



EDITORIAL

A VIEW ON STANDARDIZATION OF EDUCATION PROGRAMMES CURRICULA

"Carol I" National Defense University is a military institution of higher education accredited in accordance with the Romanian *Law of national education* that is part of the *Romanian education system*.

In terms of the quality of the educational services provided, the university complies with and applies the national standards in this field, being evaluated periodically by the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education.

The education system implemented in "Carol I" National Defense University provides, simultaneously, both *academic education and training*.

At the same time, the *European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)* has been introduced in the university.

As an advanced research and education institution, the university organizes bachelor studies (three years/180 ECTS), master studies (1 year/60 ECTS, 1.5 years/90 ECTS, 2 years/120 ECTS), PhD studies (three years), as well as a number of postgraduate courses, in compliance with the national legislation on education and the *principles of the Bologna process*.

The study programs are organized and function at the request of the main beneficiary, the *Ministry of National Defense*, according to the training needs of the military personnel and university opportunities.

Enrollment is correlated with the conception of organization and re-organization of the armed forces, the professional evolution of the personnel, the need for command personnel and need to comply with the international commitments

assumed by Romania at military level. The general objectives and specific programs of study express the professional skills the graduates must acquire in accordance with the requirements of the positions they will occupy in the structures of the Romanian Armed Forces, and with the *"model of the graduate"* developed by the main beneficiary.

Also, the university is engaged in *academic research*, which is a priority in terms of the need to use the most current and relevant research results in areas of interest, as well as a desire to impose the University as a pole of excellence in national and international research.

At present, higher education in most European countries is organized into three cycles (Bachelor, Master, PhD). The priority in the cycle of university studies is the identification *"windows of mobility"* to allow the student exchange programs.

Due to the double nature of education meant for officers in military institutions, that has to include both, academic education and military training, the mobility target under the Bologna process is slightly different for the military education compared to the civilian education, taking into account that the basic education of an officer has well defined national targets and strict programs.

The Bologna Process is not an end in itself but a tool for institutions to achieve the *mobility of students, cadets and staff*. However, taking into account the fact that the *Bologna Process is a process of standardization*, a number of differences persist at the core of officers' curriculum.

The military higher education taken undoubtedly proactive measures in terms



of *integration into the European Higher Education Area* with its specificity to train officers not only as elite soldiers on the battlefield, but also as elite intellectuals.

By introducing the ECTS, the *recognition of training courses* organized outside the national education systems has become possible, although some obstacles are still impeding (a culture of education programs and not on qualifications, proposed objectives, the language in which the study programs are conducted etc.). In this respect, the recognition of studies and qualifications obtained by students in *international military institutions* is a challenge for all participating countries.

Even if the educational systems still have some differences, we believe that through the Bologna Process, the necessary conditions were created for carrying out *joint university* programs.

To do this, *standardization of the educational curricula is a prerequisite*, so that the objectives of the Euro-Atlantic Security and Defense in military education will be more easily achieved.

The *purpose of military higher education* is, undoubtedly, to prepare future officers for war. The war must be seen as a "crisis" rather than as action in itself, since nowadays the use of the armed forces is not limited to classic interpretations.

The *term security*, which also involves the prevention of conflicts, is no longer limited to the meaning of defense, and defense tools are increasingly required to take part in the management of security.

The *Petersberg tasks*, which still define the use of armed forces in the context of CSDP, illustrate the integration of the concepts of "security" and "defense". Missions, at least in the European context, are defined more by targets than by the concept of "enemy".

The *Lisbon Treaty*, which introduced such notions as "collective defense" and "individual defense", confirms this direction.

For the standardization of educational curricula to be successful in higher military education in the European Union countries, in support of both NATO and EU operations, the following elements must be taken into account:

- *A Focus on military training* remains necessary but not sufficient;
- An education system that *focuses mainly* on teaching the human values and behavior, as in classical academies, can attract an audience that may not be suitable for new missions;
- An officer's *competence profile* should correspond more to professional skills than to practical knowledge;
- The growing integration within the national higher education system, between civil and military education, is more appropriate for mission flexibility;
- The higher military education must meet academic standards.

Regardless the importance of "academicization", the current trends in higher education for the military should not lose sight of the fact that this ultimate aim is a twofold one: the training of the intellectual elite that manages security issues and the training of future officers for the elite soldiers in their countries.

In fact, military education has a dual nature. This is underlined by the educational curricula of military higher education institutions, and through this, the young European officers' educational path is integrated in their careers.

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