

**NATIONAL ACADEMY OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND
SPORTS BUCHAREST
EXTERNAL INSTITUTIONAL EVALUATION REPORT
2009**

Introduction

I was invited to join to the evaluation team of the institutional evaluation process of the National Academy of Physical Education and Sports, Bucharest (ANEFS) as an external evaluator for the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ARACIS). The evaluation took place between Wednesday 21 October and Friday 23 October 2009. In this process as a foreign expert evaluator I was responsible for establishing an overview of ANEFS focusing on the main points of continuous improvement of quality and future development aspects with outlining the main dimensions of present and future challenges of the university. Before the three day long visit I received the self-evaluation report of ANEFS and the guidelines of external institutional evaluation from ARACIS. During my stay in Bucharest with the help of the colleagues of the university I had the possibility to insight all the documentations and annexes of the evaluation process and collect every useful and important information about ANEFS. My report is roughly following the structure of the self evaluation report of the institution.

Background

The National Academy of Education and Sports with its almost 90 year old tradition has a significant role in Romania focusing its activity on the science of physical education and sports. There are several institutions, faculties offering different kinds of educational programs in connection with physical education and sports in the country but the tradition, the experience, the prestige and the competences of ANEFS show the importance of the institution in the internal and international environment. ANEFS has an important role in training and improving the students on European standards of qualification in physical education, sports, kinesitherapy and other connected

professions, and also support and develop scientific research activities both national and international level. On the whole the institution meets the cultural, social and economic needs of the community.

The leadership of the institution and the managerial structures

According to the information and written documents the academic and the administrative leadership of ANEFS have the appropriate competencies to do their work correctly. The managerial structures of the two faculties of the university (Faculty of Physical Education and Sports and Faculty of Kinesitherapy), the departments, centers and other organizational units of the institute have a transparent, logical structure and it is suited for the correct management of the organization. The operation of the institution rely on a system of regulations, procedures and tools covering the whole set of university life parallel with the permanent evaluation of the different types of programs, the teaching staff and the other personnel of the university.

The ANEFS teaching staff

The titular teaching staff in ANEFS has proper competencies, qualifications, and academic degrees which results a good level of performance in education and training processes. The average age of the titular teaching staff is 45 and the greatest share (32%) of the teaching staff is in the age interval 41-50. Because of this favorable situation new generations of teachers could 'grow up' including the realistic possibility of the personal development of employees.

According to the self evaluation documentation of the institution and personal field experiences the scientific potential and quality of human resources of ANEFS seems to be on a good level. University has now a highly qualified staff. Beyond the professional competences it is important to point out that the language skills of the staff (including not just the titular teaching staff but even the administrative and other employees) expressly good, most of the colleagues have fluent French and/or English. It is also important to point out that the teaching staff from ANEFS enjoys a large national and international

recognition and appreciation, which is leading to their presence in specialized bodies and committees in the country and abroad.

For 5 years, ANEFS has implemented the Bologna Process principles, by adopting the "LMD": License University Studies, Master's University Studies, and Doctoral University Studies. There is a room for debate in connection with this process like everywhere where the Bologna Process has been started but on the whole the first experiences of ANEFS are not that 'bad'.

Material resources

The education activities take place in the ANEFS headquarters, ANEFS Stadium (Football Field), "Prof. Virgil Teodorescu" Parang didactic base and Eforie Nord-Techirghiol didactic base. On these locations, different types of activities are carried out according to the academic structure and to ANEFS schedule. The headquarter consists of amphitheatres, lecture and seminar rooms, conference halls, equipped laboratories, and other spaces, methodical rooms, halls for practical works, and also multifunctional sports ground.

The complementary spaces like library, publishing and printing house, computerized workshops, museum, and other workshops are also important parts of the university processes. In connection with library the development has already started, but in this field further and permanent development is needed in the future, especially in the field of digitalization. The publishing house "Discobolul", founded in 2009 is also a relevant advantage for ANEFS.

According to the data I have received the didactic base "Prof. Virgil Teodorescu"-Parang (Petrosani), and the Eforie-Nord didactic base (seaside location of the university) ensure good possibilities and provide good conditions for students and for staff members, too. These locations could play a very significant role in the future development and diversification of the university services. The rehabilitation and development of these places seems to be continuous process. Among the students'

facilities, ANEFS maintains hostels, canteen, and consulting room, supplementary spaces for individual study, internet access and sports base access.

The General Manager and the Vice-rector of ANEFS is responsible for the permanent monitoring and activity efficiency. The increased efficiency results extra-budget incomes which role increases permanently.

The equipments and installations in connection with the educational process is seems to be an important priority and supply the demands of students quite well. On the other hand besides the above mentioned priority there are certain dimensions where further investment and development is needed: for example some parts of the visited headquarter (offices, exteriors and interiors of some buildings, etc.) are not in a very good state of repair. The present processes despite of the permanently changing financial conditions seem to be promising. These investments and developments are financed from the State budget or financed through the institution's own sources.

On the whole the university meets the demands of European standards but it is important to continue the work to invest permanently to its physical infrastructure.

Financial activity

Every year, the Senate of ANEFS approves of the income and expenses budget set up, in conformity with the legal provisions. Within the institutional structure the economic department-accountancy office is responsible for the financial activities. After reviewing the main documents of the financial activities and after consultations with the chief-accountant and general director of the university the financial activities – incomes and expenses of ANEFS are relatively well-balanced. It is important to point out that the state support, due to the changing priorities, low budget of the state and because of negative effects of the financial crisis has changed notably to this year, the 2009 state support is only around the two-third of 2008 state support. If we compare the total income of 2008 with the estimated income of 2009, the estimated income in optimal case would be only the three-fourth of the total income of 2008. This means that the university, parallel with the decreasing state support has been forced to find other outside resources, extra

budget incomes. This activity seems to be successful while the 2009 rate of the own incomes in total income (20%) is expectedly grow to 32% this year. I think that this could be a new strategic orientation: instead of less secure level of state support the university has to find the ways to realize more own, extra budget incomes to maintain and finance its activities in a reasonable level and quality. Right now there are lot of signs of this change of way of thinking: there are plans to utilize the available resources and find also new directions to make extra money (rent of different properties, possessions and patrimonies like students' hostels, canteen; permanent development of the seaside location and Parang mountains with offering different types of services in the future; development of a conference hall at headquarters which would be used for own and outside programs exploit the sports fields; search for grants and other outside resources, donations, etc.)

Students

I consider as a remarkable issue the implementation of Bologna Process with the three levels of License University Studies, Master's University Studies, and Doctoral University Studies at ANEFS which allows the institute to connect to the European Higher Education Area. In Hungary there is also a possibility for a two-year long advanced vocational program (at ISCED level 5B) which is available on an optional basis prior to first cycle (License University Studies) programs leading to advanced vocational qualifications. Such programs can count towards any ISCED 5A programs up to a maximum of 60 credit points. As I have experienced (if my information are correct) these types of vocational programs are not existed at ANEFS (and probably missing from the Romanian higher education). Maybe in the future that would be a kind of diversification to organize such programs like sports communicators which already exists in the Hungarian system. I think there is also a possibility to organize professional higher education training programs at ANEFS in the future (at ISCED level 5A) which can follow any Bachelor's or Master's degree and they involve specialization in a field of study and with a certificate at the end, but do not lead to another degree.

It is favorable process that growing number of students participates in master programs of the university (which is especially remarkable in the field of kinesitherapy) and doctoral programs. It is also important point that ANEFS uses procedures to monitor the graduates' professional evolution. This process must be a permanent and continuous following of students. This information is a very important feedback for the university. Data show the main direction of the graduates' employment on the labor market in the education system (schools, high schools, sports clubs, etc.), in medical units (especially graduates who are specialized in kinesitherapy), and in private societies focused on performance sports and leisure activities (especially graduates who are specialized in physical education and sports). Although these processes seem to be good, and most of the students are able to find their place at work, some of the students (like top performance athletes) leave the country for good – sooner or later. (I guess this is a very typical problem everywhere in Central-Eastern Europe).

It is important to point out that from 2006 there is a Center of Counseling and Orientation in the Professional Career (CCOPC), which helps the students with consulting, in order to orient them in their professional career.

ANEFS offers a wide range of social, cultural and sports services for students (dwelling spaces with Internet and TV cable, canteen, ceremony hall, lecture hall within the library, cultural services, programs, etc.).

There are several bilateral agreements within the framework of Socrates-Erasmus programs. The main directions of these connections are with universities of France, Italy, Spain and recent past with a university from Denmark. There are also incoming students (not just within Socrates-Erasmus programs), for example in 2008 from Tunisia (8), and from Portugal (5). In the earlier years there were incoming students from Iran, Syria, Macedonia, Albania, Moldavia, and Ukraine. In the last few years the number of incoming students is usually less than the number of the outgoing students. According to the 2009 data, the effects of the financial crisis would reduce the numbers of incoming and outgoing students. Parallel with the student mobility there is also teacher mobility in

the university within the framework of Erasmus (this usually means a two week long period to different European destinations) with the same main directions like student mobility. Although these connections are operating quite well, it is recommended to enter into more bilateral contracts with European and also with non-European universities (for example with universities from the United States) and increase the number of students and staff members taking part in mobility activities.

The public information can be found on the ANEFS site, which is one of the most important parts of the communication with the external environment including correct information about the main aspects of the education process in Romanian and English language, but in connection with English language information further development is recommended on ANEFS site. Of course there are many other possibilities to give information about the offered programs from Open Days to the guides for Romanian and foreign students. All these activities of ANEFS are coordinated by the Department of Communication and External Relations.

During my visit I had the possibility to meet with some students of ANEFS and I found them very open minded, energetic and intelligent. They seem to be very loyal to their university and pay a lot of attention to their studies. I have also experienced that the students I met speak very good English.

Research activities of ANEFS

ANEFS plays a very important role in scientific research, with promoting the enrichment of knowledge in different fields. The importance of research activities seems to be significant in the university and the results of these activities are apparently integrated to the educational process. In ANEFS, just like everywhere in the recently joined European countries of Central-Eastern Europe, the European resources become more and more important in financing the different kinds of research activities.

In consideration of the institution prestige, ANEFS yearly organizes the International Scientific Conference, which joins together with the other events organized by faculties

of the same type in the country. The presence of "Alexandru Partheniu" Interdisciplinary Research Centre is also an important advantage for the scientific research activity in the university.

Conclusion

My report is based on what I have experienced; what I have seen, what I have read and have heard before and during my visit. I hope that some of my comments will help the university management in the process of permanent improvement. On the whole ANEFS develops its activity within a competition market including service offers for education, research and consulting and meet the individual's educational and professional training specific standards, as well as the community social and economic development standards and European standards of education and scientific research. I recommend the high level of confidence rate for the university with emphasizing the following:

- I suggest developing more international links and collaborations to support international research activities and encourage students and staff members taking part in exchange and mobility programs.
- ANEFS should continue to invest in the physical infrastructure and facilities when own resources, state support or any other funds allow.
- The maintenance of the present favourable situation and competitiveness is an important challenge and appears the key element of the sustainable future of ANEFS.

Finally I would like to thank to the Rector, Vice Rectors, Deans and all the University staff for the pleasant atmosphere and the support during my stay in Bucharest. At least but not last special thanks to ARACIS for giving me the opportunity to participate in this evaluation process in Romania.

Pécs, 10-30-2009

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Iván Zádori', written over a horizontal line.

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