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## THE HISTORY OF THE HUNGARIAN LAW ENFORCEMENT HIGHER EDUCATION AND ITS POSSIBLE FUTURE OBJECTIVES

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### ***Abstract***

*The Police College of Budapest has undergone significant development since 1st of September 1971 – when it began to operate – till nowadays, but the most significant conversion of this College – including the necessarily conducted changes after the systematic change and the Bologna-type multiple-cycle educational system which was established (in an ascending system) in 2006 – is yet to come.*

*In this qualification area of the higher education the College has occupied a dominant place in the past forty years. In addition we can say that nowadays it provides education on the entire field of law enforcement.*

*According to the obligations arising from the Bologna Process in 2006 a relatively modern, multiple-cycle higher educational institute comes into existence on the field of law enforcement, and in the possession of the BA qualification acquired here the graduates should start their duty as officers, civil servants or government employees for a law enforcement body or in the civil security sphere, or they should continue their studies on the College's own master training or on the cooperating universities adequate trainings. But the progression of the principles settled in the Bologna declaration shows an inconsistent view, because paying attention to the special conditions of this training the possibility of mobility is limited for both students and candidates, the equivalence and acceptance of diplomas in the field of law enforcement in other countries is inconceivable, and because of the limited possibility of mobility the transfer of credits or acquisition of credits in other higher-educational institutes is also running into considerable difficulties.*

*The „survival” as a Faculty of Law Enforcement within the institution of the National University of Public-service can provide a solution for the currently existing problems such as the lack of post-graduate training in the field of law enforcement or the limited number of mobility programs, but it can also give rise to other questions which must be solved.*

*Keywords: Bologna process, higher education, law enforcement education.*

### **Introduction**

The object of this study is to introduce – in the course of law enforcement higher

education its four decades hegemonic role concerning to the full scale training in the field of law enforcement - the Police College as well as the National University of Public-service formed on 1 January 2012, which came into existence after the merger of Zrínyi Miklós University of National Defense, Budapest Corvinus University Public Administration Faculty and Police College. These three predecessor institutions brought into existence the unified public service, national defense and law enforcement higher education center. In the summer of 2010 after a government-level decision was made, the legislation base and the development of a common academic module were completed by the end of 2011.

### 1. Beginnings

In the early 70s recognizing the fact that the responsibilities of the Ministry of Interior Affairs were growing, it became necessary to increase the competences of the officers' authorities to improve the effectiveness of their work. Therefore the Police College came into existence by the merger of Police Academy and Foreign Language College as the successor of these institutions. Its establishment was prescribed by the Decree №39/1970 adopted by the Presidium of the Hungarian People's Republic and the fundamental tasks and the main principles of the College were stipulated in the Joint Decree № 4/1971.(X.19.) BM-MM adopted by the Ministry of Interior Affairs and the Ministry of Education as well as in the Order № 010/1971 adopted by the Ministry of Interior Affairs.

The training was carried out within three full-time and four part-time courses and the students after passing the prescribed state examinations acquired higher vocational qualifications. According to the legal regulations the supervision of the College was carried out by the Minister of Interior Affairs, and curriculum of the College was supervised by the Minister of Interior Affairs along with the Minister of Education.

In the first 15 years several new core curriculums were issued, some curriculums were changed, special curriculums were made (for example, for the leadership training course).

The time spent on education continuously decreased, thanks to the introduction of "Free Saturdays", so that in 1971 totally 101 weeks were spent on regular trainings, while in 1996 – only 96 weeks, nowadays this number is near to 90 weeks. The hours of the different subject-classes show significant changes compared to the total number of hours, because by 1990 the hours of social sciences, military, vocational and physical subjects were significantly reduced, however the time spent on legal and foreign-language trainings were gradually increased. The benefit of these efforts was drafted most expressively by professor Finszter in 2010: "The greatest value of the Police Academy is that it provides high quality legal education. Its mission is to educate professionals who are able to operate in the field of the rule of law enforcement (whether it is the police, the border guard, customs and finance guard or the disaster protection services)" (Finszter 2010).

According to Gábor Szakács: "The control and organization of the training and educational work in the institution and the legal framework at the time of the establishment of the College were significantly different from the typical practice of the Hungarian higher education" (Szakács 1993). The abovementioned statement is intended to be

supported by the following examples. “In 1973 the Order of the Minister of Interior Affairs, which was qualified as “Secret”, set up the College Council of Police College. The 22-member board was appointed by the Minister of Interior Affairs. 70% of its members were the representatives of professional bodies, the majority of whom became acquaintance with the college life only in the Councils’ meetings” (Szakács 1993). The Council had only consultative and proposal powers.

The Organizational and Operational Rules (issued in 1976) maintained and strengthened the institutional military hierarchy organization and among others the staff of instructors was divided into two groups: staff instructors (Heads of Departments, vocational group leaders, senior instructors, instructors, assistant lecturers) and civil employees. The approved teacher's titles in the higher education were used only by the latter group” (Szakács 1993).

### **2. Entrance procedure**

According to the effective Ministry of Interior Affairs’ order, only the person who was not older than 30, in exceptional cases not older than 35 years old, medically suitable, having a high school graduation, serving in the professional staff of the Ministry of Interior Affairs or an appointed civil servant and who was in the possession of an enrollment request written by the administration could apply to the College. Applicants had to take written and oral entrance examinations checking their knowledge of Marxism-Leninism, their basic knowledge of service, and their aptitude and capability required according to the given specialty.

From the mid-eighties the events accelerated. Along with passing the medical and psychological aptitude tests, the written and oral entrance exams were introduced in Hungarian language, literature and history, together with implementing a system of estimation used nationwide. In 1984 the application to the College was made possible for students completing compulsory military service and in 1988 for students with secondary education only (without completing compulsory military services). From 1989-90 the entrance examinations were carried out according to the practice of the Hungarian higher education.

In the 70’s the over-application was 1,2-1,5 times higher than the College could admit, by 1988 the over-application was 1,9 times higher and in 1990 it grew to 5 times, thus in 1984 altogether 585 and in 1990 altogether 1088 person applied to the College for the provided 200-220 full-time seats per a year, and for the provided 150-200 part-time seats per a year (Szakács 1993). Such a tendency can be seen up to now. At present the number of admissible students to the full-time course is less than 200. However the number of applicants wishing to take a full-time course and applying for 3500-5000 specialties is 2000-2500. The number of applicants registered by the Educational Office wishing to take a part-time course in different specialties is 1400-1800, whereas the number of admissible students is only about 300. For the MA training which started in 2008 a three-time over-application is typical (Derce 2010).

One of the consequences of the changes in the higher education having taken place in 2006 was in eliminating the entrance examinations and in decreasing the role of the

institutions in the process, as nowadays the application is made through the Education Office and the scores are calculated on the basis of the result of the high-school graduation. Strangely to say, but this change caused significant additional tasks and costs for the higher education, because unlike the prior practice when the suitability test was taken only by those who based on preliminary calculations had a chance to go to the High School (about 500-600 people), nowadays every applicant wishing to take a full-time course had to be examined (2500 person in 2010).

### **3. Accreditation process**

“The mid 1990 were characterized by the educational policy’s ambition that intended to centralize the higher education’s principles, standards, and content requirements. The pursuit of the unification – but not the mechanical unification – did not violate the institutions’ autonomy, moreover it was expressly useful for the institutions engaged in the same training fields and faculties, as well as in the course of taking over the leading institutes’ experiences, furthermore the content of professional qualifications and training became unified and equivalent” (Derce 2010).

The Police Academy’s educational activity in every specialty was accredited by The Hungarian Accreditation Committee’s Plenum resolution issued in 1999. It also declared that the ongoing activity was in compliance with the expected contents and formal requirements of the higher education. The above decision further strengthened the position of the College in the Hungarian higher education as the only institution in the field of law enforcement training. The College was obliged to make one change according to the Accreditation Committee’s resolution, which is to develop the unified language exam requirements for both full-time and part-time courses.

Furthermore since 2003 in the curriculums of the specialties the requirements of the credit-based system had to prevail, thus the credit-type record of the studies was realized as prescribed by law.

### **4. Bologna process**

According to the higher education law of 2005, since the 2006/2007 academic year the BA training has been carried out in 11 specializations within 2 integrated faculties (criminal administration and law enforcement administration). Compared with the previous practice, it was supplemented by the newly introduced specialty of private security service, so under the auspices of the Professional Chamber of protection of person and property and private investigation in the field of private security the training of specialists in public and professional education was also initiated. The progress of the process has not stopped, because since the 2008/2009 academic year the MA part-time training of 30 future heads of law enforcement administrations in the law enforcement faculty has started. Thus another milestone was stepped over.

Besides the compliance with the regulatory and accreditations standards “the College developed extensive relationships with the significant part of domestic higher education institutions, with research centers and scientific forums relating to its profile, and with law enforcement authorities’ outstanding professionals, as well as foreign partner institutions” (Kiss 2005).

Thanks to the Erasmus program students can carry out studies abroad (Germany, France, England, Slovenia, etc.) and in the spirit of reciprocity the College receives foreign students too, whose trainings are conducted in the English and German languages, thus foreign language skills are becoming increasingly important, both for teachers and for students. “If we continue this work, the law enforcement authorities will receive annually increasing number of officers from the College, who have no problem with communication in foreign languages as well as with the organization of law enforcement cooperation, and we will train officers with international outlook” (Fórizs 2010).

### **5. The future that has already begun – National University of Public-service**

According to the Government resolution № 1278, the Hungarian Parliament on 16 March 2011 adopted the Act XXXVI of 2011 on the establishment of the National University of Public Service (hereinafter – reorganization act), which objective was to establish a training system for the public service career.

“All three predecessor institutions have a mature institutional strategy, effective institution development plan. At present on the basis of the abovementioned the training and research tasks resulting from their purpose are successfully carried out. At the same time according to the preliminary estimation all three institutions are suitable for the educational integration, their common elements could be disclosed, their training portfolios could be harmonized, however the full review of the present training structure can happen in future and the coordinated conversation of the structure can start in the 2013/2014 academic year” (Virányi 2010).

It should be emphasized that only after the full review has taken place, the government objectives like common module, development of common training, specification of structural and content attributes can be determined. Since January 1, 2012 the most significant change has occurred in the College’s life, therefore the development of the new faculty’s training system and the modernization of the present faculty’s training system are essential.

The most important and essential task is to clarify the exact customer needs and accordingly to determine the exact training needs and outcomes. The term “customer” means the agencies in the field of law enforcement like Police, National Tax and Customs Administration, Disaster-Management, Prison-Services and the Chambers’ leadership in the field of private security, as well as the related leaders in the field of education.

In connection with the proposed new faculties/ specialization modules to be implemented since 2013/2014 the successful completion within a short period is essential, for which finishing the consultation with the customers is indispensable. To ensure the continuous and equal number of students, informing the students who are preparing to enter the higher institution is necessary.

After the completion the above emphasized review it is possible to implement the structural rationalization in order to restructure the institutional and departmental units, eliminate the existing parallels and overlaps, or to reduce them to the lowest possible level and to outline the cross-faculty training centers.

In the existing system the students’ legal relations, as well as the admission conditions and requirements show serious divergence. According to the existing point of views the elimination and the unification of the differences (e.g. physical, psychological

and medical examinations and the security control) is neither reasonable nor possible.

The admission conditions and requirements may cause problem in case of faculty changing, because there are no compulsory admission conditions (e.g. physical, psychological and medical examination, security control) in all specializations of the three faculties. Prior experience indicates that students choose a specialty deliberately, so only a small part of them will ask for a transfer to another faculty or another specialty and the accompanying change in the background of the customer.

It should be noted that it is easier to change from the law enforcement faculty and the military science faculty to public administration faculty. After the first and second semester just on the basis of proportional coeducation the next semester can be started in the public administration faculty almost smoothly. The position of the student in the public administration faculty can be considerably less favorable, because the changing cannot be solved immediately. After the first semester the second semester on another faculty cannot be started automatically, because the half-year basic military training, which is a stepping-stone for entry into the military higher education, or the basic three-month training in internal affairs, which is an obligation in the field of law enforcement, has to be accomplished. Since both trainings are possible from the autumn of the next academic year, changing the faculty requires repetition of the one-year course.

Despite the above described special aspects, the realization of the so-called common training started in autumn 2013.

“The new University objectives are not only to operate and co-ordinate the predecessor institutions’ trainings and research subsystems but also assume and require their adjustment.” (Virányi 2011)

### Summary and concluding remarks

The Police College came to its four-decade history in 2011. The College has always considered its basic tasks to shape the students’ behavior and views and their personalities, namely the upbringing. In the future the Police Academy shall do this work in order to prepare the students for the public service.

The main indicators for the future competitiveness of higher education in the field of law enforcement shall be the quality and practical education, the rationalization of the present BA and MA trainings, the establishment of new faculties and disciplines, launching the PhD training and developing specified advanced education, professional higher education trainings, expert trainings, leader trainings, and the introduction of practically oriented life-long learning.

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