the university involved in developing such programmes?
10. Do students complain about services (or the lack of such, as the case may be) and to whom do they address their complaints? What measures are taken to address student complaints? What feedback is provided to the students?
11. Do the individuals interviewed believe in the need to provide student support services and why? What do they think should be done in the future?
12. Have these issues changed in recent years? What is the level of awareness about such issues?

#### **Individuals to be Interviewed** (based on information from the university's website)

1. Rector or Vice-Rector responsible for university administration (e.g. **Professor Vjekoslav Jerolimov**, Vice-Rector for Teaching and Students, **Professor Vlasta Vizek Vidovic**, Vice-Rector for International Relations)
2. Depending on what position may exist in the university - dean of students, head of student support units (e.g. is there a person who oversees the **Student Centres**?)
3. The chair of the **Academic Senate**
4. The deans of the following faculties (as available): **Architecture, Philosophy, Science, Law, Political Science, Graduate School of Economics and Business, Teacher Education Academy** (this is a random sample, therefore if some of the deans are not available, please suggest others)
5. The **individuals responsible for student support services** on a day-to-day basis (unit heads, counselors, etc from admissions, student records, and all other student support offices as is their existing structure); from the website I could not see where these units are located, please suggest the appropriate individuals; alternatively, the staff from the **International Relations Office**
6. One or two leading **professors** from the faculties above – random selection, individuals who have demonstrated an interest in student support matters
7. Representatives of the **Student Council** (e.g. the Chair, the Secretary, perhaps the Chair of the Council can nominate other students to be interviewed)
8. Representatives from the **Student Centres**
9. Two or five **students** (random selection, students from the faculties to be interviewed)
10. Other individuals of your recommendation.

#### **Research Procedure**

These are envisioned as individual interviews though participants can, if they wish, include other members in the discussion. Permission will be sought from each interviewee to tape the conversation. The length of each interview is planned not to exceed 45 minutes. Each interviewee will receive a transcript of the conversation and will be asked to give permission to use the material as reference for the findings and conclusions of the doctoral dissertation.

It is possible that as the research progresses, there may be additional questions or a need for a second interview. The interviewees are kindly asked to indicate whether they would be interested to continue as participants in the research project until its completion. Those who are interested will receive a copy of the completed dissertation.

30 April 2004  
Budapest  
Central European University, Hungary

Rositsa Bateson (batesonr@ceu.hu)  
Vice President for Student Services

**BABES-BOLYAI UNIVERSITY, ROMANIA**

May 20-21, 2004

**Research Objectives**

This research is being carried out for the purposes of a doctoral dissertation to be submitted to the University of Southampton (UK), Centre for Higher Education Management and Policy at Southampton, as part of completing a doctoral programme in higher education management. It is supervised by Professor John Taylor, Director of CHEMPaS. The dissertation will be organised as a comparative study of the practices in several universities in Central and Eastern Europe with regard to student support services, and an assessment of the role that is assigned to them in the overall institutional management structure.

**Research Topic (Working Title)**

**An assessment of student services in higher education as an integral part of the university core: cases of transformation (integration) and centralisation in Central and Eastern Europe**

The research project I am undertaking is based on my professional experience in the area of student services as a centralised institutional support unit of the Central European University (CEU), a US-style graduate research-intensive university in Budapest, Hungary. In the course of my experience, I have observed that CEU students have become more demanding and vocal in their expectations of the quality of support services they receive from the institution, ranging from a variety of customer-oriented flexible support to a higher degree of student involvement in the governance and decision-making processes within the institution.

For a broader understanding of the role of student services in institutional management in the context of regional developments, I would like to select several institutions in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) where similar trends have been consciously identified within those institutions, and develop my research in the form of parallel case studies of evolving student expectations and institutional responses. My goal is to design a comparative study of institutional change and re-organisation in relation to student expectations, analyse the benefits and disadvantages of centralisation of student support, and finally develop a model of integrated student support services which could be used by small and large institutions in this region.

While many studies of the transition of educational systems in this region have focused on educational policy and priorities for developing critical skills suited to the emergent market economies, on how to strengthen the faculties and innovate academic capacity, and on financial sustainability in the context of dramatic decreases of state support, there is relatively little research done on how institutions of higher education can and should re-organise their internal structures to enhance the student experience. Often scarce resources do not reach the level of student support personnel for programme or professional development purposes, and I am interested to find out to what extent services (functions) such as recruitment and admissions, student records, student life, residential support, advising and counselling, career planning and other, are acknowledged as essential or critical for the university operations. I would therefore like to focus my research on the changing role of the student, examine the concept of the student as a “customer” and how, whether universities acknowledge that or not, the student-customer influences student service provision and institutional organisation. In the process of my study, I will also examine how the integration of services for the benefit of the student-customer affects the overall institutional effectiveness and, as my experience



suggests, ultimately enhances institutional performance and serves the needs of other stakeholders, both inside and outside of the university.

### **Objectives of the Visit to the Babes-Bolyai University**

The purpose of this visit is to acquaint myself with the existing management and student support structures within a large comprehensive university, and to test my own assumptions about student support – both in terms of institutional attitudes and management structures. I am especially interested in finding out whether the inherited Humboldtian model of education, with its focus on academe, is in the process of transformation toward a more student-centred approach, what are the factors which have prompted it, and what are the institutional responses to these changing circumstances. Is student support seen as a practical necessity only for international students, or are support structures being created for the benefit of all students, to enhance student learning and engagement with student life?

This is a preliminary visit to gain experience in the field, outside my own institution, and to assess—and adjust as necessary—my research project. I would be very grateful for the time and insights of the university's officials, while at the same time observing all requirements of the research protocol in terms of data collection, verification and obtaining permission to use the findings.

### **Preliminary Research Questions**

**(Definition:** Under *Student Support Services* I include student recruitment and admissions, financial aid (as applicable), orientation, course registration and academic counselling, student academic records, student life (student activities outside the classroom, clubs, non-political organisations), student union (or government), counselling programmes (pastoral care in terms of individual and social development), career advising, dining services, sports services, and alumni services.)

1. Description of the institutional and faculty (department) management structure. Has there been a re-organisation of this structure in the last ten years? If so, what were the objectives?
2. What is the current thinking (understanding) about student support services? Have there been any changes in the views of deans/professors and staff about the provision of such services and why? Were such changes discussed in the academic and management fora of the university?
3. To what extent do universities see themselves in competition for students, or for the best students, and to what extent does this influence the provision of student services?
4. Where are the student support services located in the institutional/faculty management structure? Who is responsible for them?
5. What student support services are offered and do they relate to each other? Are they internally connected at the level of the individual faculty or are they offered across the university structure?
6. Which university body or individual is responsible for developing the university programme(s) for student support? To what extent are they influential in the university management structure?
7. Have students participated in any discussions about the provision of support services? In what circumstances and what has been the outcome of such discussions?
8. Is the provision of student support a factor in the students' choice of an institution or a given course?
9. Are students encouraged to take the initiative to organise activities other than student representation in the university governance structure? If so, how? Is the university involved in developing such programmes?

10. Do students complain about services (or the lack of such, as the case may be) and to whom do they address their complaints? What measures are taken to address student complaints? What feedback is provided to the students?
11. Do the individuals interviewed believe in the need to provide student support services and why? What do they think should be done in the future?
12. Have these issues changed in recent years? What is the level of awareness about such issues?

### Individuals to be Interviewed (based on information from the university's website)

1. **Rector Andrei Marga** (I am using his article on BBU, published by UNESCO-CEPES<sup>87</sup> in 2000. Perhaps he might be interested to reflect further on the transformation process at the university since then) or the **Vice-Rector responsible for university administration and students**
2. Depending on what position may exist in the university - dean of students, head of student support units (e.g. **Professor Mircea Miclea** or the **Center for International Cooperation**?)
3. The chair of the academic **Senate** (or the highest elected academic governing body)
4. The deans of the following faculties (as available): **Physics, Psychology and Science of Education, Political Science and Public Administration, Sociology and Social Work, Business**. (this is a random sample, therefore if some of the deans are not available, please suggest others)
5. The **individuals responsible for student support services** on a day-to-day basis (unit heads, counsellors, etc from admissions, student records, and all other student support offices as is their existing structure)
6. One or two leading **professors** from the faculties above – random selection, individuals who have demonstrated an interest in student support matters
7. Representatives of the **Student Organisation OSUBB** (e.g. the Chair, the Secretary, perhaps the Chair can nominate other students to be interviewed)
8. Two or five **students** (random selection, students from the faculties to be interviewed)
9. Other individuals of your recommendation.

### Research Procedure

These are envisioned as individual interviews though participants can, if they wish, include other members in the discussion. Permission will be sought from each interviewee to tape the conversation. The length of each interview is planned not to exceed 45 minutes. Each interviewee will receive a transcript of the conversation and will be asked to give permission to use the material as reference for the findings and conclusions of the doctoral dissertation.

It is possible that as the research progresses, there may be additional questions or a need for a second interview. The interviewees are kindly asked to indicate whether they would be interested to continue as participants in the research project until its completion. Those who are interested will receive a copy of the completed dissertation.

25 April 2004  
Budapest

Rositsa Bateson (batesonr@ceu.hu)  
Vice President for Student Services  
Central European University, Hungary

<sup>87</sup> *Ten Years After and Looking Ahead: A Review of the Transformations of Higher Education in Central and Eastern Europe*, UNESCO-CEPES Studies on Higher Education, Bucharest 2000.

**UNIVERSITY OF NOVI SAD, SERBIA**  
January 20-21, 2005

### **Research Objectives**

This research is being carried out for the purposes of a doctoral dissertation to be submitted to the University of Southampton (UK), Centre for Higher Education Management and Policy (CHEMPaS), as part of completing a doctoral programme in higher education management. It is supervised by **Professor John Taylor**, Director of CHEMPaS. The dissertation will be organised as a comparative study of the practices in several universities in Central and Eastern Europe with regard to student support services, and an assessment of the role that is assigned to them in the overall institutional management structure.

### **Research Topic (Working Title)**

**An assessment of student services in higher education as an integral part of the university core: cases of transformation (integration) and centralisation in Central and Eastern Europe**

The research project I am undertaking is based on my professional experience in the area of student services as a centralised institutional support unit of Central European University (CEU), a US-style graduate research-intensive university in Budapest, Hungary. In the course of my experience, I have observed that CEU students have become more demanding and vocal in their expectations of the quality of support services they receive from the institution, ranging from a variety of customer-oriented flexible support to a higher degree of student involvement in the governance and decision-making processes within the institution.

For a broader understanding of the role of student services in institutional management in the context of regional developments, I would like to select several institutions in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) where similar trends have been consciously identified within those institutions, and develop my research in the form of parallel case studies of evolving student expectations and institutional responses. My goal is to design a comparative study of institutional change and re-organisation in relation to student expectations, analyze the benefits and disadvantages of centralisation of student support, and finally develop a model of integrated student support services which could be used by small and large institutions in this region.

While many studies of the transition of educational systems in this region have focused on educational policy and priorities for developing critical skills suited to the emergent market economies, on how to strengthen the faculties and innovate academic capacity, and on financial sustainability in the context of dramatic decreases of state support, there is relatively little research done on how institutions of higher education can and should re-organise their internal structures to enhance the student experience. Often scarce resources do not reach the level of student support personnel for programme or professional development purposes, and I am interested to find out to what extent services (functions) such as recruitment and admissions, student records, student life, residential support, advising and counselling, career planning and other, are acknowledged as essential or critical for the university operations.

I would therefore like to focus my research on the changing role of the student, examine the concept of the student as a “customer” and how, whether universities acknowledge that or not, the student-customer influences student service provision and institutional organisation. In the process of my study, I will also examine how the integration of services for the benefit of the student-customer affects the overall institutional effectiveness and, as my experience

suggests, ultimately enhances institutional performance and serves the needs of other stakeholders, both inside and outside of the university.

### **Objectives of the Visit to the University of Novi Sad**

The purpose of this visit is to acquaint myself with the existing management and student support structures within a large comprehensive university, and to test my own assumptions about student support – both in terms of institutional attitudes and management structures. I am especially interested in finding out whether the inherited German/Humboldtian model of education, with its focus on academe, is in the process of transformation toward a more student-centred approach, what are the factors which have prompted it, and what are the institutional responses to these changing circumstances. Is student support seen as a practical necessity only for international students, or are support structures being created for the benefit of all students, to enhance student learning and engagement with student life?

This is a preliminary visit to gain experience in the field, outside my own institution, and to assess—and adjust as necessary—my research project. I would be very grateful for the time and insights of the university's officials and students, while at the same time observing all requirements of the research protocol in terms of data collection, verification and obtaining permission to use the findings.

### **Preliminary Research Questions**

**(Definition:** Under *Student Support Services* I include student recruitment and admissions, financial aid (as applicable), orientation, course registration and academic counselling, student academic records, student life (student activities outside the classroom, clubs, non-political organisations), student union (or government), counselling programmes (pastoral care in terms of individual and social development), career advising, dining services, sports services, and alumni services.)

1. Description of the institutional and faculty (department) management structure. Has there been a re-organisation of this structure in the last ten years? If so, what were the objectives?
2. What is the current thinking (understanding) about student support services? Have there been any changes in the views of deans/professors and staff about the provision of such services and why? Were such changes discussed in the academic and management fora of the university?
3. To what extent do universities see themselves in competition for students, or for the best students, and to what extent does this influence the provision of student services?
4. Where are the student support services located in the institutional/faculty management structure? Who is responsible for them?
5. What student support services are offered and do they relate to each other? Are they internally connected at the level of the individual faculty or are they offered across the university structure?
6. Which university body or individual is responsible for developing the university programme(s) for student support? To what extent are they influential in the university management structure?
7. Have students participated in any discussions about the provision of support services? In what circumstances and what has been the outcome of such discussions?
8. Is the provision of student support a factor in the students' choice of an institution or a given course?

9. Are students encouraged to take the initiative to organise activities other than student representation in the university governance structure? If so, how? Is the university involved in developing such programmes?
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11. Do the individuals interviewed believe in the need to provide student support services and why? What do they think should be done in the future?
12. Have these issues changed in recent years? What is the level of awareness about such issues?

### **Individuals to be Interviewed** (based on information from the university's website)

1. **Prof. Ladislav Novak**, Vice-Rector and President of the University Committee for Strategic Planning
2. **Student Vice-Rector**
3. Depending on what position may exist in the university - **the head of all student support units** (e.g. is there a person who oversees the **Student Centres**?)
4. The chair of the **University Council**
5. The **deans** or professors of the following faculties (as available):
6. Philosophy; Law; Sciences; Academy of Arts; University Center for Gender Studies; University Center for Advanced European Studies and Research; University Center for management in Education
7. The UNESCO Chair in Governance and Management of Higher Education if the university hosts one
8. The **individuals responsible for student support services** on a day-to-day basis (unit heads, counsellors, etc from admissions, student records, and all other student support offices as is their existing structure): **Director of the Student Center in Novi Sad** (Jovan Bjelobaba) and **staff members**
9. Representatives of the **Student Union and the Student Association** (e.g. the Chair, the Secretary, perhaps the Chair of the Council can nominate other students to be interviewed)
10. Representatives from the **Student Cultural Center, the Association of Hungarian Students, the Association of Roma Students, etc.**
11. Two or five **students** (random selection, students from the faculties to be interviewed)
12. Other individuals of your recommendation.

### **Research Procedure**

These are envisioned as individual interviews though participants can, if they wish, include other members in the discussion. Permission will be sought from each interviewee to tape the conversation. The length of each interview is planned not to exceed 45 minutes. Each interviewee will receive a transcript of the conversation and will be asked to give permission to use the material as reference for the findings and conclusions of the doctoral dissertation.

It is possible that as the research progresses, there may be additional questions or a need for a second interview. The interviewees are kindly asked to indicate whether they would be interested to continue as participants in the research project until its completion. Those who are interested will receive a copy of the completed dissertation.

1 December 2004  
Budapest

Rositsa Bateson (batesonr@ceu.hu)  
Vice President for Student Services  
Central European University, Hungary

**UNIVERSITY OF DEBRECEN, HUNGARY**  
February 7-8, 2005

### **Research Objectives**

This research is being carried out for the purposes of a doctoral dissertation to be submitted to the University of Southampton (UK), Centre for Higher Education Management and Policy (CHEMPaS), as part of completing a doctoral programme in higher education management. It is supervised by **Professor John Taylor**, Director of CHEMPaS. The dissertation will be organised as a comparative study of the practices in several universities in Central and Eastern Europe with regard to student support services, and an assessment of the role that is assigned to them in the overall institutional management structure.

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While many studies of the transition of educational systems in this region have focused on educational policy and priorities for developing critical skills suited to the emergent market economies, on how to strengthen the faculties and innovate academic capacity, and on financial sustainability in the context of dramatic decreases of state support, there is relatively little research done on how institutions of higher education can and should re-organise their internal structures to enhance the student experience. Often scarce resources do not reach the level of student support personnel for programme or professional development purposes, and I am interested to find out to what extent services (functions) such as recruitment and admissions, student records, student life, residential support, advising and counselling, career planning and other, are acknowledged as essential or critical for the university operations.

I would therefore like to focus my research on the changing role of the student, examine the concept of the student as a “customer” and how, whether universities acknowledge that or not, the student-customer influences student service provision and institutional organisation. In the process of my study, I will also examine how the integration of services for the benefit of the student-customer affects the overall institutional effectiveness and, as my experience

suggests, ultimately enhances institutional performance and serves the needs of other stakeholders, both inside and outside of the university.

### **Objectives of the Visit to the University of Debrecen**

The purpose of this visit is to acquaint myself with the existing management and student support structures within a large comprehensive university, and to test my own assumptions about student support – both in terms of institutional attitudes and management structures. I am especially interested in finding out whether the inherited German/Humboldtian model of education, with its focus on academe, is in the process of transformation toward a more student-centred approach, what are the factors which have prompted it, and what are the institutional responses to these changing circumstances. Is student support seen as a practical necessity only for international students, or are support structures being created for the benefit of all students, to enhance student learning and engagement with student life?

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### **Preliminary Research Questions**

**(Definition:** Under *Student Support Services* I include student recruitment and admissions, financial aid (as applicable), orientation, course registration and academic counselling, student academic records, student life (student activities outside the classroom, clubs, non-political organisations), student union (or government), counselling programmes (pastoral care in terms of individual and social development), career advising, dining services, sports services, and alumni services.)

1. Description of the institutional and faculty (department) management structure. Has there been a re-organisation of this structure in the last ten years? If so, what were the objectives?
2. What is the current thinking (understanding) about student support services? Have there been any changes in the views of deans/professors and staff about the provision of such services and why? Were such changes discussed in the academic and management fora of the university?
3. To what extent do universities see themselves in competition for students, or for the best students, and to what extent does this influence the provision of student services?
4. Where are the student support services located in the institutional/faculty management structure? Who is responsible for them?
5. What student support services are offered and do they relate to each other? Are they internally connected at the level of the individual faculty or are they offered across the university structure?
6. Which university body or individual is responsible for developing the university programme(s) for student support? To what extent are they influential in the university management structure?
7. Have students participated in any discussions about the provision of support services? In what circumstances and what has been the outcome of such discussions?
8. Is the provision of student support a factor in the students' choice of an institution or a given course?

9. Are students encouraged to take the initiative to organise activities other than student representation in the university governance structure? If so, how? Is the university involved in developing such programmes?
10. Do students complain about services (or the lack of such, as the case may be) and to whom do they address their complaints? What measures are taken to address student complaints? What feedback is provided to the students?
11. Do the individuals interviewed believe in the need to provide student support services and why? What do they think should be done in the future?
12. Have these issues changed in recent years? What is the level of awareness about such issues?

#### **Individuals to be Interviewed** (based on information from the university's website)

1. **Professor Zoltan Abadi-Nagy**
2. **Dr. Eva Bakosi**, Director, Student Social Affairs
3. **Is there another person/position in charge of all student support units or is this Dr. Bakosi?**
4. **Dr. Emilne Varge, Director, Quality Assurance**
5. **Vice-Rector for Students**
6. The chair of the **University Council or Senate**
7. The **deans** or professors of the following faculties (as available):  
Arts/Philosophy; Education; Law; Economics and Business Administration
8. The UNESCO Chair in Governance and Management of Higher Education if the university hosts one
9. The **individuals responsible for student support services** on a day-to-day basis (unit heads, counselors, etc from admissions, student records, and all other student support offices as is their existing structure):
10. **Peter Korosparti**, Student Government and other Representatives of the **Student Government (5-10 students, as available)**
11. Selection of 2-5 from the faculties above
12. Other individuals of your recommendation.

#### **Research Procedure**

These are envisioned as individual interviews though participants can, if they wish, include other members in the discussion. Permission will be sought from each interviewee to tape the conversation. The length of each interview is planned not to exceed 45 minutes. Each interviewee will receive a transcript of the conversation and will be asked to give permission to use the material as reference for the findings and conclusions of the doctoral dissertation.

It is possible that as the research progresses, there may be additional questions or a need for a second interview. The interviewees are kindly asked to indicate whether they would be interested to continue as participants in the research project until its completion. Those who are interested will receive a copy of the completed dissertation.

7 December 2004  
Budapest

Rositsa Bateson (batesonr@ceu.hu)  
Vice President for Student Services  
Central European University, Hungary



## APPENDIX IX

### Selection of Informants/Interviewees

(Institutions listed in alphabetical order)

#### Babes Bolyai University, Romania

1. **Rector Andrei Marga** or the **Vice-Rector responsible for university administration and students**
2. Depending on what position may exist in the university - dean of students, head of student support units (e.g. **Professor Mircea Miclea** or the **Center for International Cooperation?**)
3. The chair of the academic **Senate** (or the highest elected academic governing body)
4. The deans of the following faculties (as available): **Physics, Psychology and Science of Education, Political Science and Public Administration, Sociology and Social Work, Business.** (this is a random sample, therefore if some of the deans are not available, please suggest others)
5. The **individuals responsible for student support services** on a day-to-day basis (unit heads, counsellors, etc from admissions, student records, and all other student support offices as is their existing structure)
6. One or two leading **professors** from the faculties above – random selection, individuals who have demonstrated an interest in student support matters
7. Representatives of the **Student Organisation OSUBB** (e.g. the Chair, the Secretary, perhaps the Chair can nominate other students to be interviewed)
8. Two or five **students** (random selection, students from the faculties to be interviewed)
9. Other individuals of your recommendation.

#### University of Debrecen, Hungary

1. **Professor Zoltan Abadi-Nagy**, Vice Rector
2. **Dr. Eva Bakosi**, Director, Student Social Affairs
3. **Is there another person/position in charge of all student support units or is this Dr. Bakosi?**
4. **Dr. Emilne Varge**, Director, Quality Assurance
5. **Vice-Rector for Students**
6. The chair of the **University Council or Senate**
7. The **deans** or professors of the following faculties (as available):
  - a. **Arts/Philosophy**
  - b. **Education**
  - c. **Law**
  - d. **Economics and Business Administration**
8. The UNESCO Chair in Governance and Management of Higher Education if the university hosts one
9. The **individuals responsible for student support services** on a day-to-day basis (unit heads, counsellors, etc from admissions, student records, and all other student support offices as is their existing structure):
10. **Peter Korosparti**, Student Government and other Representatives of the **Student Government (5-10 students, as available)**
11. Selection of 2-5 from the faculties above
12. Other individuals of your recommendation.

## University of Novi Sad, Serbia

1. **Prof. Ladislav Novak**, Vice-Rector and President of the University Committee for Strategic Planning
2. **Student Vice-Rector**
3. Depending on what position may exist in the university - **the head of all student support units** (e.g. is there a person who oversees the **Student Centres**?)
4. The chair of the **University Council**
5. The **deans** or professors of the following faculties (as available):  
Philosophy; Law; Sciences; Academy of Arts; University Center for Gender Studies; University Center for Advanced European Studies and Research; University Center for management in Education
6. The UNESCO Chair in Governance and Management of Higher Education if the university hosts one
7. The **individuals responsible for student support services** on a day-to-day basis (unit heads, counsellors, etc from admissions, student records, and all other student support offices as is their existing structure): **Director of the Student Center in Novi Sad** (Jovan Bjelobaba) and **staff members**
8. Representatives of the **Student Union and the Student Association** (e.g. the Chair, the Secretary, perhaps the Chair of the Council can nominate other students to be interviewed)
9. Representatives from the **Student Cultural Center, the Association of Hungarian Students, the Association of Roma Students, etc.**
10. Two or five **students** (random selection, students from the faculties to be interviewed)
13. Other individuals of your recommendation.

## University of Zagreb, Croatia

1. Rector or Vice-Rector responsible for university administration (e.g. **Professor Vjekoslav Jerolimov**, Vice-Rector for Teaching and Students, **Professor Vlasta Vizek Vidovic**, Vice-Rector for International Relations)
2. Depending on what position may exist in the university - dean of students, head of student support units (e.g. is there a person who oversees the **Student Centres**?)
3. The chair of the **Academic Senate**
4. The deans of the following faculties (as available): **Architecture, Philosophy, Science, Law, Political Science, Graduate School of Economics and Business, Teacher Education Academy** (this is a random sample, therefore if some of the deans are not available, please suggest others)
5. The **individuals responsible for student support services** on a day-to-day basis (unit heads, counsellors, etc from admissions, student records, and all other student support offices as is their existing structure): from the website I could not see where these units are located, please suggest the appropriate individuals; alternatively, the staff from the **International Relations Office**
6. One or two leading **professors** from the faculties above – random selection, individuals who have demonstrated an interest in student support matters
7. Representatives of the **Student Council** (e.g. the Chair, the Secretary, perhaps the Chair of the Council can nominate other students to be interviewed)
8. Representatives from the **Student Centres**
9. Two or five **students** (random selection, students from the faculties to be interviewed)
10. Other individuals of your recommendation.

## **APPENDIX X**

### **Visit Itineraries**

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(In Chronological Order)

#### **University of Zagreb, Croatia**

International Relations Office

Contact person: Mrs. Andrea-Beata Jelic, M.A.

Email: [ajelic@unizg.hr](mailto:ajelic@unizg.hr)

Tel: (00-385-1) 45-64-450

Ms. Rositsa Bateson, Vice President for Student Services, Central European University, Hungary

Study visit to the University of Zagreb  
13-14 May 2004

#### **PROGRAMME**

Thursday, 13 May

- |             |                                                                                                                                                     |
|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 8.30– 9.30  | Faculty of Architecture<br>Professor Bojan Baletic, Ph.D., Vice-dean for Teaching                                                                   |
| 9.30-10.30  | Faculty of Civil Engineering<br>Professor Dubravka Bjegovic, Ph.D., dean                                                                            |
| 11.00-12.30 | Faculty of Philosophy<br>Mrs. Neda Stazic, dipl. iur., Chief Secretary of the Faculty<br>Professor Goranka Lugomer, Ph.D., Department of Psychology |

Lunch at the restaurant of the Faculty of Philosophy

a.. Mr. Luka Juros, assistant coordinator at the UNESCO Chair in Governance and Management of Higher Education

b.. Miss Ognjenka Manojlovic, student, Law School

- |             |                                                                                         |
|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 13.30-14.30 | Faculty of Philosophy<br>Meeting with students                                          |
| 15.00-16.30 | Student Council<br>Student Centre<br>Mr. Petar Bezjak, President of the Student Council |

Friday, 14 May

- |           |                                                                                |
|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 9.00-9.45 | Academy of Fine Arts<br>Professor Vera Turkovic, Ph.D., Vice-dean for Teaching |
|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

- 10-11      Mrs. Visnja Kabalin-Borenic, International Relations Officer  
Teacher Education Academy  
Professor Vlatka Domovic, Ph.D.  
Vice-dean for Science
- 11.30-12.30    University of Zagreb, Rectorate  
Professor Vjekoslav Jerolimov, Ph.D., Vice-Rector for Teaching and  
Students
- Lunch with Professor Vlasta Vizek Vidovic
- 14.30-15.30    University of Zagreb, Rectorate  
Professor Vlasta Vizek Vidovic, Ph. D., Vice-Rector for International  
Relations  
Ms. Ana Ruzicka, B.A., Head of the International Relations Office
- 16.00          Student Information Centre  
Mr. Nino Scukanec

## **Babes-Bolyai University, Romania**

May 20-21, 2004

1. Ms. Monica Rombu, Social Service Office  
With translation Oana Negru
2. Prof. Cristian Stan, Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Psychology and Education  
Science, Head of Education Science Department: [cristiss@personal.ro](mailto:cristiss@personal.ro)  
With translation Roxana Incze: [incze.roxana@yahoo.com](mailto:incze.roxana@yahoo.com),  
[roxana@psiedu.ubbcluj.ro](mailto:roxana@psiedu.ubbcluj.ro)
3. Ms. Raluca Moldovan, Centre for International Cooperation  
Director of the Office for Joint Degrees
4. Prof. Paul Serban Agachi, Vice Rector Process Control  
Camelia Moraru, Centre for University Development (Higher Education  
Research)
5. Oana Negru, Student Counselling Centre: [oananegru@psychology.ro](mailto:oananegru@psychology.ro)  
Tel: +40 742 757 668; +40 264 520 595; Mob: +40 722 535 242
6. Bogdan Gaurean, Student Faculty of Law, Student Prefect – Romanian and  
German Line: [bgaurean@yahoo.com](mailto:bgaurean@yahoo.com) (studied 6 years at BBU, several  
programmes)  
Magor Csibi, Vice Student Prefect – Hungarian Line  
[maghorus@personal.ro](mailto:maghorus@personal.ro); [csibimagor@tnlhr.ro](mailto:csibimagor@tnlhr.ro); +40 744 664 590
7. Raluca Sfetcu, Student of Psychology (3<sup>rd</sup> year), Student Senator and Vice  
President of the Association of Students of Psychology in Romania:  
[ralu\\_sf@yahoo.com](mailto:ralu_sf@yahoo.com)
8. Ana-Maria Truta, Student of European Studies (2<sup>nd</sup> year), European Student  
Society: [anima\\_bl@yahoo.com](mailto:anima_bl@yahoo.com)  
Elena Podariu (Podaviu?), Student of European Studies (3<sup>rd</sup> year):  
[elena\\_podariu@hotmail.com](mailto:elena_podariu@hotmail.com)

## University of Novi Sad, Serbia

### Final time table for interviews

**Thursday 20 January, 2005**

Morning interviews

**Jovan Gvero**, Director of the Student Cultural Center, 9:00

**Association of the Association of Disabled Students**, Faculty of Law, 10:00

**Pavle Sekerus**, Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy, room 33, first floor, 11:00

**Fuada Stankovic**, founder of the University Center for Advanced European Studies and Research and former Rector of the UNS, Faculty of Law, room 35, first floor, 12:00

**Miroslav Veskovic**, former Vice-Rector and Head of the Physics Dept., Faculty of Sciences, room 30, second floor, 13:00

Afternoon interviews

**the Association of Roma Students, and represent of the Roma Community**, Faculty of Philosophy, room 51, 14:00 - 15:30

**Ladislav Novak**, over the lunch time 16:00

**Friday, 21 January, 2005**

Morning interviews

**Jovan Bjelobaba**, Director of the Student Center, 8:30-9:45

**Radmila Marinkovic-Neducin**, Rector of the University of Novi Sad, Rector Office, 10:00

**Rodoljub Etinski**, Vice-Dean, Faculty of Law, 11:00,

**Svenka Savic**, Center for Gender Studies, Kralja Aleksandra 8, 12:00,

**Milka Oljaca**, Head of the University Center for Management in Education, Faculty of Philosophy, room 51, 13:00

Afternoon interviews – Office of the Student Vice-Rector, 16:00 – 19:00

**Helena Hirszenberger**, Student Vice-Rector,

**Nikola Cubrilo**, representative of the Student Alliance of Faculty of Engineering,

**Nemanja Luzanin**, representative of the Student Union of UNS

**the Association of Hungarian Students**

**Two or five other students**

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**Ivana**, from International Relations of the UNS, will help in translation during the first interview on Thursday, with Jovan Gvero, Director of the Student Cultural Center, at 9:00 and translation during the first interview on Thursday, with Jovan Bjelobaba, Director of the Student Center, at 8:30

## University of Debrecen, Hungary

February 7-8, 2005

**1. Dr. Gaál István, Vice-President for Education and Teacher Training, School of Independent Faculties, Email:** [igaal@math.klte.hu](mailto:igaal@math.klte.hu)

**2. Dr. Virágos Márta, Director of the Library**

Participants: Klára Koltay ([kkoltay@lib.unideb.hu](mailto:kkoltay@lib.unideb.hu)), Peter Pilishegyi (student)

**3. Pont Iroda and the Egyetemi Élet**

Participants:

Lugosi Andor, Career Centre [info@pszk@unideb.hu](mailto:info@pszk@unideb.hu)

Kozicsko Katalin, [solodosci@freemail.hu](mailto:solodosci@freemail.hu)

László Ölveti, Chief Editor of the Egyetemi Élet

Banfalvi Gyozo, Egyetemi Élet

Péter Pilishegyi, Student Representative

László Hamvas, manager of DC Kht.

Translation: Izabella Hegedus (student) [hbella@freemail.hu](mailto:hbella@freemail.hu);

[hegedus\\_iza@yahoo.com](mailto:hegedus_iza@yahoo.com)

**4. Dr. Edit Szűcs, Managing Director, Quality Assurance** ([vedit@puma.unideb.hu](mailto:vedit@puma.unideb.hu))

**Dr. Éva Bakosi, Director for Policy of Social Affairs (through translation)**

**Péter Körösparti**, Student: President of the Student Government

**Péter Pilishegyi**, Student Representative

**Izabella Hegedűs**, student, member AEGEE Europe (*translation*)

**5. Professor Zoltan Abádi-Nagy, Vice Rector, Chair, School of Independent Faculties**

**6. Professor István Bujalos, Dean of the Faculty of Arts**

Tel: 0630 3824741; Email: [bujalos@tigris.klte.hu](mailto:bujalos@tigris.klte.hu)

**7. Tózsérné Gáll Ibolya, Students Information Center (Information System Office)**

**8. Debrecen Campus Kht (DC Kht)**

Participants: Dr. Zoltán Bács, DC Kht, senior advisor (card)

Adrián Nagy, manager of the Universitas Kht. Email: [anagy@agr.unideb.hu](mailto:anagy@agr.unideb.hu)

Translation: Izabella Hegedűs, student

**9. Noémi Szabó Kiss, Head of Registry, Faculty of Economics, Dean's Office – Registry**

**10. Dr. János Kormos, Dean, Faculty of Economics and Business Administration**

## APPENDIX XI

### Case Studies: List of Institutional Documents

(Institutions listed in alphabetical order)

#### Babes Bolyai University, Romania

- Agachi, P. (2006). Multiple Employment Issues at the 'Babes-Bolyai' University in Cluj-Napoca, Romania: A Case Study. *Higher Education in Europe*, Vol. 31, No. 3, pp. 309-315
- Agachi, P. and Pop, C. (undated), The Babes-Bolyai University – An Entrepreneurial University. BBU Centre for University Development, Studies. [WWW] <http://www.cdu.ubbcluj.ro/Documente%20MA/The%20BBU%20-%20an%20entrepreneurial%20university.pdf> (20 June 2006)
- Baba C., Szamosközi S., Schreiber W. (2002). *The Institutional Evaluation of the Babeş-Bolyai University 2001*. Cluj-Napoca: Cluj University Press
- Babes-Bolyai University Website. [WWW] <http://www.ubbcluj.ro/> (23 April 2004, 19 March 2006, 20 June 2006)
- Babes-Bolyai University. (2003). *The Internationalisation at Babes-Bolyai University* Brochure, Centre for International Cooperation
- Country Report - Romania 2003*, Bologna Process: Berlin 2003, National Reports 2003, [[http://www.bologna-berlin2003.de/pdf/Romania\\_neu.pdf](http://www.bologna-berlin2003.de/pdf/Romania_neu.pdf) , 25 June 2006]
- Country Report - Romania 2004-2005*, Bologna Process: Bergen 2005, National Reports 2005: [<http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/>, 25 June 2006]
- EUA. (2001). *The Babes-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, EUA Reviewers' Report*. Institutional Evaluation Programme
- Institute for Educational Sciences. [WWW] <http://www.ise.ro/en/> (20 June 2006)
- Marga, A. (2000). Romania: Babes-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca. In: *Ten Years After and Looking Ahead: A Review of the Transformation of Higher Education in Central and Eastern Europe*. Bucharest: UNESCO-CEPES
- Marga, A. (2004). *Eleven Years After (1993-2004)*. Cluj-Napoca: Cluj University Press
- Marga, A. (2004). *University Reform Today*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Cluj-Napoca: Cluj University Press
- Miclea, M. (2006). Institutional Approaches to Entrepreneurialism: Reflections on the case of 'Babes-Bolyai' University in Cluj-Napoca. *Higher Education in Europe*, Vol. 31, No. 2, pp. 105-115
- Nagy, L., Opre, D. and Gherghin, G. (2004). *Quality Assurance Brochure 2004*. BBU Centre for University Development. [WWW] <http://www.cdu.ubbcluj.ro/QA%20En.htm> (20 June 2006)
- Opre, D., Gherghin, G., Bernat, S. and Pop, C. (2003). *Quality Assurance Brochure 2003*. BBU Centre for University Development. [WWW] <http://www.cdu.ubbcluj.ro/QA%20En.htm> (20 June 2006)
- Quality Assurance in Romanian Higher Education*. (2007). Bucharest: Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
- Report on the Visit to the Babes-Bolyai University, Romania*. (2002). The Universities Project of the Salzburg Seminar Visiting Advisors Programme
- Strategic Plan for 2004-2007*. (2003). Babes-Bolyai University
- The Charter of the Babes-Bolyai University*. (2000). Babes-Bolyai University. [WWW] <http://www.ubbcluj.ro/www-en/despre/carta.htm> (20 June 2006)
- Universitas 2004: Decisions, Strategies and Policies adopted by the Babes-Bolyai University Senate on the Proposal of the Academic Council*. (2004). Cluj-Napoca: Cluj University Press



## Case Studies: List of Institutional Documents

### University of Debrecen, Hungary

- Campus Hungary. (Information for foreign students). [WWW] [www.campushungary.hu](http://www.campushungary.hu) (25 June 2006)
- Country Report - Hungary 2004-2005* Bologna Process: Bergen 2005, National Reports 2005. [WWW] <http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/> (25 June 2006)
- Developing an Internal Quality Culture in European Universities*. (2005). Report on the Quality Culture Project 2002-2003. European University Association. [WWW] [http://www.eua.be/eua/jsp/en/upload/QC1\\_full.1111487662479.pdf](http://www.eua.be/eua/jsp/en/upload/QC1_full.1111487662479.pdf) (25 June 2006)
- Ministry of Education, Republic of Hungary. (2002). *Higher Education in Hungary: Heading for the Third Millennium*. [WWW] <http://www.om.hu/main.php?folderID=181&articleID=1069&ctag=articlelist&iid=1> (25 June 2006)
- Ministry of Education, Republic of Hungary. (2006a). *Higher Education Programmes for Foreign Students in Hungary*. [WWW] <http://www.om.hu/main.php?folderID=181&articleID=1180&ctag=articlelist&iid=1> (25 June 2006)
- Ministry of Education, Republic of Hungary. (2006b). *Towards Bologna: The Hungarian Universitas Programme - Higher Education Reform Project*. [WWW] [http://www.om.hu/letolt/english/towards\\_bologna.pdf](http://www.om.hu/letolt/english/towards_bologna.pdf) (25 June 2006)
- Ministry of Education, Republic of Hungary. Website. [WWW] <http://www.om.hu/main.php?folderID=137> (25 June 2006)
- Ministry of Education, Republic of Hungary. (2005). *Hungary in the Bologna Process: National Report 2004-2005*. [WWW] [http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/EN/national\\_impl/00\\_Nat-rep-05/National\\_Reports-Hungary\\_050111.pdf](http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/EN/national_impl/00_Nat-rep-05/National_Reports-Hungary_050111.pdf) (25 June 2005)
- Network 3 Report: Student Support Services*. (2003). EUA Quality Culture Project. Network Coordinator: Luciano Arcuri, University of Padova, Italy
- Quandt, R. (2002). *The Changing Landscape in Eastern Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Recommendations for Best Practices in Student Support Services*. (2002). Proposal submitted by the University of Debrecen for participation in the EUA Quality Culture Project
- University of Debrecen – ECTS Website. [WWW] <http://erasmus.admin.unideb.hu/ects/> (27 March 2006, 25 June 2006)
- University of Debrecen Website. [WWW] <http://dragon.unideb.hu/eng.htm> (28 November 2004, [site no longer active](#))
- University of Debrecen Website. [WWW] <http://www.unideb.hu/index.php?lC=en> (27 March 2006, 25 June 2006)
- University of Debrecen, *2001-2002 Brochure*
- Welcome to the University of Debrecen: International Student Guide*. (2006). University of Debrecen. [WWW] <http://www.unideb.hu/index.php?lC=en> (25 June 2006)

## Case Studies: List of Institutional Documents

### University of Novi Sad, Serbia

- Conclusions and Recommendations.* (2003). UNESCO-CEPES/EUA Conference on “The External Dimension of the Bologna Process: South-East European Higher Education and the European Higher Education Area in a Global World”. Bucharest. March 2003. [WWW] <http://www.ns.ac.yu/stara/>, “Novosti i događaji” (26 Jan 2005, 10 June 2006)
- Country Report - Serbia 2003.* Bologna Process: Bergen 2005, National Reports 2005. [WWW] [http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Docs/S\\_and\\_M/SERBIA.PDF](http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Docs/S_and_M/SERBIA.PDF) (5 July 2006)
- Country Report - Serbia 2004-2005.* Bologna Process: Bergen 2005, National Reports 2005. [WWW] <http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/> (25 June 2006)
- EUA. (2002a). *Institutional Evaluations of Universities in Serbia, Overview Report.* [WWW] <http://www.ns.ac.yu/stara/>, “Novosti i događaji” (26 Jan 2005, 10 June 2006)
- EUA. (2002b). *Institutional Review Programme: University of Novi Sad, Final Report.* [WWW] <http://www.ns.ac.yu/stara/>, “Novosti i događaji” (26 Jan 2005, 10 June 2006)
- Republic of Serbia and Montenegro. (2005). *Law on Higher Education.* [WWW] <http://www.ns.ac.yu/stara/>, “Novosti i događaji” (26 Jan 2005, 10 June 2006)
- Serbia Economic Memorandum.* (2004). Lead Author: Ardo Hansson, “Education and Training”, pp. 116-131. Washington, DC: The World Bank. [WWW] <http://www.worldbank.org.yu/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/ECAEXT/SERBIAEXTN/0,,contentMDK:20585693~pagePK:141137~piPK:141127~theSitePK:300904,00.html> (19 June 2006)
- Stankovic, F. (2003). Quality Higher Education at the University of Novi Sad. *Higher Education in Europe*, Vol. XXVIII, No. 3, pp. 331-333
- Stankovic, F. (2006). Entrepreneurialism at the University of Novi Sad. *Higher Education in Europe*, Vol. 31, No. 2, pp. 117-128
- Summary Report on the Visit to the University of Novi Sad, Serbia and Montenegro.* (2004). The Universities Project of the Salzburg Seminar Visiting Advisors Programme. [WWW] <http://www.ns.ac.yu/stara/>, “Novosti i događaji” (26 Jan 2005, 10 June 2006)
- The Novi Sad Initiative.* (2005) Addressing Questions of Governance in Creating the European Higher Education Area. [WWW] <http://www.nsinitiative.ns.ac.yu/documents.html> (27 March 2006)
- Towards an Integrated University via Internal Agreement.* (2003). University of Novi Sad. Tempus Joint European Project – 15/12/2003
- Turajlic, S. (2003). Is Higher Education a Public Good? A View from a Serbian Perspective. *Higher Education in Europe*, Vol. XXVIII, No. 3, pp. 349-352
- University of Novi Sad Website. [WWW] <http://www.ns.ac.yu/stara/> (28 November 2004, 27 March 2006, 19 June 2006)
- Zindovic-Vukadinovic, G. (2004). Serbia and Montenegro: The Catalytic Effects of Higher Education. *Higher Education in Europe*, Vol. XXIX, No. 3, pp. 329-340

## Case Studies: List of Institutional Documents

### University of Zagreb, Croatia

- Berryman, S. and Drabek, I. (2002). *Mobilising Croatia's Human Capital to Support Innovation-Driven Growth*. Background Paper for the *Croatia Country Economic Memorandum on EU Accession Breakthrough 2001*. (2002). A Development Strategy for the University of Zagreb. University of Zagreb, Croatia
- Country Report - Croatia 2003*. Bologna Process: Berlin 2003, National Reports 2005. [WWW] <http://www.bologna-berlin2003.de/pdf/Croatia.pdf> (5 July 2006)
- Country Report - Croatia 2004-2005*. Bologna Process: Bergen 2005, National Reports 2005. [WWW] <http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/> (25 June 2006)
- Croatia Country Economic Memorandum*. (2003). Lead Author: Daniel Fernando Oks, "Education Strategy", pp. 147-157. Washington, DC: The World Bank. [WWW] <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTCROATIA/Resources/301144-1121189574957/croatia-complete.pdf> (16 June 2006)
- Education Sector Development Plan 2005-2010*. (2005). Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, Republic of Croatia. [WWW] <http://public.mzos.hr/default.asp?ru=1109&gl=&sid=&jezik=2> (16 June 2006)
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## **APPENDIX XII**

### **List of Interviews**

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(In Chronological Order)

#### **University of Zagreb, Croatia 13-14 May 2004**

1. Faculty of Architecture (6 participants)
  - Prof. Bojan Baletic, PhD, Vice-Dean for Teaching
  - Prof. Tonci Zaizmic
  - Vesna Mandic (Staff, Secretary)
  - Anonymous Staff
  - Ivona Ivevic (Student)
  - Boris Labas (Student)
2. Faculty of Civil Engineering
  - Professor Mladen Radujkovic (Vice Dean Research)
3. Faculty of Philosophy (2 participants)
  - Mrs. Neda Stazic, dipl. Iur., Chief Secretary of the Faculty
  - Prof. Tamera Sveljo (International Cooperation Officer; Translator)
4. Department of Psychology/ Student Counselling Centre
  - Prof. Goranka Lugomer, Ph.D.
5. Students (6 participants)
  - Luka Juros (PolSci, Assistant Coordinator at the UNESCO Chair in Governance and Management of HE)
  - Ognjenka Manojlovic (Law)
  - Andreja Pevec
  - Aleksandra Brankovic (student working at the Student Information Centre)
  - Mislav Zitko
  - Drazen Cepic (Student of Philosophy and Croatian Language and Literature)
6. Student Government/Student Center
  - Marko Greiner, President
7. Rectorate
  - Prof. Gvozden Flego (PolSci, Former Minister of Education)
8. Academy of Fine Arts (2 participants)
  - Prof. Vera Turkovic, Ph.D., Vice-Dean for Teaching
  - Mrs Visnja Kabalin-Borenic, International Relations Officer
9. Teacher Education Academy (Pedagogical Academy)
  - Professor Vlatka Domovic, Vice Dean for Science
10. Rectorate
  - Professor Vjekoslav Jerolimov, Vice Rector for Teaching and Students
11. Rectorate
  - Ms Ana Ruzicka, Head of the International Relations Office
12. SIC - Student Information Centre, Zagreb (3 participants)
  - Mr Nino Skukanec, Ivana Puljiz, Danijela Dolenec

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**Babes Bolyai University, Romania**  
**May 20-21, 2004**

1. Ms. Monica Rombu, Social Service Office  
With translation Oana Negru
2. Prof. Cristian Stan, Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Psychology and Education Science, Head of Education Science Department:  
With translation Roxana Incze
3. Ms. Raluca Moldovan, Centre for International Cooperation  
Director of the Office for Joint Degrees
4. Prof. Paul Serban Agachi, Vice Rector Process Control  
Camelia Moraru, Centre for University Development (Higher Education Research)
5. Oana Negru, Student Counselling Centre:
6. Bogdan Gaurean, Student Faculty of Law, Student Prefect – Romanian and German Line:  
(studied 6 years at BBU, several programmes)  
Magor Csibi, Vice Student Prefect – Hungarian Line
7. Raluca Sfetcu, Student of Psychology (3<sup>rd</sup> year), Student Senator and Vice President of the Association of Students of Psychology in Romania:
8. Ana-Maria Truta, Student of European Studies (2<sup>nd</sup> year), European Student Society:  
Elena Podariu (Podaviu?), Student of European Studies (3<sup>rd</sup> year):

**University of Novi Sad, Serbia**  
**January 20-21, 2005**

1. Jovan Gvero, Director, Student Cultural Center of Novi Sad  
Translation: Ivana Vujkov, International Office, University of Novi Sad
2. Student Association of Disabled Students, Faculty of Law  
Interviewee: Marko Mirkovic (Management)  
Participants: Milesa Malinkovic (Pedagogy)  
Maja Lulic (Pedagogy)  
Ruzica Skrbic (Secretary) Email:  
Miljana Jeftenic (Law)
3. Prof. Pavle Sekerus, Doc. Dr., Faculty of Philosophy, Vice-Dean for International Relations
4. Prof. Miroslav Veskovic, former Vice-Rector and Head of the Physics Dept., Faculty of Sciences
5. The Association of Roma Students, Faculty of Philosophy  
Interviewee: Denic Slavica  
Participants: Petar Novca Nikolic [journalist]  
Translation: Prof. Milka Oljaca
6. Student Center of Novi Sad  
Interviewee: Jovan Bjelobaba, Director of the Student Center  
Participant: Marijana Doklos (responsible for accommodation)  
Zora Subasic (responsible for dining)  
Translation: Ms. Ivana Vujkov, International Office
7. Prof. Dr. Radmila Marinkovic Neducin, Rector
8. Prof. Dr. Olga Cvejic Jancic, Dean, Faculty of Law  
Translation: Bojan Stefanovic, International Relations Officer

9. Prof. Dr. Svenka Savic, Center for Gender Studies  
Participant: Veronika Mitro Email:
10. Prof. Milka Oljaca, Head of the University Center for Management in Education, Faculty of Philosophy
11. Meeting with 6 students  
Helena Hirszenberger, Student Vice-Rector  
Nemanja Luzanin, President, Student Union of the University of Novi Sad  
Zeljko Tekic, Student Vice-Dean, Faculty of Technical Science  
Nikola Cubrilo, student, Industrial Engineering and Management,  
Vice- President of student alliance of faculty of technical science  
Zalan Kormanyos, The Union of Hungarian Students in Vojvodina  
Silard Simon

### **University of Debrecen, Hungary** **February 7-8, 2005**

1. Dr. Gaál István, Vice-President for Education and Teacher Training, School of Independent Faculties, Email: igaal@math.klte.hu
2. Dr. Virágos Márta, Director of the Library  
Participants: Klára Koltay (kkoltay@lib.unideb.hu), Peter Pilishegyi (student)
3. *Pont Iroda* and the *Egyetemi Élet*  
Participants:  
Lugosi Andor, Career Centre  
Kozicsko Katalin,  
László Ölveti, Chief Editor of the *Egyetemi Élet*  
Banfalvi Gyozo, *Egyetemi Élet*  
Péter Pilishegyi, Student Representative  
László Hamvas, manager of DC Kht.  
Translation: Izabella Hegedus (student)
4. Dr. Edit Szűcs, Managing Director, Quality Assurance  
Dr. Éva Bakosi, Director for Policy of Social Affairs (through translation)  
Péter Körösparti, Student: President of the Student Government  
Péter Pilishegyi, Student Representative  
Izabella Hegedűs, student, member AEGEE Europe (*translation*)
5. Professor Zoltan Abádi-Nagy, Vice Rector, Chair, School of Independent Faculties
6. *Professor István Bujalos, Dean of the Faculty of Arts*
7. Tőzsérné Gáll Ibolya, Students Information Center (Information System Office)
8. Debrecen Campus Kht (DC Kht)  
Participants: Dr. Zoltán Bács, DC Kht, senior advisor (card)  
Adrián Nagy, manager of the Universitas Kht. Email:  
Translation: Izabella Hegedűs, student
9. Noémi Szabó Kiss, Head of Registry, Faculty of Economics, Dean's Office – Registry
10. Dr. János Kormos, Dean, Faculty of Economics and Business Administration

## APPENDIX XIII

## Data Analysis: Coding Table

| Theme_<br>Topic_<br>Code | Theme_Name                                                                                                 | Topic_Name                                                                                                                                               |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| T101                     | Changes in the organisational and management structure of the institution/faculty (Q 1 and 2)              | result of external factors (e.g. law, change of statutes, external review and recommendations, etc)                                                      |
| T102                     | Changes in the organisational and management structure of the institution/faculty (Q 1 and 2)              | result of internal factors (e.g. students are more demanding, professors, self-study, change of attitudes, interests, awareness of the importance of SS) |
| T103                     | Changes in the organisational and management structure of the institution/faculty (Q 1 and 2)              | result of international developments (e.g. Bologna process, EU mobility schemes, effort to attract international students)                               |
| T104                     | Changes in the organisational and management structure of the institution/faculty (Q 1 and 2)              | reasons for change were discussed at academic and management fora, and changes were implemented resulting in policy and procedural change                |
| T105                     | Changes in the organisational and management structure of the institution/faculty (Q 1 and 2)              | changes were implemented directly, without discussion, without policy or procedural change                                                               |
| T106                     | Changes in the organisational and management structure of the institution/faculty (Q 1 and 2)              | current structure of the university is fragmented: strong faculties, weak university                                                                     |
| T107                     | Changes in the organisational and management structure of the institution/faculty (Q 1 and 2)              | the university is integrated/integrating                                                                                                                 |
| T201                     | Awareness of the importance of Student Support Services + Attitudes/Student Expectations (Q 3, 8, 11, 12 ) | interviewee was surprised by the topic, made special comments                                                                                            |
| T202                     | Awareness of the importance of Student Support Services + Attitudes/Student Expectations (Q 3, 8, 11, 12 ) | interviewee is aware of the importance of SS                                                                                                             |
| T203                     | Awareness of the importance of Student Support Services + Attitudes/Student Expectations (Q 3, 8, 11, 12 ) | interviewee needs further explanation, was not aware of SS in general                                                                                    |
| T204                     | Awareness of the importance of Student Support Services + Attitudes/Student Expectations (Q 3, 8, 11, 12 ) | interviewee thinks there is no need for special arrangements for SS (Negative)                                                                           |
| T205                     | Awareness of the importance of Student Support Services + Attitudes/Student Expectations (Q 3, 8, 11, 12 ) | interviewee thinks that the faculty/univ offers adequate SS (Complacent)                                                                                 |
| T206                     | Awareness of the importance of Student Support Services + Attitudes/Student Expectations (Q 3, 8, 11, 12 ) | interviewee thinks that the SS offered need improvement (Positive/Pro-active)                                                                            |
| T207                     | Awareness of the importance of Student Support Services + Attitudes/Student Expectations (Q 3, 8, 11, 12 ) | interviewee thinks that SS form a part and contribute to the overall student experience                                                                  |
| T208                     | Awareness of the importance of Student Support Services + Attitudes/Student Expectations (Q 3, 8, 11, 12 ) | interviewee thinks that student expectations are evolving and the university needs to respond                                                            |
| T209                     | Awareness of the importance of Student Support Services + Attitudes/Student Expectations (Q 3, 8, 11, 12 ) | student services have not changed                                                                                                                        |
| T210                     | Awareness of the importance of Student Support Services + Attitudes/Student Expectations (Q 3, 8, 11, 12 ) | interviewee thinks that SS add to the competitive edge of the university                                                                                 |



| Theme_<br>Topic_<br>Code | Theme_Name                                                                                                 | Topic_Name                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| T211                     | Awareness of the importance of Student Support Services + Attitudes/Student Expectations (Q 3, 8, 11, 12 ) | interviewee DOES NOT think that SS add to the competitive edge of the university (e.g. university does not see as a competitive advantage; students are not influenced by provision of SS when making their choice) |
| T212                     | Awareness of the importance of Student Support Services + Attitudes/Student Expectations (Q 3, 8, 11, 12 ) | students do not have big expectations                                                                                                                                                                               |
| T301                     | Description of SS and Location in the University Structure (Q 4 and 5)                                     | types of Student Services: table!                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| T302                     | Description of SS and Location in the University Structure (Q 4 and 5)                                     | central, at the level of the university, available to all students, overseen by central univ administration                                                                                                         |
| T303                     | Description of SS and Location in the University Structure (Q 4 and 5)                                     | central, at the level of the university, available to all students, NOT overseen by central univ administration (e.g. accommodation, health, sports, cultural/social)                                               |
| T304                     | Description of SS and Location in the University Structure (Q 4 and 5)                                     | faculty-based, overseen by Dean                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| T305                     | Description of SS and Location in the University Structure (Q 4 and 5)                                     | special (grass-root activities): originated by students, professors, others, overseen by others, NGOs, student associations                                                                                         |
| T306                     | Description of SS and Location in the University Structure (Q 4 and 5)                                     | coordinated                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| T307                     | Description of SS and Location in the University Structure (Q 4 and 5)                                     | not coordinated                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| T308                     | Description of SS and Location in the University Structure (Q 4 and 5)                                     | one person responsible                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| T309                     | Description of SS and Location in the University Structure (Q 4 and 5)                                     | no one single person responsible, in consultation                                                                                                                                                                   |
| T310                     | Description of SS and Location in the University Structure (Q 4 and 5)                                     | the university gives financial support                                                                                                                                                                              |
| T311                     | Description of SS and Location in the University Structure (Q 4 and 5)                                     | the university gives in-kind support (no financial support)                                                                                                                                                         |
| T312                     | Description of SS and Location in the University Structure (Q 4 and 5)                                     | student support office in the faculty does not have decision-making powers, only executes decisions of the Dean (and council) or follows legal regulations                                                          |
| T401                     | Student Services in University Management and Strategic Planning (Q 6 and 7)                               | Involvement of Rector / Vice-Rector                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| T402                     | Student Services in University Management and Strategic Planning (Q 6 and 7)                               | Involvement of the Senate                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| T403                     | Student Services in University Management and Strategic Planning (Q 6 and 7)                               | Involvement of the Dean / Vice-Dean                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| T404                     | Student Services in University Management and Strategic Planning (Q 6 and 7)                               | Involvement of the Student Union                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| T405                     | Student Services in University Management and Strategic Planning (Q 6 and 7)                               | Involvement of students: role of students, student associations                                                                                                                                                     |
| T406                     | Student Services in University Management and Strategic Planning (Q 6 and 7)                               | Able to influence university management and planning                                                                                                                                                                |
| T407                     | Student Services in University Management and Strategic Planning (Q 6 and 7)                               | NOT able to influence university management and planning                                                                                                                                                            |
| T408                     | Student Services in University Management and Strategic Planning (Q 6 and 7)                               | university management is a new topic/problem                                                                                                                                                                        |



| Theme_<br>Topic_<br>Code | Theme_Name                                                                                                       | Topic_Name                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| T501                     | Communication between university and students (Q 10 and 13)                                                      | formal channels – documents, results, feedback: PRO-ACTIVE                                                                                                                                                                                |
| T502                     | Communication between university and students (Q 10 and 13)                                                      | informal channels – discussion, one-time steps, not coordinated: RE-ACTIVE                                                                                                                                                                |
| T503                     | Communication between university and students (Q 10 and 13)                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| T601                     | Attitude to Student Involvement in University Management, Governance and the University Experience (Q 11 and 12) | Negative: university does not actively seek student involvement (e.g. no effort to collect student feedback, distance between students and administration, things are done only when students personally visit – special effort involved) |
| T602                     | Attitude to Student Involvement in University Management, Governance and the University Experience (Q 11 and 12) | Positive/passive: students are encouraged but the university does not get involved in student activities (giving freedom to students)                                                                                                     |
| T603                     | Attitude to Student Involvement in University Management, Governance and the University Experience (Q 11 and 12) | Positive Pro-Active: students are encouraged and supported to become involved/Connected to their status of being students, learning process                                                                                               |

## APPENDIX XIV

## Organisational and Operational Regulations University of Debrecen

| Name of the regulation                                                                                                                           | Approved    | Modified     |              |                             |             |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------------------|-------------|
| <b><u>I. Szervezeti és működési szabályzat</u></b>                                                                                               |             |              |              |                             |             |
| <u>1. számú melléklet DE Organogram</u>                                                                                                          |             |              |              |                             |             |
| <u>2. számú melléklet DE GF Organogram</u>                                                                                                       |             |              |              |                             |             |
| <u>3. számú melléklet</u>                                                                                                                        |             |              |              |                             |             |
| <u>4. számú melléklet Centum/TEK Működési rendje</u>                                                                                             | 2006.06.22. | 2007.10.04.  | 2007.12.20.  | 2008.03.06.                 |             |
| <u>5. számú melléklet Karok működési rendje</u>                                                                                                  |             |              |              |                             |             |
| <u>6. számú melléklet kutatóintézetek működési rendje</u>                                                                                        |             |              |              |                             |             |
| <b><u>II. Az SZMSZ részét képező, de külön megalkotott szabályzatok:</u></b>                                                                     |             |              |              |                             |             |
| <u>A munkáltatói jogkör gyakorlásának rendje</u>                                                                                                 | 2006.06.22. | 2007.10.04.  | 2007.12.20.  | 2008.03.06.                 |             |
| <u>A DE szabályzata az egyes munkakörök betöltésével kapcsolatos szabályokról, a pályáztatás rendjéről és egyéb foglalkoztatási szabályokról</u> | 2006.06.22. | 2007.05.24.  | 2008. 03.06. |                             |             |
| <u>Melléklet</u>                                                                                                                                 |             |              |              |                             |             |
| <u>Az egyetemi kitüntetések és címek adományozásának szabályzata</u>                                                                             | 2006.06.22. | 2006.11.30   | 2007.04.19.  | 2007.11.15.                 |             |
| <u>A tudományos kutatás szabályzata a kutatási pályázatok elbírálásának rendje</u>                                                               | 2000.12.14. | 2002.05.30.  |              |                             |             |
| <u>A DE hallgatói felvételi szabályzata</u>                                                                                                      | 2006.06.22. | 2007. 04.19. | 2007.11.15.  |                             |             |
| <u>Függelék</u>                                                                                                                                  |             |              |              |                             |             |
| <u>A DE tanulmányi és vizsgaszabályzata</u>                                                                                                      | 2006.06.22. | 2006.11.02.  | 2007. 04.19. | 2007.10.04.                 | 2007.12.20. |
| <u>A Debreceni Egyetem hallgatói térítési és juttatási szabályzata</u>                                                                           | 2006.06.22. | 2006.10.05.  | 2006.11.30.  | 2007.05.24.,<br>2007.12.20. | 2007.10.04. |
| <u>A hallgatói jogorvoslati kérelmek benyújtásának és elbírálásának eljárási rendje a Debreceni Egyetemen</u>                                    | 2006.05.25. | 2007. 04.19. |              |                             |             |
| <u>A DE hallgatóinak fegyelmi és kártérítési szabályzata</u>                                                                                     | 2000.05.25. | 2003.10.09.  | 2006.05.25.  |                             |             |
| <u>A DE hallgatóinak baleset- és munkavédelmi szabályzata</u>                                                                                    | 2000.12.14  | 2001.11.08.  |              |                             |             |
| <u>Szabályzat a De kollégiumainak és diákotthonainak működési rendjéről</u>                                                                      | 2006.06.22. | 2007.12.20.  |              |                             |             |
| <u>A DE szabályzata a fogyatékkal élő hallgatók esélyegyenlőségének biztosításáról</u>                                                           | 2006.05.25. |              |              |                             |             |
| <u>A DE doktori szabályzata</u>                                                                                                                  | 2006.05.25. | 2006.11.30   | 2007.04.19.  | 2007.10.04.                 | 2007.11.15. |
| <u>A DE szellemi tulajdon kezelési szabályzata</u>                                                                                               | 2005.12.01. | 2005.02.01.  | 2007.11.15.  |                             |             |
| <b><u>III. A gazdálkodással kapcsolatos szabályzatok:</u></b>                                                                                    |             |              |              |                             |             |
| <u>Gazdálkodási Szabályzat</u>                                                                                                                   | 2007.02.15. |              |              |                             |             |
| <u>Munkavédelmi szabályzat</u>                                                                                                                   | 2001.11.08. | 2007.04.19.  |              |                             |             |
| <u>Tűzvédelmi szabályzat</u>                                                                                                                     | 2001.11.08. | 2007.04.19.  |              |                             |             |
| <u>Leltározási és leltárkészítési szabályzat</u>                                                                                                 | 2001.11.08. | 2007.05.24.  |              |                             |             |
| <u>Selejtezési szabályzat</u>                                                                                                                    | 2001.11.08. | 2007.05.24.  |              |                             |             |
| <u>Belső ellenőrzési szabályzat</u>                                                                                                              | 2000.12.14  | 2001.10.04.  | 2004.09.09.  |                             |             |
| <u>Közbeszerzési eljárási szabályzat</u>                                                                                                         | 2002.03.28. | 2005.03.24.  | 2006.03.30.  | 2007.05.24.                 | 2007.12.20. |
| <u>Szerződéskötés eljárási rendje</u>                                                                                                            | 2007.05.24. | 2007.06.28.  |              |                             |             |

|                                                                                                                                                                                   |              |              |             |             |             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| <a href="#">Egyetemi üzemeltetésben lévő gépjárművek hivatali- és magáncélú, valamint a személyi tulajdonú gépjárművek hivatali- és munkabajárással kapcsolatos használatáról</a> | 2007.05.24.  |              |             |             |             |
| <a href="#">Kötelezettségvállalás, utalványozás, ellenjegyzés és érvényesítés rendje</a>                                                                                          | 2002.03.28.  | 2003.11.06.  |             |             |             |
| <a href="#">Pályázatkezelés eljárási rendje</a>                                                                                                                                   | 2007.05.24   |              |             |             |             |
| <a href="#">Pénzkezelési és értékkezelési szabályzat</a>                                                                                                                          | 2007.05.24   |              |             |             |             |
| <a href="#">Önköltség-számítási szabályzat</a><br>Mellékletek: <a href="#">1,2,3,4,5,6,7a,7b,8,9,10,11</a><br>Kalkulációs nyomtatványok: <a href="#">1, 2, 3, 4, 5</a>            | 2002.03.28.  |              |             |             |             |
| <a href="#">DE számviteli politikája</a>                                                                                                                                          | 2007.05.24.  |              |             |             |             |
| <a href="#">DE számlakerete</a>                                                                                                                                                   | 2002.03.28.  |              |             |             |             |
| Szabályzat a képzési és létesítmény-fenntartási előirányzat felosztásáról                                                                                                         | 2002.05.30.  |              |             |             |             |
| <a href="#">Eszközök és források értékelési szabályzata</a>                                                                                                                       | 2007.05.24.  |              |             |             |             |
|                                                                                                                                                                                   |              |              |             |             |             |
| <a href="#">Számlarend</a>                                                                                                                                                        | 2002.06.27.  |              |             |             |             |
| <a href="#">Vagyongazdálkodási szabályzat</a>                                                                                                                                     | 2007.05.24.  |              |             |             |             |
| <a href="#">Bizonylati Szabályzat</a>                                                                                                                                             | 2002.06.27.  |              |             |             |             |
| <b>IV. Egyéb szabályzatok:</b>                                                                                                                                                    |              |              |             |             |             |
| <a href="#">A DE kollektív szerződése</a>                                                                                                                                         | 2001.01.01.  | 2001.11.08.  | 2004.10.21. |             |             |
| <a href="#">A Debreceni Egyetem Etikai Kódexe (Vizsgakódex) Angol</a>                                                                                                             | 2007.11.15.  |              |             |             |             |
| <a href="#">A Debreceni Egyetem Etikai Kódexe (Vizsgakódex)</a>                                                                                                                   | 2007.11.15.  |              |             |             |             |
| <a href="#">EHÖK alapszabály</a>                                                                                                                                                  | 2006.06.22.  | 2006.11.30.  | 2007.06.21. | 2007.11.14. |             |
| <a href="#">A DE Minőségügyi kézikönyve</a>                                                                                                                                       | 2005.10.13.  | 2007. 04.19. |             |             |             |
| <a href="#">A Társadalmi Tanács működési rendje</a>                                                                                                                               | 2000.09.01.  |              |             |             |             |
| <a href="#">Közalkalmazotti szabályzat</a>                                                                                                                                        | 2001.05.24.  | 2006.10.06.  |             |             |             |
| <a href="#">Iratkezelési Szabályzat</a>                                                                                                                                           | 2002.03.28.  | 2005.12.01.  | 2006.11.30. | 2007.11.15. |             |
| <a href="#">Lakástámogatási Szabályzat</a>                                                                                                                                        | 2001.04.26.  |              |             |             |             |
| <a href="#">Az egyetemi lakások igénybevételének szabályzata</a>                                                                                                                  | 2001.06.28.  |              |             |             |             |
| <a href="#">A Magyar Köztársaság állami ünnepeiről szóló 1991. évi VIII. törvényben felsorolt, illetve az egyetemi ünnepek és megemlékezések rendje</a>                           | 2000.04.27.  |              |             |             |             |
| <a href="#">Szabályzat a normatív kutatástámogatás felosztásáról és felhasználásáról</a>                                                                                          | 2000.05.25.  |              |             |             |             |
| <a href="#">Honosítási Szabályzat</a>                                                                                                                                             | 2000.05.25.  | 2001.10.04.  |             |             |             |
| <a href="#">Habilitációs Szabályzat</a>                                                                                                                                           | 2000.06.29.  | 2002.10.10.  | 2004.10.21. | 2005.03.24. | 2006.05.25. |
| <a href="#">A Pedagógus továbbképzés szabályzata</a>                                                                                                                              | 2000.06.29.  |              |             |             |             |
| <a href="#">A diákigazolvánnyal kapcsolatos feladatok szabályzata</a>                                                                                                             | 2000.06.29.  | 2000.10.19.  | 2003.06.26. |             |             |
| <a href="#">Az oktatói munka hallgatói véleményezésének szabályzata</a>                                                                                                           | 2000.06.29.  |              |             |             |             |
| <a href="#">Erasmus szabályzat</a>                                                                                                                                                | 2001.06.28.  | 2002.05.30.  | 2004.12.02. | 2006.10.05. |             |
| <a href="#">A diákhitel intézményi feladatainak szabályzata</a>                                                                                                                   | 2001.11.08.  |              |             |             |             |
| <a href="#">A DE Szabályzata a külföldi bizonyítványok és oklevelek elismerésével kapcsolatban fizetendő díjakról</a>                                                             | 2002.06.27.  |              |             |             |             |
| <a href="#">A DE átoktatási szabályzata</a>                                                                                                                                       | 2002.10.10.  | 2006.03.30.  | 2007.11.15. |             |             |
| <a href="#">Az Egyetemi Könyvtár SZMSZ-e</a>                                                                                                                                      | 2001.06.28.  |              |             |             |             |
| <a href="#">A DENK Könyvtárhasználati szabályzata</a>                                                                                                                             | 2001.12.13.  |              |             |             |             |
| <a href="#">A DE informatikai rendszerének felhasználói szabályzata</a>                                                                                                           | 2005.03.24.  |              |             |             |             |
| <a href="#">A DE adatkezelési, adatvédelmi és</a>                                                                                                                                 | 2007. 04.19. |              |             |             |             |

|                                                                                         |             |  |  |  |  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|--|--|--|--|
| <a href="#">adatbiztonsági szabályzata</a>                                              |             |  |  |  |  |
| <a href="#">DE informatikai rendszerének üzemeltetői szabályzata</a>                    | 2005.03.24. |  |  |  |  |
| Idegennyelvi Központ SZMSZ                                                              | 2002.05.30. |  |  |  |  |
| <a href="#">DE esélyegyenlőségi terve</a>                                               | 2007.10.05. |  |  |  |  |
| <a href="#">Szabályzat a rektor feletti munkáltatói jogkör gyakorlásának rendjéről</a>  | 2003.11.06. |  |  |  |  |
| <b>V. Társulási szerződések:</b>                                                        |             |  |  |  |  |
| <a href="#">Társulási szerződés az ATOMKI-val</a>                                       | 2000.04.27. |  |  |  |  |
| <a href="#">Társulási szerződés a DRHE-el</a>                                           | 2000.06.29. |  |  |  |  |
| <a href="#">Társulási szerződés a Kölcsey Ferenc Református Tanítóképző Főiskolával</a> | 2000.10.19. |  |  |  |  |

## APPENDIX XV

### Student Services Matrix for Each Case Study

#### STUDENT SERVICES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NOVI SAD

|                                                              | All Faculties                                     | Faculty-Specific                          | University Level                                                                                                                                    | External Agencies                                           | Student Gov't |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| 1. Student Recruitment                                       |                                                   | Individual professors                     | Education Fair<br>Website                                                                                                                           |                                                             |               |
| 2. Admissions                                                |                                                   |                                           |                                                                                                                                                     |                                                             |               |
| 3. Orientation                                               |                                                   | Official meeting at the beginning of AY   |                                                                                                                                                     |                                                             |               |
| 4. Student Records/<br>Registration/<br>Academic Counselling | Student Service<br>Secretary of the<br>Department | Information Systems<br>Diploma Supplement |                                                                                                                                                     |                                                             |               |
| 5. Financial Aid                                             |                                                   |                                           | Merit Awards                                                                                                                                        | Student Centre                                              |               |
| 6. Student Housing and<br>Dining                             |                                                   | Outsourced Dining<br>Services             |                                                                                                                                                     | Student Centre – main student<br>cafeteria, residence halls |               |
| 7. International Programmes                                  |                                                   | Int'l student exchanges                   | International Office                                                                                                                                |                                                             |               |
| 8. Student Life and Activities                               |                                                   |                                           |                                                                                                                                                     | Student Cultural Centre of<br>Novi Sad                      |               |
| 9. Student Counselling                                       |                                                   |                                           |                                                                                                                                                     |                                                             |               |
| 10. Career Advising                                          |                                                   |                                           |                                                                                                                                                     |                                                             |               |
| 11. Student Government                                       | Student Association<br>and Student Union          |                                           | Student Vice-Rector (a student)<br>Student Association and Student Union                                                                            |                                                             |               |
| 12. Student Associations                                     | Specialised student<br>organisations              | Specialised student<br>organisations      | A. of Hungarian students<br>A. of Roma students<br>A. of Disabled Students<br>“Balkan Idea” and AEGEE<br>Cultural, artistic and sports associations |                                                             |               |
| 13. Alumni Association                                       |                                                   |                                           | First Alumni Assembly 2003, AA in process                                                                                                           |                                                             |               |
| 14. Other                                                    |                                                   |                                           | Educational Affairs and Public Relations<br>Office                                                                                                  |                                                             |               |

**STUDENT SERVICES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAGREB**

|                                                                       | <b>All Faculties</b>                                              | <b>Faculty-Specific</b>                                   | <b>University Level</b>                                                 | <b>External Agencies</b>                                    | <b>Student Gov't</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>1. Student Recruitment</b>                                         | Website                                                           |                                                           | Website<br>Publications                                                 |                                                             |                      |
| <b>2. Admissions</b>                                                  |                                                                   |                                                           | Central System (?)                                                      |                                                             |                      |
| <b>3. Orientation</b>                                                 |                                                                   | Faculty orientation                                       |                                                                         |                                                             |                      |
| <b>4. Student Records/<br/>Registration/<br/>Academic Counselling</b> | Student Office/<br>Secretariat<br>(Educational<br>Administration) | Information Database<br>(faculty-specific)                |                                                                         |                                                             |                      |
| <b>5. Financial Aid</b>                                               |                                                                   |                                                           | Merit Awards                                                            | Student Centre - scholarships                               |                      |
| <b>6. Student Housing and<br/>Dining</b>                              |                                                                   | Outsourced Dining<br>Services                             |                                                                         | Student Centre – main student<br>cafeteria, residence halls |                      |
| <b>7. International<br/>Programmes</b>                                | Int'l Programmes and<br>Mobility Coordinator                      | Int'l Programmes and<br>Mobility                          | International Relations Office – services for<br>international students | <i>Student Information Centre<br/>(SIC)*</i>                |                      |
| <b>8. Student Life and<br/>Activities</b>                             |                                                                   | On-line Forum<br>Student Info Centre<br>Student Ombudsman |                                                                         | Student Centre – cultural<br>activities                     |                      |
| <b>9. Student Counselling</b>                                         |                                                                   | Informal Professor-<br>Student Counselling                | Student Counselling Service (based at Dept<br>of Psychology)            |                                                             |                      |
| <b>10. Career Advising</b>                                            |                                                                   |                                                           |                                                                         | <i>Student Information Centre<br/>(SIC)*</i>                |                      |
| <b>11. Student Government</b>                                         | Faculty Student Council                                           |                                                           | University Student Council                                              | Student Centre – houses the<br>office of the SG             |                      |
| <b>12. Student Associations</b>                                       | Formal/Informal<br>Associations                                   | Formal/Informal<br>Associations                           | International Student Organisations                                     |                                                             |                      |
| <b>13. Alumni Association</b>                                         | Alumni Affairs Coord.<br>(member of academic or<br>admin staff)   |                                                           | Alumni Association Committee                                            |                                                             |                      |
| <b>14. Other</b>                                                      | Faculty Committees<br>(e.g. complaints)                           | Sport events, field trips,<br>summer school               | University Computing Centre                                             |                                                             |                      |

\* The Student Information Centre (SIC) is an NGO, not formally connected to the University of Zagreb.

**STUDENT SERVICES AT BABES BOLYAI UNIVERSITY**

|                                                             | All Faculties                                           | Faculty-Specific                    | University Level                                                                                                                                                                                                 | External Agencies | Student Gov't |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| <b>1. Student Recruitment</b>                               | Website                                                 |                                     | Website<br>Organised at University Level                                                                                                                                                                         |                   |               |
| <b>2. Admissions</b>                                        |                                                         |                                     | <a href="http://www.ubbcluj.ro/admitere/admitere.htm">http://www.ubbcluj.ro/admitere/admitere.htm</a> (only in RO – to check)                                                                                    |                   |               |
| <b>3. Orientation</b>                                       | At the beginning of AY – organised by Tutor             |                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                   |               |
| <b>4. Student Records/Registration/Academic Counselling</b> | Faculty Secretariat<br>Tutor Advising System            |                                     | IT system [ <a href="http://www.ubbcluj.ro/studenti/facilitati.htm">http://www.ubbcluj.ro/studenti/facilitati.htm</a> ]<br>Enrolment Statistics from the Rectorate - which office produces those (ask Camellia)? |                   |               |
| <b>5. Financial Aid</b>                                     |                                                         | Faculty extra-budgetary sources     | Social Service                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                   |               |
| <b>6. Student Housing and Dining</b>                        |                                                         |                                     | Social Service<br>Admin Committee of the Residence Complex                                                                                                                                                       |                   |               |
| <b>7. International Programmes</b>                          | Informal at the faculty level;<br>Soctrates Coordinator |                                     | Centre for International Cooperation (CIC)                                                                                                                                                                       |                   |               |
| <b>8. Student Life and Activities</b>                       | Dean, Head of Dept.<br>Tutor                            | Faculty extra-budgetary sources     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                   |               |
| <b>9. Student Counselling</b>                               | Tutor                                                   |                                     | Expert Centre (EC)                                                                                                                                                                                               |                   |               |
| <b>10. Career Advising</b>                                  |                                                         |                                     | Career Centre ( <a href="#">est 2005</a> )                                                                                                                                                                       |                   |               |
| <b>11. Student Government</b>                               | Student Prefects/Faculty                                |                                     | Student Prefects/University                                                                                                                                                                                      |                   |               |
| <b>12. Student Associations</b>                             | Formal/Informal Associations (NGOs)                     | Formal/Informal Associations (NGOs) | No info on website (in construction)                                                                                                                                                                             |                   |               |
| <b>13. Alumni Association</b>                               |                                                         |                                     | Alumni Association                                                                                                                                                                                               |                   |               |
| <b>14. Other</b>                                            |                                                         |                                     | Centre for University Development (CDU)<br>Centre for Quality Assurance                                                                                                                                          |                   |               |

**STUDENT SERVICES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DEBRECEN**

|                                                                            | <b>All Faculties</b>                                                                                    | <b>Faculty-Specific</b> | <b>University Level</b>                                                                                                            | <b>External Agencies</b>                                    | <b>Student Gov't</b>                              |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1. Student Recruitment</b>                                              |                                                                                                         |                         | Website                                                                                                                            |                                                             |                                                   |
| <b>2. Admissions</b>                                                       |                                                                                                         |                         |                                                                                                                                    |                                                             |                                                   |
| <b>3. Orientation</b>                                                      |                                                                                                         |                         | Freshmen's Ball                                                                                                                    |                                                             |                                                   |
| <b>4. Student Records/<br/>Registration/<br/><br/>Academic Counselling</b> | Registry Office<br>Head of Registry<br>NEPTUN system<br>Deputy Dean for Teaching or<br>Academic Affairs |                         | NEPTUN System Central Office                                                                                                       |                                                             |                                                   |
| <b>5. Financial Aid</b>                                                    |                                                                                                         |                         | Student Welfare Office + Committees                                                                                                |                                                             | Student Committee on<br>state-funded scholarships |
| <b>5. Student Housing<br/><br/>Dining Services</b>                         | Outsourced at Faculties                                                                                 |                         | Student Welfare Office + Committees<br><br>Debreceni Universitas Co.                                                               | Debrecen Universitas Co.                                    |                                                   |
| <b>7. International<br/>Programmes</b>                                     | International Offices at each<br>School                                                                 |                         | Center for External Relations                                                                                                      |                                                             |                                                   |
| <b>8. Student Life and<br/>Activities</b>                                  |                                                                                                         |                         | <i>Pont Iroda</i> Service Centre<br>University Days<br>Dorm Week                                                                   | Debrecen Campus Co.<br>(DC Kht)<br>Debrecen Universitas Co. |                                                   |
| <b>9. Student Counselling</b>                                              |                                                                                                         |                         | Psychological Counselling Service                                                                                                  |                                                             |                                                   |
| <b>10. Career Advising</b>                                                 |                                                                                                         |                         | <i>Pont Iroda</i> Service Centre<br>Career Fair                                                                                    | Debrecen Campus Co.<br>(DC Kht)                             |                                                   |
| <b>11. Student Government</b>                                              | Student representatives of<br>each faculty                                                              |                         | Student Union                                                                                                                      |                                                             |                                                   |
| <b>12. Student Associations</b>                                            |                                                                                                         |                         | 11 Organisations and Associations;<br><a href="http://www.unideb.hu/index.php?lC=hu">http://www.unideb.hu/<br/>index.php?lC=hu</a> |                                                             |                                                   |
| <b>13. Alumni Association</b>                                              |                                                                                                         |                         |                                                                                                                                    |                                                             |                                                   |
| <b>14. Other</b>                                                           |                                                                                                         |                         | Quality Assurance Office<br>University Library                                                                                     |                                                             |                                                   |



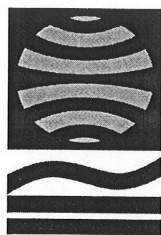
## **APPENDIX XVI**

### **Recommendations for Best Practices in Student Support Services**

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**Proposal submitted by the University of Debrecen for participation  
in the EUA Quality Culture Project  
(2002)**

Draft 5.11.02



## European University Association

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### Quality Culture Project Template for the Network Reports

The network reports are based on the institutional presentations, the SWOT analyses, the actions plans and the discussions that have taken place in each network. The network reports will be used as a basis for the project report, which will seek to **identify best practices and success factors** for developing and strengthening an internal quality culture in higher education institutions. The following questions are meant as a guide and should be applied to your experience in the project as well as to the thematic area of your network.

#### 1. Defining, introducing and strengthening internal quality

1.1 It was a deliberate decision not to select a definition of quality at the start of this project and to leave this choice open to the participating institutions. Was there an implicit or explicit adoption – either as a network, subgroups within the network or individually – of a definition of quality?

- Quality as fitness for purpose
- Quality as compliance (zero errors)
- Quality as customer satisfaction
- Quality as excellence
- Quality as value for money
- Quality as transformation (process of changing the customer)
- Quality as enhancement (process of changing the institution)
- Quality as control (punitive/rewarding process of quality assurance)
- Other definitions, please specify

1.2 Please comment and analyse the reasons that led the group or individual institutions to settle – or not – on a specific definition. The following factors are offered as suggestions to guide your analysis.

- The specific thematic area of your network: Did the theme influence the choices that were made?
- The type of institutions represented in your network in terms of:
  - Their degree of autonomy, e.g., to set strategic direction and human resources policies; manage the employment structure and the finances; decide on research and teaching activities

- The strength of their institutional corporate identity
  - Their institutional organisational cultures (e.g., centralised vs. decentralised; hierarchical vs. collegial)
  - The maturation of an internal quality culture within these institutions
  - Their responsiveness to internal and external stakeholders
  - Their national and international ambitions and positioning
- The national contexts, specifically:
    - The different cultures represented in your network
    - The national quality assurance context in which institutions have to operate and to which they are reacting
  - Other factors (please specify)

## 2. Identifying best practices

In looking synthetically at the action plans and taking into account the discussions that you have had, please identify the broad areas of agreement in terms of the following questions<sup>1</sup>. (All points need not be addressed.)

- 2.1 Did your network come to a view as to the best way to introduce an internal quality culture. Specifically, was there an agreement as to the need to define quality explicitly **for each institution** or did they decide that it was better to leave this issue alone? Please give your observations and comments, e.g., to what extent did the group feel that it was important to do so and in what manner?
- 2.2 Did your network come to a view on how best to operationalise an internal quality culture? Specifically, did the network discuss ways in which structures within the institution should be changed to reflect the new emphasis on internal quality (e.g., create or not an office in charge of quality), and the advantages/disadvantages of the proposed changes?
- 2.3 Do the action plans acknowledge the role of the **senior leadership** (rectoral team, deans, head of administration)? Specifically, do they address the extent to which and how the senior leadership:
  - Promotes internal quality principles and encourages staff involvement and responsibility
  - Promotes unity of purpose to combat the centrifugal forces of the institution
  - Integrates quality monitoring in its decision-making processes
- 2.4 **Strategy, policy and planning**  
To what extent and how do the action plans identify the importance of:
  - Involving staff at all levels in the development of institutional policies, priorities and strategy
  - Incorporating the needs of stakeholders in development plans
  - Prioritising short-, medium- and long-term goals, associating them with appropriate resources and identifying success indicators to track performance

<sup>1</sup> The following section is largely based on Colleen Liston (1999) *Managing Quality and Standards*, pp. 102–111, Open University Press, Buckingham, UK.

- Clarifying standards of operations and ensuring broad commitment to these

## 2.5 Information and analysis

To what extent do the action plans address issues related to institutional data analysis in terms of:

- Scope, reliability, timeliness and access
- Trend analysis
- International and national comparisons and benchmarking
- Dissemination and use of data analysis in planning
- Quality indices: Has your network discussed and agreed performance indices for your thematic area? If not, what were the reasons (e.g., qualitative measures are more appropriate for your theme)? If yes, what are they?

## 2.6 Staff

To what extent do the action plans address staff related issues in terms of the need to develop further, e.g.:

- Human resource policies for both the academic and administrative lines (e.g., recruitment, selection, induction, evaluation, staff development, promotion, exit procedures, sabbaticals, procedures for conflict resolution and grievances, etc.)
- Procedures to ensure clarity and responsibility for quality (e.g., job descriptions, clear reporting lines, accountability at all levels)
- A culture that encourages innovation and risk taking and mechanisms to empower staff to take initiatives and responsibility
- Internal communication channels to ensure a two-way communication between management and staff

## 2.7 Students and stakeholders

To what extent do the action plans address the need to anticipate the expectations of students and stakeholders and improve their satisfaction? e.g.:

- Are there mechanisms in place to scan the need of students and external stakeholders and to communicate them across the institution?
- Are there mechanisms in place to assess the extent to which the improvements that are introduced have improved operations and satisfaction?
- How are students and stakeholders involved in the internal evaluation of quality?

## 2.8 Process, product and service

To what extent do the action plans address the operationalisation of quality standards in the delivery of product and services? Specifically:

- How does the institution introduce and evaluate new techniques and processes?
- To what extent are the needs of relevant stakeholders taken into account when redesigning operations?
- To what extent are quality and standards clarified and communicated across the institution?
- To what extent are methods to ensure quality built in the operations and processes?
- To what extent is there a follow up to ensure continuous improvement and fine-tuning of services and processes?
- To what extent is the institution able to systematise processes and quality standards across all faculties and departments?

**2.9 Organisational decision making and feed-back loops**

To what extent do the action plans address:

- How the institution evaluate its performance and how these evaluations are taken into account in the next planning phase
- How the institution scan its internal and external environment for threats and opportunities and relate these to its performance (strengths and weaknesses), to identify strategic priorities
- The ways in which the institution can take full advantage of its institutional autonomy

**3. Process debriefing**

- 3.1 Please describe the success and difficulties you encountered in running this project.
- 3.2 If you departed from the Project Guidelines, please specify how. Would you recommend that these variations or complementary activities be included in the next cycle of the project?
- 3.3 If you followed strictly the Guidelines, what recommendations would you make to improve them?
- 3.4 The institutional representatives were asked to consult colleagues in their institutions during key points of this project. How widely have they been able to consult: e.g., have they discussed the institutional presentations, the SWOT analysis and the action plan with the institutional leadership, the deans, a sample of academic and non-academic staff, and students?
- 3.5 If not, what were the reasons and to what extent has this determined the quality of their output?
- 3.6 Overall, did you think that the project was useful to the participants and in what ways?

Please feel free to add any additional comment or observation that this template did not address and that you feel is important. Please send your report (12 - 15 pages) by 30 May 2003, to [andree.sursock@eua.be](mailto:andree.sursock@eua.be).

Thank you very much for your contribution to the success of this important project.

## Annex 1

EUA - Quality Culture Project  
 Network three: Student Support Services  
 List of participants to the meetings

|                                   |                                                              |         |                                                  |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|---------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Luciano Arcuri<br>(co-ordinator)  | University of Padova                                         | Italy   | luciano.arcuri@unipd.it                          |
| Agnès Badel                       | Université Claude Bernard Lyon 1                             | France  | Agnes.badel@univ-lyon1.fr                        |
| Alan Harrison<br>Don McQuillan    | National University of Ireland,<br>University College Dublin | Ireland | Alan.Harrison@ucd.ie<br>don.mcquillan@chiu.ie    |
| Jane Williams                     | Viborg-Seminarieret                                          | Denmark | jane.williams@viborgsem.dk                       |
| Joan Anton Carbonell<br>Mavi Dolz | Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona                            | Spain   | JoanAnton.Carbonell@uab.es<br>mavi.dolz@uab.es   |
| Thomas Kern                       | University of Applied Sciences<br>Brandenburg                | Germany | vp@fh-brandenburg.de                             |
| Trevor Joscelyne                  | London Metropolitan University                               | UK      | t.joscelyne@unl.ac.uk                            |
| Zoltan Abady - Nagy               | University of Debrecen                                       | Hungary | almasio@delfin.klte.hu<br>stanita@delfin.klte.hu |

## THE UNIVERSITY OF DEBRECEN

### The educational system in Hungary

The educational system in Hungary is divided into general and higher education. The institutions of general education are nursery schools (for 3-6-7 year-olds), primary schools (8 years of study for 6-14 year-olds), grammar schools (8 or 6 or 4 years of study for 10-14-18 year-olds) and vocational schools (3 years of study for 14-17 year-olds). Secondary schools with at least a 4-year educational program can get the right to conduct accredited vocational higher education as well.

Currently there operate 65 state-acknowledged institutions providing university- and/or college-level education (30 state-owned, 26 denominational, and 9 foundation institutions). The majority of the universities/colleges are multi-faculty establishments. As for their geographical position, a certain dominance of the capital can be seen; in the regional centres of the country mainly integrated universities can be found, and there are some other higher educational institutions scattered in the country.

### The University of Debrecen

#### *1. The history of the university*

The 90 years of the university's modern history date back to 1538, the foundation of the Reformed College in Debrecen. Due to its wide-ranging higher educational activities, the Royal Hungarian University in Debrecen was founded with 4 faculties in 1912. After 1949, the university split up into several independent institutions, at the same time the establishment of the Faculty of Sciences was approved, while legal education was discontinued. As a result of the reunification process of the 1980s, on 1 January, 2000 the University of Debrecen came about with the merger of four legal predecessor institutions, namely Kossuth University, the University of Medicine, the University of Agriculture, and Wargha College of Education in Hajdúböszörmény.

#### *2. The geographical position of the university*

The university is located in the regional centre of Northeast Hungary with 6 campuses in Debrecen, 1 in Hajdúböszörmény, and 1 in Nyíregyháza.

#### *3. The number of faculties, research institutes and laboratories*

From 1 September, 2002 the institution conducts educational and research activities in 6 university-, 3 college-level faculties, and in 5 institutes. The university covers the greatest number of disciplines among Hungary's higher educational institutions (including humanities, social studies, music, sciences, law, economics, agriculture, teacher training, medical and health sciences, and engineering). Top qualified teaching staff and researchers ensure competitive education for students (18 members of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences; 140 have DSc, and 827 PhD degrees).

Teacher training is facilitated by excellent teaching practice schools that belong to the institutional structure (two primary and a secondary teaching practice school, and a twelve-group practice nursery). In the field of agricultural sciences three research institutes and a

model farm make students' professional training and introduction to scientific research easier (Research Institute in Karcag, Research Institute in Nyíregyháza, Farm and Regional Research Institute in Debrecen). A high quality, both nationally and internationally acknowledged clinical institution system (with 2000 beds) provides the background for education in medicine and health sciences.

The Nuclear Research Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences takes part in PhD and undergraduate education as an affiliated institution of the University of Debrecen.

In the field of medicine and health sciences, natural sciences, and engineering state-of-the-art labs facilitate the given educational and research activities, where students can do practice and gain experience in research.

#### 4. Student number and its distribution

Our university is in the centre of interest, which the number of applicants to our institution also proves: there are 4.6 time more candidates than the university can educate. In the 2002-2003 academic year around 25.000 students study at almost 130 majors. In the same academic year, of the 349.000 students studying at the 65 state-acknowledged institutions of higher education in Hungary, 7.2 % conduct their studies at the University of Debrecen.

The university offers a wide range of educational programs:

university-level education, supplementary level education, specialized further education, accredited institutionalized vocational higher education, PhD education, and as for the forms there are regular, correspondence, evening, and distance courses.

The number of students has increased by about 7 % every year since integration. The number of applicants for the university-level correspondence courses, for supplementary education, and for specialized further education has increased significantly.

*The number of students at the University of Debrecen in the 2001-2002 academic year*

| Faculties and independent institutes | Full-time      |               |       | Correspondence |               |       | Evening (Self-financed) | Distance (Self-financed) | PhD       |                | Specialized further education (Self-financed) | Total |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|---------------|-------|----------------|---------------|-------|-------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|----------------|-----------------------------------------------|-------|
|                                      | State-financed | Self-financed | Total | State-financed | Self-financed | Total |                         |                          | Full-time | Correspondence |                                               |       |
| AVFK                                 | 823            | 96            | 919   | -              | 376           | 376   | -                       | -                        | 14        | 17             | 285                                           | 1611  |
| AOK                                  | 1004           | 516           | 1520  | -              | -             | -     | -                       | -                        | 88        | 68             | 19                                            | 1695  |
| BTK                                  | 2639           | 24            | 2663  | -              | 1365          | 1365  | -                       | 79                       | 103       | 121            | 354                                           | 4685  |
| DK                                   | 182            | 21            | 203   | -              | -             | -     | 6                       | -                        | -         | -              | -                                             | 209   |
| EFK                                  | 1132           | 9             | 1141  | 577            | 651           | 1228  | -                       | -                        | -         | -              | -                                             | 2369  |
| FOTI                                 | 138            | 33            | 171   | -              | -             | -     | -                       | -                        | -         | -              | -                                             | 171   |
| GYTI                                 | 192            | 11            | 203   | -              | -             | -     | -                       | -                        | 14        | 11             | -                                             | 228   |
| HPFK                                 | 626            | 24            | 650   | 1065           | 279           | 1344  | -                       | -                        | -         | -              | 430                                           | 2424  |



|       |       |      |              |      |      |             |     |    |     |     |      |       |
|-------|-------|------|--------------|------|------|-------------|-----|----|-----|-----|------|-------|
| JÁTI  | 708   | 17   | <u>725</u>   | -    | 605  | <u>605</u>  | -   | -  | -   | -   | -    | 1330  |
| KTK   | 706   | 13   | <u>719</u>   | -    | 156  | <u>156</u>  | -   | -  | 5   | 26  | 60   | 966   |
| MPK   | 936   | 162  | <u>1098</u>  | 135  | 350  | <u>485</u>  | -   | -  | -   | -   | 188  | 1771  |
| MTK   | 976   | 36   | <u>1012</u>  | -    | 68   | <u>68</u>   | -   | -  | 32  | 30  | 213  | 1355  |
| NI    | -     | -    | <u>-</u>     | -    | -    | <u>-</u>    | -   | -  | -   | -   | 57   | 57    |
| TTK   | 2884  | 255  | <u>3139</u>  | -    | 563  | <u>563</u>  | 205 | -  | 103 | 94  | 87   | 4191  |
| Total | 12946 | 1217 | <u>14163</u> | 1777 | 4413 | <u>6190</u> | 211 | 79 | 359 | 367 | 1693 | 23062 |

The number of state financed students (15,082) constitutes 65.4% of the total educational capacity. The proportion of self-financed students (7,980) is 34.6%, while the proportion of full-time students (14,522) is 63%. The Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Sciences have the highest number of students, followed by the two college faculties: the Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Health College.

#### 5. Finance, budget of the university, key figures of the 2001 internal economic budget

The university operated on a nearly 30 billion budget in the fiscal year 2001. Nearly 1/3 of the budget (10,686,710 HUF) came from state subsidization, 11% (3,328,173 HUF) was the university's own income, 48.6% (14,813,214 HUF) came from resources provided by OEP (Hungarian National Health Service) for the operation of the clinics, 1.6% (500,000 HUF) from the ministry of the agrarian sector, while 5.5% (1,686,710 HUF) was other external funds.

Research estimates constituted approximately 10% (3,048,310 HUF) of the total budget. To this we must add the total salary of researchers and at least 1/3 of the salary of other university staff as their sphere of activity includes research as well.

#### 6. Mission

The University of Debrecen is a determinant institution of Hungarian higher education, which

- endeavours to accomplish wide interdisciplinary training and research of the highest quality, as a result of which it has become an internationally known institution of training, scientific research and development in the fields of arts, social sciences, music, sciences, law, economics and business, agriculture, medicine and health and engineering;
- by striving to develop its effectiveness, flexibility and responsiveness, and endeavouring for dynamic development and the rationalization of management, is becoming an increasingly determinant intellectual centre, in close connection with the neighbouring territories of the bordering countries;
- wishes to become a regional economic centre by connecting the actors of business with the local and central government;

- wishes to increase student numbers by expanding post-secondary education, initiating new diploma programmes, restructuring degree programmes, heavily increasing the volume of postgraduate training, continued education and distance learning regarding the demand for lifelong learning.

By relying on the local conditions and extensive regional co-operations the university strives to meet the demands of the regional labour market as a research and intellectual centre. At the same time it builds extensive relations and co-operates with the region's higher education institutions, industrial and producing enterprises, the national and international actors, institutions and organisations of scientific life. The University of Debrecen maintains wide local, regional, national and international relations and endeavours to further extend them. Co-operation with the local government, the business sector and producing enterprises is increasing and, at the same time, training is becoming more appropriate to the demands of society. These co-operations and collaborations are certified by agreements (e.g. collaboration with the city, with the not integrated (clerical) higher education institutions of the city, the police headquarters, the Nuclear Research Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the higher education institutions of the North Great Plain region, international higher education institutions, etc.).

The university strives to make use of its extensive knowledge in these co-operations and collaborations and aims to influence and shape the changes of social and economic life, in order to promote their development.

The university endeavours to carry out its two basic tasks, education and research, at the highest level for the benefit of the students, the region and society. In the inseparable relationship of education and research the latest results of science can be directly transferred into training, which also influence the development of the given field of science, of economy and society. The university's research activity (which ranks the university second in the country) promotes the professional career of talented young scholars.

We can list the training priorities of the University of Debrecen only in principle because of the multidisciplinary nature of the institution. The University of Debrecen endeavours

- to examine the criteria and solution methods of the two-level training at the university, which is in compliance with the Bologna process, which affects a wide spectrum of training;
- to further trainings that are based on the co-operation of faculties and promote effective integration;
- to expand training capacity in accordance with the demands of the labour market and of society;
- to increase the range of training services of the Lifelong Learning Centre;
- to strengthen the training programme of the Institute of Law.

Research is the institution's highest priority. Within this the university focuses on: research and development concentrating on the eastern Hungarian region, in the fields of agriculture, economics, sociology, public health, environment protection and information technology,

with the various fields reinforcing one another; co-operation in regional research activity with the European and especially the neighbouring countries and higher educational institutions; the utilisation of technological transfer in applied research projects, especially in the fields of agricultural and clinical sciences, using joint strategies; life science programmes that are realised in the framework of multilateral co-operations, especially in the fields of molecular medicine and biotechnology.

Taken the multidisciplinary and multilevel educational system of the university, it is difficult to define preferred didactic approaches and the various forms of the organisation of learning activity. Lectures form an integral part of basic training, but seminars and practice can also be found in the proportion stipulated by the regulations, in groups of varying number. The project method is becoming more widely used, case studies are connected to certain stages and the number of trainings is on the increase. The university can be characterised by a creative atmosphere, and by the application of methods that promote healthy competitiveness, develop work morale, individual thinking, co-operation and communication skills, and promote practical application.

The university has built and is continuously developing its control system, and defines decision competence, taking into consideration the frames of the law and the institutional objectives. The two levels (university level and faculty level) of decision preparation and decision making are regulated by the Rules of Operation, in accordance with the Higher Education Act and other regulations.

This regulation shows clearly that the university widely ensures the professional autonomy of various faculties/independent institutes, research institutes, supports their operation and development and helps them enforce their individual characteristics with every possible means. The autonomy of faculties/independent institutions is granted within the frame of the law and operates under central control. Everything that is ordained by the prevailing regulations as well as every activity and decision that affects the development of the whole university and is of strategic important concerning the university's development, professional and scientific judgement both on the national and the international labour and knowledge market comes under central control.

The university management flexibly adapts to the priorities of the university. The spheres of authority are clearly defined. There is mutual, direct and regular communication between the university and faculty management levels. Feedback is regular and continuous. The levels, bodies and methods of decision preparation are transparent, the regular operation of bodies makes university decision making smooth.

Our international relations spread to several continents and their already wide scope is continuously increasing. These relations are a source of extra knowledge, help make us known and recognised internationally and are confirmed by 76 bilateral agreements. In the frame of the ERASMUS project we have 126 partners, and there are 554 co-operations on departmental or institute levels. The university builds and develops its international relations which arch over several continents so as to

- help the process of familiarisation with the international practice and development tendencies that are connected to the basic activities of teaching and research;
- support and motivate research collaborations;

- provide opportunity for student and staff mobility;
- ensure engagement in international processes that affect higher education;
- increase its international recognition;
- get familiar with the international higher education market through which it is able to assess the mutual opportunities of demand and supply.

The university creates the formal framework for the realization of the above objectives and defines the basic principles of networking, taking into consideration the traditions of the faculties.

#### Student support services

The University of Debrecen wishes to create a motivating, appealing and modern environment for its students that serves scientific training, career building, stable conditions of life and an enjoyable passing of free time at the same time. It creates the organisational framework and material conditions of student support services so that

- students be able to perform the best of their abilities;  
students may get the maximum help with their career goals at each stage of their training;
- it can ensure equal opportunity for students (talent development, mental health services, support for the handicapped/disabled);
- it can adapt flexibly to the reasonable and continuously changing needs of the students;
- it can continuously widen the scope of support services both in the fields of financial support, various services and allowances in kind.

To this end it develops infrastructure, and widens the scope of its relations both with its internal and its external partners on the local, regional, national and international levels too.

#### Quality and quality culture at the university

The university considers its basic interest thus its continuously stressed and emphasised task to continuously evaluate and improve the quality of teaching, research and artistic activities. Quality development based on the above objective complies with the institutional mission statement. The university finalized its quality development programme in spring 2002, it agreed on the regulations of the activity and created the organisational background of the operation. The development of the quality assurance system aims for unified regulation drawing on the previous extensive experience of the faculties. Our objective is to continuously build a quality assurance system that ensures not only quality considerations but also the best possible fulfillment of the university's professional objectives and effective operation, pays special attention to the fulfillment of the demands of both direct and indirect stakeholders, namely the students, employers, customers that order research, and national and international scientific communities.

X Taking into consideration the fact that the university does not have a unified quality assurance system, it implies that internal quality culture is not unified either, it is still being formed. Aspiration for quality is general but the attitude to system and quality development varies.

The University of Debrecen recommends the following best practice to EUA:

The economic and social transformations that took place in Hungary in recent years imposed a great burden on the community in general and on individuals in particular – including the higher education age group. The management of the University of Debrecen decided that the student population's mental condition as well as the cause of drug-prevention must be a priority. Therefore the university launched a Mental Health Programme in 2001. The services are free of charge and participation is anonymous.

The programme welcomes students, who

- have problems with conducting their life;
- feel lonely;
- have problems with their parents;
- have study problems;
- have conflicts with their peers;
- have problems with their partners;
- have problems with their sexual life;
- have problems with self-assessment;
- have lost any sense of motivation;
- have some addiction.

The components of the programme already in operation:

- "Way To Mental Health" publication (25.000 copies);
- "The Thread of Ariadne" Mental Health Consultation Service (available 8.00-16.00 every day);
- mental health assistance hotline during the weekend;
- 25-hour personality training programme;
- "Ment-a-levél" ("Ment-a[l]-letter") monthly information publication;
- discussions of relevant movies;
- website.

It reflects the efficiency of the programme that the number of participating students keeps increasing.

**STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**  
**SWOT ANALYSIS**

1. Advice and Guidance – 2. Material Support Services – 3. Academic Support Services – 4. Non-Material and Non-Academic Services  
*Note: Numbering follows that of the received guide*

## University of Debrecen

## Student Support Services

## EUA - Quality Culture Project SWOT Analysis

| Strengths                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                       |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Evidence                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Collecting evidence                                                                                                                   |
| 1.1-1.2. University Mental Health Programme to help students                                                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "Way To Mental Health" publication (25.000 copies);</li> <li>- "The Thread of Ariadne" Mental Health Consultation Service available 8.00-16.00 every day;</li> <li>- mental health assistance hotline during the weekend;</li> <li>- 25-hour personality training programme;</li> <li>- "Ment-a-level" monthly information publication;</li> <li>- discussions about relevant films;</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- number and division of students participating in the programme;</li> </ul>                   |
| 1.3. Services provided by the Student Advisory and Career Office                                                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- job fairs organized in the last week of March every year, two-day programme, largest job fair outside the capital, several thousand participants;</li> <li>- preparatory lectures before the job fairs, lectures given by representatives of career counselling firms about job seeking techniques;</li> <li>- weekend job seeking courses lasting for several days (communication, personality training, writing a CV, personality tests, mock interviews);</li> <li>- databases of job vacancies for primary and secondary school teachers, support for students taking part in teacher education;</li> <li>- "Career counselling" optional course in the teacher education programme;</li> <li>- occupational counselling exhibitions for secondary school students at the beginning of October, a two-day programme organized in co-operation with the County Employment Centre;</li> <li>- publications for freshmen and prospective students;</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- statistics concerning the number of students finding employment after graduation;</li> </ul> |
| 1.3. Student counselling, services provided by Márton Áron Specialized College for Hungarian students beyond the borders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- databases, job seeking and career counselling for Hungarian students living beyond the borders;</li> <li>- aid in seeking vacancies to help students to return to their country of residence;</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                       |

1. Advice and Guidance – 2. Material Support Services – 3. Academic Support Services – 4. Non-Material and Non-Academic Services

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Note: Numbering follows that of the received guide

## University of Debrecen

## Student Support Services

## EUA - Quality Culture Project SWOT Analysis

| Strengths                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Collecting evidence |  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|--|
| Evidence                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                     |  |
| 1.4. Talent Education Programme, Students' Scholarly and Scientific Study Circles, specialized colleges/programmes to help mentor and tutor services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conferences organized by the University of Debrecen Talent Education Programme every year;</li> <li>- personality training programmes;</li> <li>- Scholarly and Scientific Study Circle conferences;</li> <li>- Hatvani István Specialized College (Faculty of Arts, Institute of Law, Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, Faculty of Sciences);</li> <li>- Sántha Kálmán Specialized College (Faculty of Medicine);</li> <li>- Tormay Béla Specialized College (Faculty of Agroecconomics and Rural Development, Faculty of Agriculture);</li> <li>- training on a tutorial basis;</li> <li>- language courses free of charge;</li> <li>- specialized courses adapted to the needs of the students;</li> <li>- preparation for a scientific career;</li> <li>- reserved accommodation in the dormitory;</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                |                     |  |
| 1.5. Legal and Procedural Advice, International Student Support                                                                                      | <p>Legal and procedural advice for international students arriving at the University of Debrecen within the framework of bilateral agreements, ERASMUS, CEEPUS, ISEP mobility programmes and programmes organized by the Ministry of Education include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- advice and help in immigration affairs, concerning deadlines and documents to be handed in;</li> <li>- advice and help in administrative and education affairs: registration, contacting departments, etc.;</li> <li>- providing international students with a student tutor;</li> <li>- maintaining contact with the Office of Migration and Nationality.</li> </ul> <p>The university is obliged to report international students to the Office of Migration and Nationality 8 days after their registration at the relevant Office of Education. The same is necessary when they leave. We have data concerning the number of international students arriving at the University of Debrecen in the framework of the above-mentioned programmes.</p> |                     |  |

1. Advice and Guidance – 2. Material Support Services – 3. Academic Support Services – 4. Non-Material and Non-Academic Services

Note: Numbering follows that of the received guide



| Strengths                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
|                                                                | Evidence                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Collecting evidence |
| 2.1. Benefits covered by the Benefits and Allowances Handbook  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- student stipend (4,000-17,000 HUF/month);</li> <li>- scholastic scholarships (provided by the Hungarian Republic, priority scholarship, professional scholarships);</li> <li>- recurrent and one-time financial social benefit (3,000-8,000 HUF/month);</li> <li>- "Bursa Hungarica" Scholarship for Higher Education financed by the national and local governments (2,000-11,000 HUF/month)</li> <li>- scholarship provided by the "Opportunity for Learning Public Fund" (8,500-18,000 HUF/month)</li> <li>- financial aid to buy textbooks and lecture notes (max. 3000 Ft/semester)</li> <li>- financial aid to buy school equipment provided for first year students;</li> <li>- financial aid provided during internship;</li> <li>- residence benefit (3,000-5,000 HUF/month)</li> </ul> |                     |
| 2.1. Introduction of a new type of financial aid: student loan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- new type of financial aid with a higher amount of support (10,000-25,000 HUF/month);</li> <li>- individual borrowing through post office;</li> <li>- the university provides information-flow, and advice about advantages and disadvantages;</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                     |
| 2.2. A wide scale of student health services                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- general medical services:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- basic services are provided for students;</li> <li>- surgeries located on almost all the campuses (except for the Kassai Street campus);</li> <li>- inoculation provided;</li> <li>- the medical hospitals and clinics are close by;</li> </ul> </li> <li>- dental care:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- dental care within easy reach;</li> <li>- most of the dental surgeries on the campuses function as private practices;</li> <li>- consultation by specialists;</li> <li>- run by the university clinics;</li> </ul> </li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                  |                     |

1. Advice and Guidance – 2. Material Support Services – 3. Academic Support Services – 4. Non-Material and Non-Academic Services

Note: Numbering follows that of the received guide

## University of Debrecen

## Student Support Services

## EUA - Quality Culture Project SWOT Analysis

| Strengths                                                                                |  | Evidence                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |  | Collecting Evidence |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|---------------------|
| 2.3. University Code about the provision for the disabled                                |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- new rules about the equal rights of disabled students;</li> <li>- the infrastructure specially designed for the disabled is widely available (ramps, special lavatories, elevator doors, etc.);</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |  |                     |
| 2.4. Accommodation, dormitories                                                          |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- common system of admittance ensures equal rights;</li> <li>- there are 12 dormitory units at the service of students with 3,577 places, where 58% of the students can be accommodated, which is 15% more than the national average;</li> <li>- plans for the construction of a new student hostel with the help of private capital;</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                      |  |                     |
| 2.5. Non-traditional student support: alumni associations                                |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the Centre for International Relations and University Advancement oversees their operation               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the Alumni Association of the University of Debrecen to be established soon;</li> <li>- alumni associations of the predecessor institutions: Lajos Kossuth University Alumni Association, University Medical School of Debrecen Alumni Association, Debrecen University of Agriculture Alumni Association;</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |  |                     |
| 2.5. Non-traditional student support: services for students bringing up a child/children |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "matrimonial rooms" available in the dormitories for couples and partners bringing up a child/children;</li> <li>- one-time social support when a student gets married or has a child (20,000 HUF);</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |  |                     |

1. Advice and Guidance – 2. Material Support Services – 3. Academic Support Services – 4. Non-Material and Non-Academic Services

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Note: Numbering follows that of the received guide

| Strengths                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Collecting evidence |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 3.1. International student support in the framework of the ERASMUS programme | <p><b>Evidence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The ECTS compatible and cumulative credit system facilitates the evaluation and integration of studies carried out abroad within the framework of the ERASMUS programme;</li> <li>- The ECTS catalogues of the faculties are regularly published on the ERASMUS web page of the university, and we are preparing the ECTS database.</li> <li>- Students can apply for participation in the ERASMUS programme after completing their second year studies. The applications are judged by the ERASMUS coordinators at each department/institute as they have the necessary professional competence. Students can take part in a training of 3-12 months at a West European institution and their studies carried out at the partner institution are recognized at home.</li> <li>- During their ERASMUS studies students are registered at both universities, they do not have to pay tuition fees and they are entitled to all student rights both at the partner and at the home institution.</li> <li>- Participation in the ERASMUS programme offers a two-fold advantage for the student: on the one hand, it is an excellent opportunity to practice a foreign language, on the other hand, the material acquired and tested in the foreign language deepens the students' professional competence, increases their ability to make contacts with foreigners and their multicultural sensitivity.</li> </ul> |                     |

1. Advice and Guidance – 2. Material Support Services – 3. Academic Support Services – 4. Non-Material and Non-Academic Services

*Note: Numbering follows that of the received guide*

| University of Debrecen                                        |  | Student Support Services                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |  | EUA - Quality Culture Project SWOT Analysis |  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------------|--|
| Strengths                                                     |  | Evidence                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |  | Collecting evidence                         |  |
| 3.1. Guidance for students taking part in mobility programmes |  | <p>We offer the following help for students coming to the University of Debrecen within the framework of bilateral agreements and taking part in mobility programmes organized by the Ministry of Education and others like ERASMUS, CEEPUS, ISEP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- for incoming students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- letter of admission necessary for visa application;</li> <li>- advice and guidance in immigration affairs, concerning deadlines and documents to be handed in;</li> <li>- advice and help in administrative and education affairs: registration, contacting departments, etc.;</li> <li>- providing international students with a student tutor, who accompanies them to the Office of Migration and Nationality, the relevant Educational Office, the library, the Informatics and Computer Centre, etc. and provides help with registration. The tutor also helps settling down and orientation both at the university as well as in town (e.g., sightseeing, buying a mass transit season ticket, etc.);</li> </ul> </li> <li>- for outgoing students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- information about the conditions of travelling abroad (e.g., visa requirements);</li> <li>- administrative help (e.g., sending fax, maintaining contacts with the international partner in the case of bilateral agreements, etc.)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |  |                                             |  |

1. Advice and Guidance – 2. Material Support Services – 3. Academic Support Services – 4. Non-Material and Non-Academic Services

Note: Numbering follows that of the received guide

## Student Support Services

| Strengths                                                                                           | Evidence                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Collecting evidence |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 3.2. Electronic access for academic purposes                                                        | <p>- The introduction of the "NEPTUN 2000 Unified Higher Education System" at all faculties from the academic year 2002/03 to carry out administrative tasks. The users of the system are assistants at the Educational Offices and at the various departments and institutes, other workers carrying out administrative tasks, and students and faculty, who can access information stored in the system to varying extent. The system offers the following opportunities for students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- they can check their personal data and information concerning their studies;</li> <li>- <i>they can receive messages from the administrators at the Educational Offices within the system;</i></li> <li>- they can register for courses, examinations;</li> <li>- they can check their grades;</li> <li>- they can monitor their transferred stipend.</li> </ul> <p>The system makes administrative tasks, which have become more demanding with the growing number of students, faster and more effective ways of keeping the students informed.</p>   |                     |
| 3.2. Information and documents consultable through the web, electronic access for academic purposes | <p>-Electronic documents and lecture notes, which can be downloaded from the homepage of the various faculties, are becoming more and more common besides the traditional printed materials. These educational materials are accessible from anywhere (e.g., from half of the dormitories), which is a cost-effective method.</p> <p>-"Virtual Specialized Training": realized within the framework of a project by "Apertus Public Fund". The aim of the Internet-based distance-learning programme is to further educate ancillary workers. It is an easily accessible, complex educational service for specialists wishing to improve professionally. The Faculty of Health College of the University of Debrecen has joined this interactive distance-learning programme. The web-based health manager distance training is being launched on an experimental basis. The advantages of distance learning are the following: individual time management, no distance in space and time, customized feedback from the tutor and the students of the virtual school, cost effectiveness.</p> |                     |

## University of Debrecen

## EUA - Quality Culture Project SWOT Analysis

## Student Support Services

| Strengths                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Evidence                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Collecting evidence                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 3.3. Libraries, databases and electronic resources: full Hungarian document holdings since 1952. Significant international periodical and book collection. Numerous electronic periodicals and electronic database. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 6.1-million holdings;</li> <li>- 2,296 current international periodical titles;</li> <li>- more than 3,400 electronic periodicals;</li> <li>- 60 important databases;</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | A list of depositary copies of all documents published in Hungary. Co-operation with the Hungarian Scientific Research Fund. Member of Electronic Information Supply and National Document Supply System. |
| 3.5. The Linguistic Centre promotes the transfer of language knowledge                                                                                                                                              | <p>Qualification requirements stipulate the number and level of language exams necessary for graduation in each major.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- facultative languages: English, German, French, Italian, Spanish, Russian, Esperanto, Latin, and Hungarian for international students;</li> <li>- technical language teaching and technical translator training</li> <li>- promote the transfer of language knowledge;</li> <li>- international students taking part in medical training learn general Hungarian as well as technical language in Hungarian (407 students);</li> </ul> | Questionnaires concerning education. Reimbursement claims of students who have passed the exam.                                                                                                           |

1. Advice and Guidance – 2. Material Support Services – 3. Academic Support Services – 4. Non-Material and Non-Academic Services

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Note: Numbering follows that of the received guide

| Strengths                                                                      | Evidence                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Collecting evidence |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| <p>3.6. Providing information about the university to prospective students</p> | <p>- "Open Days" organized in each faculty/independent institute every year, where prospective students can get insight into the respective majors and training opportunities.</p> <p>- Admissions prospectus of the University of Debrecen. This free publication is designed for secondary schools, and is published in 8000 copies every year. It gives information about majors, admission scores, and admission rates. It is distributed at national and regional education exhibitions, student offices, on "Open Days", and at other student programmes.</p> <p>- The faculties/independent institutes provide information about application and admission requirements, admission scores and entrance examination subjects on their website. A contact address and an E-mail address make it possible for prospective students to get answers to their questions.</p> <p>- Those taking an entrance examination can get extensive information about the admission procedure (procedure, majors, opportunities) at the Education Offices either personally or over the phone.</p> <p>- The publication (<i>What is Available in Hungarian Higher Education</i>) of the National Higher Education Admission Bureau offers extensive information about the higher education institutions.</p> <p>- <i>University of Debrecen</i> publication in Hungarian and in English. Contents: the introduction of the faculties and units of the university, statistics, the activities of the University of Debrecen Student Union, the map of the university campuses. This free publication is available at national and regional higher education exhibitions and fairs and at university programmes.</p> <p>- Participation in national and regional higher education exhibitions and fairs in co-operation with the Student Guidance and Career Office. At the higher education exhibitions the faculty and the representatives of the Education Offices offer extensive information and personal advice to students taking an entrance examination and to anyone (parents, teachers) interested in career orientation, admission procedures, and entrance examinations.</p> |                     |

1. Advice and Guidance – 2. Material Support Services – 3. Academic Support Services – 4. Non-Material and Non-Academic Services

Note: Numbering follows that of the received guide

| University of Debrecen             |  | Student Support Services                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |  | EUA - Quality Culture Project SWOT Analysis |  |
|------------------------------------|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------------|--|
| Strengths                          |  | Evidence                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |  | Collecting evidence                         |  |
| 3.6. Informing first year students |  | <p>- Upon registration, students are informed via written materials about their rights and obligations, the conditions for obtaining a diploma, the academic calendar and the educational requirements for the first semester.</p> <p>- In order to inform students, the university and faculty rules and regulations, educational and exam regulations, and other relevant rules together with the course catalogues, the educational objective of different majors, and requirements are all made accessible in deans' offices, student unions, institutional libraries, and on university/faculty websites.</p> <p>- At the beginning of the academic year first year students are given a credit-based institutional information package compiled by the faculties.</p> <p>The package contains information about the history and the organizational structure of the faculty; educational programs, curriculum, course catalogues; educational and exam rules, rules of subsidy and allowance, rules of students' scientific study circle; scholarships; foundations; and the university calendar.</p> <p>- The University of Debrecen Student Calendar with a Student Pocket Guide is free. It is published every academic year in 15,000 copies for the students of the University of Debrecen and its affiliated institutions. It contains information, for example on the academic calendar; basic university terminology; libraries, museums, cinemas, theatres, sports facilities, bus and train timetables; maps; and student groups working on their own initiative.</p> <p>- Special lectures are given for first year students at the beginning of the educational term, where faculty of the relevant majors and department(s) give information on the commencement of studies and on the required and optional courses. During the first meeting Students are informed about the requirements for each major.</p> |  |                                             |  |

1. Advice and Guidance – 2. Material Support Services – 3. Academic Support Services – 4. Non-Material and Non-Academic Services

*Note: Numbering follows that of the received guide*



## University of Debrecen

## Student Support Services

## EUA - Quality Culture Project SWOT Analysis

| Strengths                                                                   |  | Evidence                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Collecting evidence |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 3.6. Helping students to establish contacts with other students and faculty |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-freshmen's camps, freshmen's weeks: prior to the beginning of the academic year the student unions of all faculties organize freshmen's camps for first year students, which is a good opportunity for them to meet their prospective peers, senior students and faculty.</li><li>-faculty's office hours;</li><li>-activities of student unions at faculties: promoting students' interests, organizing programs, service;</li><li>-traditional programs organized by the university, faculties, or departments: University of Debrecen Days, balls, weeks dedicated to different majors, student days, student traditions;</li><li>-cultural organizations, programs: concert series, choirs, drama group, sports programs, groups working on their own initiative;</li><li>-electronic message board, electronic mailing system;</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                     |
| 3.6. Consultation in connection with majors and educational programs        |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-with the introduction of the credit system faculties and independent institutions have created the conditions for a smooth operation (the introduction of the NEPTUN system, credit-based educational and exam rules, credit-based brochures, credit transfer subcommittees), and the student advising system.</li><li>-there are credit-transfer subcommittees at every faculty/independent institute, which will assess the transferability of credits. At the beginning of the academic year students are given a credit-based institutional information package compiled by the faculties.</li><li>-the package describes the educational programs, curricula, and rules for collecting credits and transferring them from one educational level to another. It also contains the rules of preliminary studies, that is, prerequisites for courses. The credit-based requirements for the majors are accessible on faculty websites.</li><li>-forums for students about the credit system, Student Advising Offices at faculties, persons in charge of the credit system, credit counsellors.</li></ul> |                     |

1. Advice and Guidance – 2. Material Support Services – 3. Academic Support Services – 4. Non-Material and Non-Academic Services

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## Student Support Services

## EUA - Quality Culture Project SWOT Analysis

| Strengths                                                             |  | Evidence                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |  | Collecting evidence |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|--|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|---------------------|
| 3.7. Preparatory programs at the University                           |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-self-financed preparatory courses for the entrance exam, preparatory year, intensive preparatory course, remedial preparatory course (at the Faculty of Medicine, Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Health College, Institute of Law, College Faculty of Engineering, Faculty of Science).</li><li>-during preparatory courses for the entrance exam students (former high-school graduates and those graduating) attend seminars and lectures, write mid-term papers, and take mid-term and end-term written and oral exams. Participants are provided with auxiliary material.</li><li>-the Márton Áron College is comprised of Hungarian students living beyond the frontier, who represent a special group of students.</li><li>-the primary aim of the College is not elite education, but to help students solve their individual problems. A separate building has been provided for the College, which is an ideal solution for launching specialized training. Since the College provides complex services for the students (accommodation, specialized college training, student/career office), the university administration is relieved of a considerable number of tasks.</li><li>-the College's student office keeps a record of the college-member students, keeps them informed about the latest news related to their homeland, including mediating job and apprenticeship opportunities, and organizes community and entertainment programs for them.</li><li>-a well-developed infrastructure is ensured for Hungarian students living beyond the frontier.</li></ul> |  |                     |
| 3.8. Tutor Training                                                   |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-the teaching assistant system operates for full-time students in basic education;</li><li>-senior students' participation in education on a contractual basis.</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |  |                     |
| 3.9. Student record: the role of educational offices at the faculties |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-student orientation (in person, through bulletin boards, telephone and internet) and participation in the compilation of student guides. Up-to-date and accurate information.</li><li>-student administration.</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |  |                     |

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| University of Debrecen             |  | Student Support Services                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |  | EUA - Quality Culture Project SWOT Analysis |  |
|------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------------|--|
| Strengths                          |  | Evidence                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |  | Collecting evidence                         |  |
| 3.9. Electronic educational record |  | <p>-the NEPTUN 2000 Unified Higher Education System meets today's high standards in administering multiple student affairs. Although it is a unified record system, faculty-related tasks can also be integrated into it, which enables specific administrative problems of the integrated institution to be processed. Students can track educational and financial matters and consult the educational office in person only when the transaction cannot be done electronically. By utilizing technical possibilities, the system can also keep students better informed (through the system students can receive messages from the educational office).</p>                                                                                                                 |  |                                             |  |
| 3.10. Ensuring lifelong learning   |  | <p>-the University's Lifelong Learning Center has been operating since January 2001. The Center is to enhance lifelong learning and teaching according to the labor market standards for those living in the Northern Plain and the border regions.</p> <p>- activity: launching, organizing and accrediting adult education programs; conducting research; coordinating adult education activities on a national and international basis; surveys; making efficiency surveys; managing projects on an institutional basis (e.g., "ESZA-type experimental project to support the transfer from education to the world of work PHARE HU008-02". Realizing the educational – information technology sample project "Lifelong Learning for All" in the Northern Plain region.</p> |  |                                             |  |

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## University of Debrecen

## Student Support Services

## EUA - Quality Culture Project SWOT Analysis

| Strengths                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Collecting evidence |  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|--|
| Evidence                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                     |  |
| 4.1. A wide range of sports facilities are provided for the students | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-compulsory sports education for 4 semesters;</li> <li>-university football, basketball and fencing championships;</li> <li>-national sports programs organized by the Student Union;</li> <li>-part of the student normative funding is allocated as sports grants for students with outstanding results in sports (to be announced for the first time, the monthly amount will be between 12,000-17,000 HUF); university sports unions (such as DEAC);</li> <li>-university share in the Basketball Co. based on a contract between the university and the city;</li> <li>-gym, solarium and sauna in several dormitories for free or for a reduced price.</li> </ul> |                     |  |
| 4.2. Support is provided for religious and ethnic groups             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-university chaplains operate on a contractual basis with the Roman Catholic and the Protestant churches;</li> <li>-return of the university church to the Protestant church;</li> <li>-church-affiliated students organizations and groups;</li> <li>-foreign medical students in the self-financed education program maintain several programs and have their own Student Union.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                     |  |

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## EUA - Quality Culture Project SWOT Analysis

## Student Support Services

| Strengths                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Collecting evidence |  |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|--|
| Evidence                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                     |  |
| 4.3. The university promotes student cultural activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-university clubs on each campus:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-“Lovarda” (the largest student center in the country)</li> <li>-“Kazánház” (Faculty of Agriculture), “Klinika” Cinema (Faculty of Medicine);</li> </ul> </li> <li>-university cinemas (“Ködös Utak” Film Club, Cinema at the Faculty of Agriculture, “Klinika” Cinema);</li> <li>-the establishment of a University Theatre in Debrecen by integrating drama groups that formerly operated individually and by gaining financial support from the university (Student Union);</li> <li>-“École des Bouffons” French drama group</li> <li>- International Festival of Student Drama Productions in English</li> <li>-“Kalipszis Egyetemi Színpad”</li> <li>- „Zenetheátrum” (musicals)</li> <li>- „Színházi Konzervatórium”;</li> <li>-cultural offices (Cultural Office, Public Education Center at the Medical and Health Science Center);</li> <li>-Music Conservatory of Debrecen;</li> <li>-Cultural Committee working on the cultural policy of the university;</li> <li>-cultural student organizations and other groups on their own initiative with the support of the Student Union;</li> <li>-the establishment of “Debreceni Campus Kht”:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- integrating student services and clubs</li> <li>-organizing programs (freshmen’s dances, freshmen’s camps)</li> <li>- the proprietary distribution between the university and the student organizations is 50 %, which is nationally a unique phenomenon.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |                     |  |

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## Student Support Services

## EUA - Quality Culture Project SWOT Analysis

| Strengths                                  | Evidence                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Collecting evidence |
|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 4.3. Wide range of cultural programs       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-classical and pop music concerts, concert series;</li> <li>-cinema films (shows two-three months after the national premiere);</li> <li>-theatrical performances:</li> <li>-the university drama groups have a high reputation nationwide, they are award-winners of theatrical festivals;</li> <li>-fine arts exhibitions:</li> <li>-in the ceremonial hall of the university's main building, in the Theoretical Building gallery of the Medical and Health Science Center, in the gallery of the College Faculty of Engineering and in the "Parafa" Gallery of the Hajdúszörményi College Faculty of Education;</li> <li>-university programs for students:</li> <li>-freshmen dances, special weeks, days and nights dedicated to majors, dormitory weeks.</li> </ul> |                     |
| 4.3. University media to inform students   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-university newspaper ("Egyetemi Élet", published bi-weekly in 6,000 copies, free);</li> <li>-university broadcasting in Radio "Friss" (90 MHz) in University Square, daily between 4-6 pm;</li> <li>-university broadcasting on the city TV Channel ("HAHA TV") between 1998-2000;</li> <li>-amateur broadcasting studios in some student hostels (in the Medical and Health Science Center and in "Nagyerdő" Dormitory).</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                     |
| 4.5. Security within the campus is ensured | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-security service operates as a unified system on the campus;</li> <li>-electronically operated entry system for automobiles;</li> <li>-24-hour foot patrol service;</li> <li>-security at public events;</li> <li>-continuous porter duty in the educational buildings and dormitories;</li> <li>-security camera system (e.g. Hajdúszörményi College Faculty of Education);</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                     |

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## University of Debrecen

## Student Support Services

## EUA - Quality Culture Project SWOT Analysis

| Weaknesses                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Evidence                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Collecting evidence                                                                                                                              |
| 2.1. Due to the diversity of student allowances weaknesses emerge                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- dissipation of allowance forms;</li> <li>- small amount due to the low state normative funding for students;</li> <li>- relative slowness of decision-making at local and national levels;</li> <li>- lack of information flow between national and local administration;</li> <li>- increasing administrative duties at a university level;</li> <li>- tardiness of money transfer;</li> <li>- around half of the necessary places are available;</li> <li>- the condition of the majority of dormitory buildings is poor;</li> <li>- significant differences in comfort level not yet reflected in prices;</li> <li>- artificially suppressed fees;</li> <li>- organizational disunity;</li> </ul> | From the Student Union and its organizations coordinating the distribution of allowances, Student Welfare Committees, and university committees. |
| 2.4. Condition and capacity of dormitories and student hostels                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 460 places available for 25,000 students;</li> <li>- only 10% of the stock is on open-shelves;</li> <li>- there are 60 public computer workstations in the library system;</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | According to international standard, 1 reading place should be available per 6 regular students.                                                 |
| 3.3. Insufficient open-shelf rooms, few reading places few computer workstations.     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- interest in technical translation has decreased with the introduction of charges;</li> <li>- there are many students who pass language exams only during the last year of their studies or later, after several attempts.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Statistical data                                                                                                                                 |
| 3.5. Not every language course is free of charge                                      | Most of the educational offices cannot ensure their availability to students between 8 am to 4 pm every day, so they had to introduce office hours. This practice emerged as a result of the increasing administrative duties educational officers face.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                  |
| 3.9. The educational offices at the faculties are overburdened, their capacity is low | Students may have difficulties in arranging official matters during periods when administrative tasks must deal with a large number of students (e.g., during registration, handing in registration books).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                  |

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## Student Support Services

## EUA - Quality Culture Project SWOT Analysis

| Weaknesses                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Evidence                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Collecting evidence |
| 4.1. Compared to student numbers, available sports grounds are few | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- low quality of sports infrastructure, there is no university sports hall or university swimming pool;</li> <li>- there is no incentive for a healthy student lifestyle;</li> <li>- the excessive duties concerning studies have a strong health-destroying effect;</li> <li>- lack of possibilities for regeneration and recreation at the university;</li> </ul> |                     |
| 4.3. The disunity of cultural organizations                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- there is no university-level cultural coordination centre, Campus Kht is the first effort in this field;</li> <li>- cultural organizations' conflicting interests, 'cross organization' of programs;</li> <li>- disunity of financing between university units;</li> <li>- low financial backing for cultural programs</li> </ul>                                 |                     |

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## Student Support Services

| Opportunities                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                           | Internal-external factors that may help in improvement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Evidence                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 2.3. Awareness and compilation of projects for disabled people                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- lookout for and compilation of projects;</li> <li>- counselling;</li> <li>- extension of tutorial service for the assistance of disabled students;</li> <li>- Committee of Disabled Students' Affairs, faculty committees;</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 2.5. The implementation of a career-tracking system with the help of alumni organizations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- internal: intensive cooperation with the NEPTUN record system, educational offices, departments, institutes, for the purposes of database creation. Involvement of students during their university years. It is vital that the university leadership should support the activities of the Alumni Association, and recognize its importance. Providing financial means for alumni events, and the operation of the office.</li> <li>- external: mobilization of graduate students. Establishing good connections with local companies, the local media. With their help graduate students can be contacted.</li> </ul> | Despite the fact that three predecessor institutions have alumni associations and the Alumni Association of the unified university is being formed, the potential is almost completely unexploited. Of the three existing alumni associations, only one is active (Newsletter four times a year, trips, meetings, professional lectures). The most important condition, the database of students who have graduated, is still deficient. |

## Student Support Services

| Opportunities                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Evidence                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |  |
|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| Internal-external factors that may help in improvement |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |  |
| 3.1. ERASMUS supplementary grants                      | <p>- Internal:</p> <p>Students should be provided with more detailed information on project possibilities. To achieve this goal, it is necessary that faculties and the ERASMUS Office should establish tighter bonds of cooperation.</p> <p>- External:</p> <p>Involvement of students who were on ERASMUS exchange in the ALUMNI for Europe movement, which provides a community for students who were scholarship holders in higher education institutions of the EU, and ensures access to information on new projects and job opportunities.</p> <p>As the ERASMUS grant is a supplementary one, it only contributes to the extra expenses of staying abroad, which means an amount of 200 – 500 EUR per month according to EU standards; this amount is 200 EUR at our university in the 2002/2003 academic year due to the huge number of applicants. Therefore, it is necessary to involve external sources, and demand the aid of companies, institutes, and foundations for student exchanges.</p> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |  |
|                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <p>The present information structure starts out from the central ERASMUS Office and reaches faculty ERASMUS coordinators, whose duties include the dissemination of information. However, this often falls through.</p> <p>It is to be taken as an opportunity because the ERASMUS support can be received only once, so students do not enquire about further possibilities after their ERASMUS studies are over. An important task is to bring the existence of the ALUMNI for Europe organization to students' attention and also the fact that it can be of great assistance in their career building.</p> <p>It is to be taken as an opportunity because we can gain financial support from companies if we make their managers realize that creating a resource of experts is in their own best interest as well.</p> |  |

|                          |                                             |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| University of Debrecen   | EUA - Quality Culture Project SWOT Analysis |
| Student Support Services |                                             |

| Opportunities                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Opportunities                                                                                                             | Internal-external factors that may help in improvement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Evidence                                                                                                         |
| 3.2. Provision of information and documents accessible on the world wide web                                              | The NEPTUN system makes possible accessible course notes from institute maintained lists, and department publications, educational auxiliary material can be displayed.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Open-shelf placement of the social sciences stock, winning proposals in information technology and other fields. |
| 3.2. Ensuring electronic access for study purposes                                                                        | Faculty websites offer an increasing range of lecture notes and educational material in an electronic format.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                  |
| 3.5. Increasing the number of language classes free of charge, as well as offering credits for further language learning. | With the creation of further language teacher posts, the number of classes could increase.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Statistics.                                                                                                      |
| 3.6. Counselling about majors and educational programs                                                                    | Coordination and collaboration with the ministry has begun.<br>The settling of regulations and institutional conditions for the launch of the credit system has already been done. Students are becoming familiar with the credit system, and so far counselling opportunities provided for them have proved sufficient. With the increase in the number of students in credit-based education, greater demand is expected concerning educational counselling, more students will contact counselling forums. |                                                                                                                  |
| 3.8. Improvement of tutors' training                                                                                      | Professors' counsel for instructors and doctoral candidates.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                  |
| Strengthening and systematic organization of external relations with special emphasis on university advancement           | - the relation of the university and the city;<br>- existing relations with local organizations, banks, industrial companies;<br>- fundraising;                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                  |

1. Advice and Guidance – 2. Material Support Services – 3. Academic Support Services – 4. Non-Material and Non-Academic Services

*Note: Numbering follows that of the received guide*

## University of Debrecen

## Student Support Services

## EUA - Quality Culture Project SWOT Analysis

| Threats                                                                                                                             |  | Internal-external factors                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Threats                                                                                                                             |  | Evidence                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 2.1. Use and payoff of student loans                                                                                                |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- students do not use loans to finance their studies;</li> <li>- difficulties in payoff are not perceivable yet;</li> <li>- the financing is not settled at a national level;</li> </ul> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 3.5. Libraries, databases: decreasing budgetary funds, insufficient storage capacity, outdated computer network and equipment park. |  | Same normative funding, increasing prices of publishing (domestic inflation).                                                                                                                                                   | The university network was built in 1994. The annual 18,000 increase in volumes cannot be stored.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 3.11. The university does not have a unified operating system of quality assurance for its complete educational process.            |  | However, some elements of quality control do operate, e.g., student report, MAB (Hungarian Accreditation Committee) annual report, annual institutional report.                                                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Law on Higher Education;</li> <li>- Recommendation of the Ministry of Education;</li> <li>- Achievement of nearby universities in their setting up of a quality assurance system;</li> <li>- Competition among institutions of higher education;</li> <li>- The emergence of market competition in higher education;</li> </ul> |
| 3.12. Changes in the admission system                                                                                               |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- draft of the Ministry of Education;</li> <li>- the present trend of admission scores, admission of less talented students to certain majors;</li> </ul>                                | The existence of certain majors is in danger.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

1. Advice and Guidance – 2. Material Support Services – 3. Academic Support Services – 4. Non-Material and Non-Academic Services

Note: Numbering follows that of the received guide

## Student Support Services

| Objectives                                                                                                                     | Obstacles                                                                      | Steps to overcome obstacles                                                                                           | Means (financial and human)                                                                                                                                       | Measuring results                                                         |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. The establishment of management commitment<br>Improved student services involved in the Mission statement of the University | - Different priorities as to the evaluation of student services                | - Possible incentives to promote initiatives aimed at linking up aspects of the teaching activities with the services | - The establishment of structures necessary to develop<br><br>- Provision of time and financial resources necessary for the operation of structures and trainings | - Follow-up interviews to measure management participation and commitment |
| 2. The definition of priorities as to program development                                                                      | - Conflicts of views as to priorities and areas not considered to be important | - Promote the value of work in institutions                                                                           | - Provision of time and financial resources                                                                                                                       | - Improvement in services                                                 |
| 3. Gathering information concerned with student services ending up with clear definitions and widespread circulation           | - Lack of agreement as to handling information on student services.            | - The elaboration and communication of a clear document on student services                                           | - Provision of time and financial resources for the staff and the provided documents.                                                                             | - Measuring student satisfaction with services                            |

1. Advice and Guidance – 2. Material Support Services – 3. Academic Support Services – 4. Non-Material and Non-Academic Services

*Note: Numbering follows that of the received guide*

Action Plan: University of Debrezen

EUA - Quality Culture Project

Student Support Services

| Objectives                                                                                                                                                                                                | Obstacles                                                                                                                                           | Steps to overcome obstacles                                                                                                                            | Means (financial and human)                                                                                                                                                | Measuring results                                                                                                       |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4. Student involvement in decision-making activities, addressing of student needs in a variety of activities                                                                                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of integrated activities on faculty levels</li> <li>- Lack of clear communication practice</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The involvement of student representatives: presenting offered services at meeting and discussions</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Time to be provided for staff, sites to be designated for events</li> </ul>                                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Degree of participation in events</li> <li>- Interviews and surveys</li> </ul> |
| 5. Transparency of structures, the elaboration of integrated approach                                                                                                                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Differences between institution/department procedures.</li> </ul>                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promote the value of transparency and integration, implement supporting structures</li> </ul>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Good collaboration within the institution</li> </ul>                                                                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Awareness of practice both with students and staff</li> </ul>                  |
| 6. Improve management/customer relations, establish standards of services in dormitories, improve sporting facilities, increase seating capacities in libraries, improve language learning possibilities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Difficulties in establishing customer satisfaction policy</li> <li>- Insufficient resources</li> </ul>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promote customer satisfaction services</li> <li>- Promote applications</li> </ul>                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Providing time and allocating financial resources both for training and technical management of satisfaction measuring</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Analyzing the results of satisfaction measurement</li> </ul>                   |

1. Advice and Guidance – 2. Material Support Services – 3. Academic Support Services – 4. Non-Material and Non-Academic Services

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Note: Numbering follows that of the received guide

## Student Support Services

| Objectives                                                                                                                           | Obstacles                                                                                                                                                      | Steps to overcome obstacles                                                                                                                                                                             | Means (financial and human)                                                      | Measuring results                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 7. Elaboration of quality management system and effective operation on University level                                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of commitments, structure and resources</li> <li>- Differences levels of quality-management awareness</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- General survey on working quality aspects</li> <li>- Creating an institution-level Handbook of Quality Management and its faculty-level adaptations</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Time and financial resources</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increase of quality level of teaching process</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 8. Across-the-board regulation of student services as part of the quality management system already in place                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Differences levels of quality-management awareness</li> <li>- Inadequacies of communication system</li> </ul>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Elaboration and implementation of a uniform regulation</li> </ul>                                                                                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Time and financial resources</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increase of level services and student satisfaction</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 9. Implementation of university self-evaluation based on the Model of European Quality Award (EFQM). Declaration of areas to improve | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Absence of EFQM model concerning higher education in Hungary</li> <li>- Lack of commitment.</li> </ul>                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The transformation of the EFQM model to higher education</li> <li>- Self-evaluation of conditions and results</li> </ul>                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Time and financial resources</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Top management, management of staff, institutional policy and strategy, resources, processes, staff satisfaction, customer satisfaction, impact on society and environment, results of institution's operation</li> <li>- Establishing areas necessary to improve</li> </ul> |

## APPENDIX XVII

### Formal Student Representation Bodies

|                                          | <b>Novi Sad</b>                                                                               | <b>Zagreb</b>                                                                     | <b>BBU</b>                                                                           | <b>Debrecen</b>                                                      |
|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Student Body (elected)                   | Student Parliament*<br><br>1. Student Association<br>2. Student Union<br>3. Coordinating Body | Student Council (Studentski Zbor)<br><a href="http://www.szzg.hr">www.szzg.hr</a> | Student Chancellors (Senators)                                                       | Student Government (HOOK)                                            |
| Areas of Representation                  | 1. University and Faculty Councils<br>2. Scientific and Pedagogical Councils                  | 1. Senate<br>2. Faculty Councils<br>3. Professional Department Councils.          | 1. College of the Senate<br>2. College of the Academic Council<br>3. Faculty Council | 1. University Council<br>2. Faculty Council<br>3. Department Council |
| Student Representatives in Rector's Team | Student Vice-Rector                                                                           |                                                                                   | Student Prefects for Romanian and Hungarian lines of study                           |                                                                      |

\* The Student Parliament is regulated by the 2005 Serbian Law on Higher Education. At the time of the site visit in January 2005, the Student Parliament did not exist at UNS. The information about student organisations on the UNS website has not changed since Nov 2004.



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