



Strategic projects for Romanian Higher Education

The results of structural/ fundamental transformations in any domain require long span of time to be recognized as such. In Romanian higher education system, the first transformation cycle started in the 90s and was completed in 2005-2007, its main results being the alignment of the system to international practices. At present, the second transformation cycle begins being focused on the long term projection regarding the higher education and research system. The main goals are:

- achieving and maintaining excellence within the most important university centers
- creating international visibility for these excellence centers
- improving the importance that universities and academic research has for economic development.

FORwiki—bee a visionary!

FORwiki, the first web 2.0 platform dedicated to foresight community, is available online at www.forwiki.ro. It was officially launched during the workshop meaningfully named “**Jointly Shaping and Launching the Foresight Wiki**” that took place between 15th – 16th April in Bucharest. The event, that brought together 23 participants from 3 continents, was moderated by Dr. Philine Warnke from ISI Fraunhofer one of the Quality and Leadership for Romanian Higher Education project’s partners. Among guest speakers we may acknowledge the presence of Dr. Ziauddin Sardar, Visiting Professor, the School of Arts, The City University, London and Editor of Futures Journal.

During the two days workshop, the participants had been discussing their foresight success stories, revealing the most interesting and challenging aspects regarding the foresight exercises they have developed, with the aim of enriching common knowledge regarding foresight. Detailed presentation of the foresight results, the way they have been conducted, challenges and lessons learned along the process are available on FORwiki platform.

[See page 7....](#)

AGENDA:

- **Strategic Projects for Romanian Higher Education/ p. 1**
- **FORwiki—bee a visionary! /p.1**
- **International Ranking of the Universities/ p.4**
- **The “Romanian Research Assessment Exercise”/ p.5**
- **Performance Management in Romanian Universities/ p.7**
- **Bucharest Dialogues/ p. 8**
- **1st International and National Advisory Board Meeting of the Cluster of Strategic Projects in the Reform Process of Higher Education in Romania/ p. 10**
- **National Study of Monitoring the Labor Market Insertion of Higher Education Graduates in Romania/ p. 11**
- **In Brief/ p.12**



Strategic projects for Romanian Higher Education

OVERVIEW

In this context, the Ministry of Education, Research and Innovation, through its Executive Agency for Higher Education and Research Funding - UEFISCSU, National Council for Higher Education System - CNCSIS, National Council for Financing Higher Education System, - CNFIS have prepared, applied for and obtained

the grant within the first project competition financed by the European Social Fund, National Sectoral Program for Human Resources Development, five projects targeting Romanian higher education System.

The strategic project „**Quality and Leadership for Romanian Higher Education**” opens this second transformation cycle of structural transformations. Its main goal is to develop a long term vision regarding the Romanian higher education assumed by the key stakeholders in the system as well as by the whole society, in order to ground medium and long term policies, so contributing to improving financial and strategic management of Universities’ human resources as well as develop leadership abilities for Universities that will allow them to achieve their strategic long term goals and objectives.

“Quality and Leadership for Romanian Higher Education” project is developed in partnership with Romanian and international institution:

The Institutional Partners of QLHE project are:

- The National Council of Rectors
- The Romanian Academy
- The Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education

- Fraunhofer - Institute for Systems and Innovation Research
- The European Centre for Higher Education - UNESCO - CEPES
- The Institute for Prospective Technological Studies
- European Universities Association (EUA)

The “**Improving University Management**” project aims at

improving managerial capacities for persons occupying decision-making positions in Romanian

universities and to cultivate managerial skills for those that in the future intends to occupy these positions. Also the project wishes to promote university cooperation in order to ensure the achievement of the reform objectives within the whole system.

The partners of the project are:

- University of London, Institute of Education, UK
- Association for Implementing Democracy, Romania.

The project “**Doctoral Studies in Romania – Organization of the Doctoral Schools**” focuses on restructuring the doctoral system, by strengthening its position within the network of universities, research institutes, and other employers on the labor market. The project aims to restructure and strengthen the doctoral education and research programs, in order to develop an institutional infrastructure able to support and improve the implementation of the third Bologna cycle in correlation with the second cycle, as a significant aspect of the integration of the Romanian higher



Strategic projects for Romanian Higher Education

OVERVIEW

education system in the European Higher Education Area and in the European Research Area. The project **"Doctoral Studies in Romania - Organization of the Doctoral Schools"** commenced in November 2008. Its first activity work



package focused on evaluating the current state of doctoral studies in Romania, and in defining key features for its reform.

These results were pursued by scientific research in conjunction with public debates involving conferences, workshops, seminars, and focus groups with members of doctoral programs, in particular doctoral advisors and students, experts in several disciplinary fields, and decision makers, including rectors and vice-rectors. The "Code of Practice for University Doctoral Studies" was finalized as a result of an iterative series of proposals and public debates, focused on the "Recommendations for the new model of Doctoral Schools", derived from the diagnosis report on the doctoral system in Romania.

The main aim of the **"The National Student Enrollment Registry"** project is to create an integrated system at national level that will include all the participants in the Higher Education System (HES).

The development of an integrated database for managing information on students will improve the administrative management in Romanian Higher Education System and will strengthen the universities' role in relation with the demands of civil society and the labor market, and also will

provide the necessary support for the policies and strategies in the public domain.

The expected project outcome is a practical and durable "product", representing the only possibility to create an integrated database that will cover a set of relevant

information of the current and future participants in Romanian Higher Education, focused

especially on the student dynamics. Thus, the project will represent an important instrument for the management and quality assurance in higher education.

The main goal of **"Doctorate in Universities of Excellence"** project is to create the national framework of the research quality international assessment, building a programme of excellence in Romanian universities and developing the capacity of scientific publication.

Specific Objectives:

- Developing, testing and implementing an assessment methodology at international standards, of the scientific research quality in Romanian universities, taking into account their classification depending on the research performances and proposing a model which should encourage performance.
- Developing and testing the methodological framework for implementing a programme of excellence in universities from Romania. Another priority is elaborating a model which

[See page 7....](#)



International Ranking of the Universities—Mutual Learning Workshop

The Strategic Project “Doctorate in Universities of Excellence – Research Assessment and Support for Scientific Publishing” - Work Package 3 – “Doctorate in universities of excellence” has organized the Mutual Learning Workshop on the 18th of February 2010 at CEPES-UNESCO conference room, Bucharest.

The aim of this Work Package is to develop an Excellence Programme that will help Romanian universities enter prestigious international rankings.

Through this workshop, we wanted to survey the existing models for international excellence. The analysis is and will be based on an exchange of experience among foreign experts specialized in implementing excellence programmes in countries like Germany and Japan.



Professor Akiyoshi Yonezawa (in the middle)



In the beginning of the event, Prof. Dr. Eng. Ioan Dumitrache – Project Manager made a short presentation of the Strategic Project “Doctorate in Universities of Excellence – Research Assessment and Support for Scientific Publishing”, followed by Prof. Dr. Eng. Paul Serban Agachi – “Doctorate in Universities of Excellence” Work package coordinator who presented our view on “Defining a programme for universities of excellence” in Romania. Two prestigious international experts - **Dr. Klaus Wehrberger** from DFG Germany and **Professor Akiyoshi Yonezawa** — Tohoku University, Japan presented their experiences in Universities of Excellence. In the future, we will develop a methodology for a programme of academic excellence in Romanian universities.





The “Romanian Research Assessment Exercise”

The “**Romanian Research Assessment Exercise**” round-table took place in Bucharest on March 4 – 5, at the CEPES-UNESCO headquarter, as part of the Strategic Project “**Doctorate in Universities of Excellence – Research Assessment and Support for Scientific Publishing**”- Work Package 2 – “**Quality of University Research**”. The main subjects on the agenda were the evaluation methodologies of scientific research, the European assessment exercises, the ranking and the classification

of universities according to the results of scientific research.

The debate was attended by representatives of the Romanian academic community, members of the National Coordinating Committee and the International Advisory Committee. Prof. Karel AIM (Czech Republic), Prof. Tadeusz LUTY (Poland), Prof. Erkki LEPPAVUORI (Finland), Professor Laszlo KEVICZKY (Hungary), Prof. Hans Peter JENSEN (Denmark), Prof. Par OMLING (Sweden) and Dr. Sonja BERGHOFF (Germany) presented

[See page 9...](#)





Performance Management in Romanian Universities

Interview with Dr. Paul Temple, Institute of Education, University of London

What drew the Institute of Education to participate as a partner in the project

“Improving University Management”?

Some colleagues and I had been working with universities in Romania for some years, and we were pleased to have this opportunity to continue and strengthen that relationship. We have a strong international dimension to our work at the Institute, and participation in this project fits well with that commitment.

What do you think that is the added value of the Institute of Education’s participation into the project?

We are the UK’s leading centre for research in education, and one the strongest globally, and are a centre of excellence for the study of higher education and its management. In particular, the MBA programme in higher education management which we operate provides a firm intellectual basis for our participation in the IMU project.

Starting from a comparison between the university management in Romania and the United Kingdom, which would be the main similarities and differences?

UK universities are not state institutions – they are all independent, although nearly all of them obtain the majority of their income from public sources of various kinds, for teaching and research. There is also greater competition between universities for both public and private money than is usual in Europe. This means that the management of UK universities is probably



closer to that of some types of private-sector organizations than to most state organizations. As Romanian universities obtain greater operational autonomy, and as they become more closely integrated into international networks, they will experience more competitive pressures; and should be able to learn from UK experience about how to respond to them.

What examples of good practices in the UK would be suitable for the Romanian higher education system?

For the reasons mentioned above, UK universities have traditionally had relatively strong central managements, with both academic leaders

**EXPERT
OPINION**
**Interview with Dr. Paul Temple,
 Institute of Education, University of London**

and professional managers (with skills in planning, finance, quality management, and various operational management issues, for example) working together. This managerial partnership underlies the operation of successful universities in the UK, and it is our hope that we may be able to support the development in Romania of some of these skills.



R: What results does the Institute of Education expect to obtain from this project together with UEFISCSU?

We hope that we will be able to support the establishment of a number of centres of excellence, specializing in different aspects of university management, in different university centres around Romania. This should then provide the basis for the self-sustaining development of expertise in university management, closely attuned to the needs of Romanian universities and to Romanian values.

**Strategic projects for
 Romanian Higher Education**

should enable some universities from Romania, on the basis of their research performance and of a long-term institutional strategic project, to be classified on the top of the first 500 best appreciated universities.

- Developing the capacity of scientific authorship in order to publish in scientific journals from the

EVENT

[FORwiki](#) is a platform for the foresight community of practices.

Any person interested in topics related to Future Studies & Foresight can become a member of the FORwiki Community, provided that s/he fulfills the following two conditions:

- (1) to have published at least one paper in an academic journal acknowledged by the Foresight Community of Practice, and
- (2) to have developed the methodology of a foresight exercise and/or to have run at least one foresight exercise.



FORwiki
 bee a visionary

"We mention very often the foresight community, but during this workshop, being in the same place and having the chance to discuss face-to-face, we really made us feel that we are a community," said Dr. Philine Warnke at the end of the workshop.

main flow of knowledge of over 1000 young researchers.

- Enhancing the editorial capacity of a group of 30 Romanian publications in order to be registered in the main knowledge flow by being indexed in scientometric databases. Creating the REP ("Romanian Editorial Platform") represents another goal – platform compatible with other platforms of international reputation as Springer Link and Science Direct.

**Bucharest Dialogues****SUCCESS STORY**

The Bucharest Dialogues are a series of ten “mutual learning” workshops, to be organized in Bucharest between September 1st 2009 and October 31st 2011 as activities in the project “Quality and Leadership for Romanian Higher Education”. The concept of “mutual learning” workshop was first introduced during the FORLEARN project developed by the Institute for Prospective Technology Studies (IPTS) from Seville. The FORLEARN “Mutual Learning workshops” were intended to become spaces that “foster the sharing of Foresight experience and know-how in Europe”. Hence, the workshops were meant to provide a meeting place, where practitioners, managers and policy-makers could “reflect upon, share, consolidate and transfer experiences and lessons drawn from Foresight processes and methodologies, and their outcomes”. At a FORLEARN “mutual learning” workshop there were typically invited between 5 and 15 experts, involved in problem-oriented sessions during which they exchanged experiences and lessons learned.

The Bucharest Dialogues are designed as variations of Bohm Dialogues on the fundamentals of foresight. The concept of Bohm Dialogue was

developed by the Nobel Prize laureate David Bohm, together with Donald Factor and Peter Garrett. A Bohm Dialogue is conducted in groups of 20 to 40 people, with no predefined purpose in mind. Participants are asked to

Mutual Learning Workshop to be held in 2010:

- Integrating Futures Methodologies, June 9-11, coordinated by Dr. Ziauddin Sardar and Prof. George Cairns
- Higher Education, Science and Innovation: Their Role on Human Capital Development in the Black Sea and Caspian Sea Region, July 8—10, coordinated by Prof. Eliot Sorel
- Foresight and Research Infrastructures, September, coordinated by Dr. Attila Havas
- Foresight in the University, September 30 - October 1st
- Expert Knowledge, Prediction, Forecasting: A Social Sciences Perspective, November 19-21, coordinated by Prof. Dragos Paul Aligica

suspend their assumptions - thoughts, motives, impulses and judgments – and explore the topic while attempting to “think together” collectively.

A Bohm Dialogue is a meeting without an objective or agenda, aimed at creating a common space where something new might happen. According to David Bohm, a dialogue should not be confused with a discussion, lecture, discourse or debate, which all suggest working towards a goal. The Bucharest Dialogues represent a form of conversation



Project co-financed through European Social Fund by Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources Development 2007-2013



The “Romanian Research Assessment Exercise”

their national experience in research assessment. Prof. Mircea Flonta, Prof. Romeo Susan-Resiga, Prof. Daniel David, Prof. Marius Andruh, Prof. Octavian Popescu and Prof. Adrian Titieni presented the specific assessment methodology for Humanities, Engineering Sciences, Social and Economic Sciences, Natural Sciences, Life Sciences, Arts and Architecture.

Important conclusions to be taken into consideration:

- It is very important to separate between services to the community and research activities;
- Books and articles in humanistic journals are not well represented by current methodologies;
- Books and monographs (even those at prestigious publishers) do not always constitute substantial research output;
- The evaluation of articles is substantially simplified by instruments such as the Impact Factor

and the Article Index Score;

- Evaluation in Arts is a delicate task and one must use specialized criteria;
- Experience shows that peer review evaluations are most effective with international experts;
- The assessment criteria have to be correlated with the goal and the objective of the assessment exercise;
- It is very important to use international experts during the national assessment exercises in mixed panels consisting of both Romanian and foreign evaluators.

Following the research assessment exercise in Romanian universities there will be Legislative Proposals concerning the implementation of the methodology for the assessment exercises which will take place after this project.



Bucharest Dialogues

between Foresight practitioners, managers and policy-makers which follows David Bohm's principles of dialogue. During a Bucharest dialogue, key speakers present the discourse of distinct voices within the Foresight community on a pre-established topic. This initial moment is followed by a conversation during which the participants are invited to connect personal experiences and lessons learned with concepts presented before, building-up the discourse and unveiling new ideas. The conclusions of each workshop will be uploaded online on www.FORwiki.ro so they can be used in future foresight exercises.

By now two MLWs have taken place in Bucharest:

- **“Systems Thinking for Foresight: The Case of Romanian Higher Education System”**, facilitated by Dr. Campbell Warden and coordinated by Dr. Ozcan Saritas.
- **“Scenario Building: Methods, Approaches and Applications in Higher Education”**, October 31- November 1, 2009, chaired by Prof. Dragos Paul Aligica while key speakers were sesiunile au fost conduse de Prof. Dragos Paul Aligica, Prof. George Cairns, Dr. Ozcan Saritas, Dr. Riel Miller, Dr. Ziauddin Sardar, Dr. Gill Ringland



1st International and National Advisory Board Meeting of the Cluster of Strategic Projects in the Reform Process of Higher Education in Romania

Between 4-5 February 2010, in Bucharest, took place the 1st International Advisory Board Meeting, gathering representatives of the international partners in the strategic projects for Romanian higher education, such as:

- Fraunhofer – Gesellschaft zur Förderung der angewandten Forshung e.V (Fraunhofer ISI)– Foresight Group
- Institute for Prospective Technological Studies (IPTS)
- UNESCO – European Centre for Higher Education
- European Universities Association (EUA)

The International Advisory Board terms of reference are:

- to act as a think-tank of high level decision makers and academics that will advice and give feed-back on the project implementation and main outputs (deliverables)

- to make recommendations, on request, of experts who could be involved in different stages of the project
- to be a networking reference point for international cooperation in Higher Education policies.

Amongst the participants we may acknowledge the presence of Mr. Daniel Funeriu, Romanian Minister of Education, Research, Youth and Sport as well as international experts in higher education.

The 1st International Advisory Board Meeting addressed topics regarding each of the strategic projects, such as the relevance of foresight in higher education policy making, domain-specific evaluations of research activities in the whole academic sector, defining a national strategy for the development of doctoral education, academic governance, leadership and management in different countries.





University Graduates and Labor Market: Romanian Tracer Study

“National Study of Monitoring the Higher Education Graduates’ Insertion on the Labour Market” is a project implemented by UEFSCSU and co-financed by the European Social Fund through the Sectoral Operational Programme for Human Resources Development.

The main purpose of the project is to implement, at national level, a monitoring study of the higher education graduates’ insertion (from public and private institutions) on the labor market.

The main objective of the project is to evaluate the level to which the acquired knowledge, competences and abilities enable the graduates to get hired on the labor market, to develop their own business or continue the higher education studies for lifelong learning. The study addresses graduates of public and private Higher Education institutions in Romania, aiming to follow up the social –professional career after graduation, as well as after a period of time con-

sidered sufficient to let them attain a certain professional status and obtain their individual perception regarding their own professional and employment needs.

The project will enhance Higher Education relevance for the labor market and the knowledge-based society, by providing the information needed for the correlation between Higher Education development strategy and a dynamic labor market. Furthermore, the result of this study will facilitate the correlation between the educational offer and the labor market requirements, at national and European Union level by orienting the education towards the development of necessary competences, abilities and skills. Also, it will increase the responsibility of the social partners on educational issues, determine the re-shaping of the educational offer according to the labor market requirements and to the key competence fields that are life – long needed. At



the same time, it will contribute to the improvement of the Higher Education graduates insertion level on the labor market and to the development of quality indicators that will measure the output performance level.



On February the 22nd, 2010, at Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj, Prof. Andrei Marga, Rector of the university, together with Prof. Michael Shattock, founder of the MBA in Higher Education Management at the Institute of Education, University of London, have given a conference on University Governance. Organized by the strategic ESF founded project Improving University Management with the support of the Center of Competence in university management coordinated by "Babes - Bolyai" University, this conference is part of the university management training activities addressed to the top management

representatives from Romanian higher education system. The event was attended by more than 140 people, rectors, vice-rectors and other top management persons representing universities across the country, and also mentors designated by the Institute of Education for the coordination of the university management modules.



Prof. Michael Shattock

On 15th March, 2010, took place the working meeting with the The International Higher Education Research Center experts, representatives of Kassel University in Germany, partner in the strategic project "**National Study of Monitoring the Higher Education Graduates' Insertion on the Labour Market**".

The main matters that were approached referred to general aspects such as the project methodology, as well as to more particular topics, related to the current activities developed within the project: permanent collaboration with more than 50 universities that have already signed the institutional collaborative agreement, development of the monitoring questionnaire at

national level and customization for certain study fields and work areas of interest. The researchers also presented a series of working materials and methodologies that have been successfully applied in similar projects, at international level, in countries such as France, Germany, Austria, England, Oman, as useful best practices and lesson learned examples for the Romanian Tracer Studies.

The partner's next working meeting, held in the frame of a national workshop, will agree on the final version of the monitoring questionnaire and of the working methodologies.



**University Graduates and
Labor Market**
Romanian Tracer Studies

For more information please visit:

www.forhe.ro

www.edu2015.ro

www.forwiki.ro

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