

Accreditation of Study Programmes in Slovakia (in Europe)

Pavol Návrat, Viera Rozinajová
Accreditation Commission of the
Republic of Slovakia

7/7/05 Berlin: Accreditation in the European Higher Education Area - different paths to internationalisation 1

Objectives of this Presentation

- To provide information
- To share experience
- To give a view of the perspective

7/7/05 Berlin: Accreditation in the European Higher Education Area - different paths to internationalisation 2

Our Experience

- 1990, Higher Education Law
 - ◆ academic liberties
 - ◆ institutional autonomy
 - ◆ a provision for 2-tier Bc/Mgr degree system was made
 - ◆ Accreditation Commission was established

7/7/05 Berlin: Accreditation in the European Higher Education Area - different paths to internationalisation 3

Accreditation Commission

- Mission:
 - ◆ to assist in development of higher education system in Slovakia by evaluating level of educational and research activities of institutions and by accrediting courses
- Legal Status:
 - ◆ advisory body of the Government
 - both before and after the new Law 131/2002 on HE
 - at the same time, legal guarantee of independence from government

7/7/05 Berlin: Accreditation in the European Higher Education Area - different paths to internationalisation 4

Accreditation Commission – Principal Tasks:

- ◆ to accredit newly proposed degree courses and re-accredit the running courses
- ◆ to accredit institutions

7/7/05 Berlin: Accreditation in the European Higher Education Area - different paths to internationalisation 5

Accreditation Commission – Principal Tasks:

- ◆ to give opinions on proposals to establish / close down institutes / institutions (Faculties or HE institutions)
- ◆ to make recommendations regarding the status of the higher education institution

7/7/05 Berlin: Accreditation in the European Higher Education Area - different paths to internationalisation 6

Programme Accreditation

- ◆ accreditation is compulsory for all degree courses at all three levels
- ◆ accreditation is performed periodically
- ◆ results in report

7/7/05 Berlin: Accreditation in the European Higher Education Area - different paths to internationalisation 7

Accreditation Criteria

- ◆ accreditation criteria are based:
 - mostly on evaluating resources: human, infrastructure, information, material, financial, laboratory etc.
 - programmatic reviews
 - to some extent, outcomes

7/7/05 Berlin: Accreditation in the European Higher Education Area - different paths to internationalisation 8

Institutional Accreditation

- is based on a mission (as declared by each institution)
 - concerns principal activities
 - involves
 - self report
 - peer review
 - on site visit

7/7/05 Berlin: Accreditation in the European Higher Education Area - different paths to internationalisation 9

Institutional Accreditation

- results in report
- recommendation regarding the status of the higher education institution
 - university
 - research university
 - Polytechnic (Fachhochschule)

7/7/05 Berlin: Accreditation in the European Higher Education Area - different paths to internationalisation 10

Accreditation Procedures

- ◆ transparency (documents including minutes of meetings on web site)
- ◆ general criteria discussed with representation of HE
- ◆ meetings are public;
 - frequently Minister, President of Rectors' Conference, President of HE Council, President of Students' Council take part
- ◆ Rectors and Deans of institutions on agenda are invited as a rule

7/7/05 Berlin: Accreditation in the European Higher Education Area - different paths to internationalisation 11

Accreditation Outcomes

- recommendations to the Minister:
 - to grant the right to offer a programme and confer a degree
 - to grant the right to nominate professors
 - to suspend the rights ...
- ◆ Opinions for the Minister:
 - to establish a new university
- ◆ Opinions for the Rector:
 - to establish a new Faculty

7/7/05 Berlin: Accreditation in the European Higher Education Area - different paths to internationalisation 12

Accreditation Outcomes

- Outcome from Institutional Accreditation:
 - ◆ a detailed report that
 - identifies strengths and weaknesses
 - makes recommendations to the Institution

7/7/05 Berlin: Accreditation in the European Higher Education Area - different paths to internationalisation 13

Recent Experience – point of departure

- Law 131/2002 stipulated:
 - ◆ Only (re-)accredited programmes can be offered in 2005/06
 - ◆ Only 3-tier compliant programmes can be offered in 2005/06
 - ◆ Every programme must be linked to some field(s) of study from a general classification

7/7/05 Berlin: Accreditation in the European Higher Education Area - different paths to internationalisation 14

Recent Experience – process

- HE institutions:
 - ◆ Learning process
 - ◆ Design process
- Accreditation Commission
 - ◆ Learning process
 - ◆ Programmes evaluation (management: $2 \cdot 10^3$ programmes, $4 \cdot 10^2$ experts in $3 \cdot 10$ groups)

7/7/05 Berlin: Accreditation in the European Higher Education Area - different paths to internationalisation 15

Recent Experience – outcomes

- HE institutions:
 - ◆ Roughly 80% success rate
 - ◆ Matter to reflect upon
- Accreditation Commission
 - ◆ Still easier to evaluate input criteria than output ones

7/7/05 Berlin: Accreditation in the European Higher Education Area - different paths to internationalisation 16

Case 1

- HEI from abroad intends to offer their study programme in Slovakia
 - ◆ (The most popular study fields: law, management, etc.)
 - ◆ National legislature must be applied:
 - HEI opens its local branch (needs government approval)
 - Submits study programme for accreditation in Slovakia

7/7/05 Berlin: Accreditation in the European Higher Education Area - different paths to internationalisation 17

Case 2

- A Slovak HEI intends to offer its study programme abroad (e.g., in country X)
 - ◆ Submits study programme for Slovak accreditation
 - ◆ Any further steps depend on local legislation of country X

7/7/05 Berlin: Accreditation in the European Higher Education Area - different paths to internationalisation 18

Case 3

- 2 HEI intend to open a common study programme: (e.g. the first part of the study in one country (Germany), the second part in other country (Slovakia)).
 - ◆ Joint degree (?)
 - ◆ ECTS

7/7/05 Berlin: Accreditation in the European Higher Education Area - different paths to internationalisation 19

International aspects

- Sharing knowledge
- Sharing experts
- Sharing results
- Mutual acceptance/recognition:
 - ◆ Criteria
 - ◆ Procedures
 - ◆ Outcomes
 - ◆ Decisions

7/7/05 Berlin: Accreditation in the European Higher Education Area - different paths to internationalisation 20

A possible outline for [some] steps towards [partial] mutual acceptance between accrediting bodies

- Studying and assessing each other's
 - ◆ Legislation
 - ◆ Criteria, standards
 - ◆ Procedures
 - ◆ Outcomes
 - ◆ Decisions

7/7/05 Berlin: Accreditation in the European Higher Education Area - different paths to internationalisation 21

A possible outline for [some] steps towards [partial] mutual acceptance between accrediting bodies

- Proposals of necessary changes (if needed) to achieve consistent and comparable
 - ◆ Criteria and standards
 - ◆ Procedures
 - ◆ Outcomes
 - ◆ Decisions

7/7/05 Berlin: Accreditation in the European Higher Education Area - different paths to internationalisation 22

Issues for the future

- Achieving comparable criteria and procedures of accreditation may be a step towards a mutual acceptance of outcomes and decisions
- Developing the legal framework
 - ◆ (in Slovakia: e.g. transnational education, joint, double degrees)

7/7/05 Berlin: Accreditation in the European Higher Education Area - different paths to internationalisation 23