



Blueprint for Organizing Foresight in Universities

Prof. Adrian Curaj, Manager of the *Quality and Leadership for Romanian Higher Education* project, presented, before a group of Romanian and international foresight experts, rectors and pro-rectors of Romanian universities, the document ***Blueprint for Organizing Foresight in Universities***, on September 30th. The presentation took place at the Bucharest University of Agronomics and Veterinary Medicine, during a workshop under the same name. This workshop was part of ***Bucharest Dialogues*** series, organized by the *Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation Funding (UEFISCDI)* as part of the *Quality and Leadership for Romanian Higher Education* project.

The purpose of the event was to reinforce and make the most of the outcomes of the ***Blueprint for Organizing Foresight in Universities*** document, by enabling dialogue between Romanian university professors, the beneficiaries of the document, and the international experts.

Blueprint for Organizing Foresight in Universities was written under the supervision of Prof. Adrian Curaj and included articles from five international contributors: Alain Michel (Futuribles -

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France), Ozcan Saritas (University of Manchester – the UK), Pierre Rossel (Ecole Polytechniques Federale de Lausanne – Switzerland), Ilkka Tuomi (Meaning Processing Ltd. – Finland), and Riel Miller (Institut d'etudes politiques de Paris - France) plus one Romanian contributor, Dan Grosu (UEFISCDI). [See page 3...](#)



"Improving university management" - Exchanges of good practices Romania – United Kingdom

During May-July 2010, there were three exchanges of best practices within the project "Improving university management." The three study visits, organized in collaboration with the project partner - Institute of Education, University of London, brought face to face specialists with expertise in higher education management representing universities from Romania and from United Kingdom. Thus, representatives from Romanian universities ("Al. I. Cuza" University from Iasi, "Gh. Asachi" Technical University from Iasi, "Polytechnic" University from Timisoara, West University from Timisoara, "Transilvania" University din Brasov, "Dimitrie Cantemir" Christian University, "Babes – Bolyai" University from Cluj, Medicine and Pharmacy University from Cluj, National School of Political and Administrative Studies, Petrosani University, "Ovidius" University from Constanta, "Dunarea de Jos" University from Galati, "Al. I. Cuza" Police Academy from Bucharest, Bucharest University, Bucharest Academy of Economic Studies, Tehnical University from Cluj, "Lucian Blaga" University from Sibiu)

had the opportunity to visit universities such as Oxford, Brighton, Thames Valley University, Queen Mary, Middlesex University, City University, Bloomsbury Colleges and Birkbeck from University of London.



The case studies accomplished by universities, on topics of interest on university management, were the starting point in discussions. Following that, these case studies will be completed and modified, according to the observations during the exchanges of good practices.

The case studies in final form will be the main result of the exchanges of good practices and will be uploaded on web knowledge platform, as valuable study material for university management specialists involved in the project.



Blueprint for Organizing Foresight in Universities

Blueprint for Organizing Foresight in Universities is not meant as a foresight guidebook or textbook for Romanian universities. It does not claim, in any way, to offer a success recipe about how to conduct foresight exercises in universities. This document does however provide practical solutions to challenges that universities might be confronted with while conducting their own foresight exercises. The work is the more valuable as it is built on real challenges for the Romanian universities, challenges identified during a large-scale evaluation process of Romanian higher education,” it was stated in the opening of the session.

Made up of six chapters, the work starts from identifying the main higher education future challenges, suggests a possible methodology for conducting foresight exercises, introduces a few cases of universities in Ireland, Canada, the United States of America, Turkey and Malaysia, which developed their own foresight exercises to identify potential consequences both for university strategic management and educational or research processes.

“Higher education must take into account several alternative scenarios about the fu-

ture so as to enable each student to gain awareness of the consequences of current trends and to influence events. Therefore, foresight exercises – or foresight activities – can be considered, to some extent, the antonyms of fatalism and resignation,” explained Alain Michel, Group Futuribles.

Ozcan Saritas, Manchester Institute of Innovation Research, said: *“Systemic foresight is a new methodological approach to the analysis of complex social, technological or sustainability problems, aimed at explaining the latter through the relationships among them, developing alternative and desirable models of the future, as well as methods of reaching those through behavioral and structural changes.”*



“As the university and the society that contains it change, there are people who raise the question: how should the university change? Generally, these people – some of them feeling responsible for what is happening – are looking for an answer to this question because they have a specific vision of the university. They believe that the university should change in ways that would ensure a better future for

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Workshop session The “Romanian Research Assessment Exercise”

The “**Romanian Research Assessment Exercise**” workshop took place on the 7th and the 8th of October 2010 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**”. In this meeting, the final versions of the specific methodologies of the 42 scientific fields covered by the assessment exercise have been submitted for validation. Other subjects on the agenda were the European assessment exercises

and the European ranking and the classification of universities according to the results of scientific research.

The meeting also included a discussion on the implementation procedure of National Assessment Exercise Research (ENEC) with emphasis on possible problematic aspects.

The debate was attended by representatives of the Romanian academic community, members of the National Coordinating Committee and the International Advisory Committee.

Exploratory Workshops in “Diaspora 2010” Conference

The second edition of the Conference “Diaspora in Higher Education and Scientific Research of Romania” held between September 21 and 24, was organized under the slogan “National Call to Researchers living in the Diaspora”. The conference aimed at creating a space for dialogue and collaboration between Romanian scientists working inside and outside its borders. On September 23rd 2010, 23 exploratory workshops were simultaneously organized in Bucharest and its outskirts. The main purpose of these meetings was to create the preconditions for international cooperation to achieve inter-disciplinary and cross-scale and to increase the visibility and interna-

tional impact of the Romanian scientific results.

Each workshop discussed the criteria and methodologies used in the Strategic Project “**Doctorate in Universities of Excellence – Research Assessment and Support for Scientific Publishing**” to assess the quality of scientific results. The participants’ feedback was very important for the managerial team of the project and many proposals have been included in the methodologies. At these workshops we have also launched a call for experts to be used in the National Assessment Exercise Research (ENEC).





Expert Knowledge, Prediction, Forecasting – Topics Discussed during the “Bucharest Dialogues”

A new workshop of the “Bucharest Dialogues” series, under the umbrellas of the *Quality and Leadership for Romanian Higher Education* project, took place between November 19 and 21, 2010. The event addressed forecasting experts and stakeholders from both university and business environments, its topic being **“Expert Knowledge, Prediction, Forecasting: A Social Sciences Perspective.”**

Dr. Dragos Aligica, the workshop moderator, stated in the opening: *“We need to distinguish among the study of social phenomena, predictions about social phenomena, and reactions to the predictions about social phenomena. Our focus during this two-day*

seminar is on the predictions about social phenomena, more precisely on forecasting methodology and expert knowledge.”

“Whether you run a company or elaborate social policies, you have to know what the criteria, the standards by which you determine the correct prediction or the one that is highly likely to prove correct are, before the occurrence of the social phenomena. Predictions, regardless of the domain or topic, must meet certain criteria in order to be scientific,” explained **Dr. Aligica**.

The speakers were distinguished forecasting researchers and experts from the United States of America, Ireland, Australia, and Romania. Among them: Peter Bishop, Associate Professor of Strategic Foresight and

Coordinator of the graduate program in Futures Studies at the University of Houston; Kesten C. Green, Senior Lecturer at the International Graduate School of Business, University of South Australia; Scott Armstrong, Professor at the Wharton School of Business – University of Pennsylvania.





Public event to launch "Romanian Publishing Platform"- scipio.ro

On September 17th 2010, the Strategic Project "**Doctorate in Universities of Excellence – Research Assessment and Support for Scientific Publishing**" has publicly launched the Romanian Editorial Platform hosted at www.scipio.ro. The meeting was attended by a number of 50 executives, editors and publishers of Romanian scientific publications, and has been held at the University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine – Bucharest.

"The Romanian Editorial Platform is an e-system for scientific publications that enables the automation of the editorial process

at international standards. The new platform, SCIPIO.ro (Scientific Publishing & Information), will support electronic publishing and will be developed as a digital library for Romanian scientific production," says Prof. Ioan Dumitrache, President of the NURC and Project Manager.

SCIPIO.ro – **Scientific Publishing & Information** provides to scientific journals editorial support throughout the publication flow, from receiving the manuscript to preparing the final form for print or online publication.



Presentation of Delphi Consultation Outcomes Conference

The outcomes of the consultation on education policies, which included over 1,900 participants, were presented and discussed during the "Presentation of Delphi Consultation Outcomes Conference", on September 27, at the Bucharest University of Agronomics and Veterinary Medicine.

The debates included over 150 participants, members of university quality assurance and research committees, along with the international foresight experts, Peter Bishop and Roumiana Gotseva. The goal of the "Quality and Leadership for Higher Romanian Education" project is to prepare a strategic vision of the development of Romanian higher education in 2025. To reach this

main goal, the project is based on a large-scale consultation process with experts and key system actors, involving several stages (and uses foresight methodology).

Until now, five expert panels focusing on various fields of interest have produced a set of fundamental analyses, which served as the basis for scenario-building about the future of Romanian higher education. At this stage of the national consultation, a further nine expert panels were assigned to formulate a set of public policy proposals based on the previously built scenarios that underlie the vision. These proposals were subjected to a large-scale Delphi consultation process.



Piloting the New Doctoral School Model

The “Doctoral Studies in Romania – Organization of the Doctoral Schools” Project, is currently in the phase of Piloting the New Doctoral School Model, run between January 2010 and June 2011. Piloting exercise of the New Doctoral School Model is based on the Code of Doctoral Studies. This document, carried out in the project is aimed at delivering key information about doctoral studies frame and they’re regulations. During the next months, the project team and the disciplinary team coordinators will support all partner and collaborating universities in adapting its organization and operation regulations to the present Code.

Participation of the team of experts who will be involved in analyzing the current status of piloting exercise of the New Doctoral School Model, will be noticeable through active supervision in partner universities and through constant communication and collaboration with colleagues in these institutions. In this way, is attempting to solve any difficulties or doubts arising over time and finding the most practical solutions to adapt the Doctoral Studies Code to the partner and collaborative universities features. In January 2010, the project “Doctoral Studies in Romania – Organization of the Doctoral Schools” will hold a meeting to be attended



by partners and collaborating universities representatives, called “Piloting the Doctoral Studies Code- Current state analysis” which will analyze the piloting exercise stage and discuss the encountered difficulties.

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the university and, usually, for the society in general.

As a result, in order to analyze the way it should change, the university must be able to imagine the future. This is where foresight studies come into play,” shows **Riel Miller, Sciences Po, Paris.**

Blueprint for Organizing Foresight in Universities was published by the Romanian Academy and will be distributed in Romanian universities as a support instrument for conducting foresight exercises.



The Education Policies for 2025 in Romania were validated by 1,993 persons

The outcomes of the consultation on education policies for 2025, involving 1,993 persons in the higher education environment, were presented and discussed during the “Presentation of Delphi Consultation Outcomes Conference”, on September 27, 2010, at the Bucharest University of Agronomics and Veterinary Medicine. The event included over 150 participants, members of university quality assurance and research committees, along with the international foresight experts, Peter Bishop and Roumiana Gotseva.

The conference was organized as part of the “Quality and Leadership for Higher Romanian Education” project, one of the six structural funded strategic projects and run by the *Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation Funding*.

“We are at an important stage of the project. Together with the representatives of the university quality and research committees, we discussed the outcomes of the community consultation

about education policies. The consultation was done through a questionnaire sent to over 1,900 persons. We worked with nine expert panels that developed education policy proposals for those fields which, as a result of successive consultations and based on an analysis of the current state of Romanian education, emerged as relevant for the future of Romanian higher education. This is only part of the public consultation that we are conducting on the topic of the future of Romanian education. I believe that in order to create and implement

efficient public policies, a large-scale consultation with the stakeholders as well as the strengthening of a critical mass in favor of substantial changes in the Romanian higher education system are needed. As part of this project, we will consult 10,000 higher education stakeholders while using highly qualified international expertise” declared Adrian Curaj, manager of the “Quality and Leadership for Higher Romanian Education” project.



For more information please visit:

www.forhe.ro

www.edu2025.ro

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