

## DEVELOPMENT BASED ON INTER-UNIVERSITY COOPERATION

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### ABSTRACT

The internationalization of higher education is one of the most important trends in social development. The article describes the market of educational services in the context of its high mobility and the main forms in which the process is implemented. Particular attention is drawn to

cooperation of universities, exchange of experience, improvement of quality of knowledge, which is crucial for competitiveness of the nation and the state. The possibilities of transport education, its specificity and key problems against the background of global challenges of the present are considered.

**Keywords:** higher education, quality, internationalization, university, transport, mobility, cooperation.

**Background.** The progress of education and science is the main element of sustainable economic development. Knowledge plays a key role both for the individual and society as a whole. Structures that have absorbed more knowledge naturally occupy more profitable market niches, and nations that have at their disposal a sufficient arsenal of knowledge are more competitive.

**Objective.** The objective of the authors is to consider development of transport education based on inter-university cooperation.

**Methods.** The authors use general scientific methods, comparative analysis, scientific description, evaluation approach.

### Results.

#### 1. Mission of buditels

Education can be viewed as an infrastructure consisting of educational institutions offering knowledge and specialists training personnel for the labor market.

Accordingly, all of us, teachers and scientists, as participants in the market of educational services, take an active part in implementation of the mission assigned to us and the state policy in the field of education.

The first day of November in Bulgaria marks the Day of National Buditels. «Buditel» is a person who during his entire life popularizes and considers knowledge of national history as his main priority, fosters love for his native language, as well as his admiration for the native culture and spirit of the nation. In a broader sense, buditels are all former and true figures of science and education who are even unknown to the public contribute to the spiritual and intellectual development of the young person. In this sense, we, the teachers, taking into account our responsibility to society, are awakening, we have the honorable mission of dedicating the young people who are coming to replace us in the world of knowledge. According to the inscription of the times of the Bulgarian ruler Omurtag, carved on a column in the ancient capital of Bulgaria, the city of Pliska: «No matter how well a person lives, he dies and another is born». And it is necessary to transfer to this other all the accumulated by previous generations.

That is why our policy in the field of education is so important. And not only because we are conducting it, but also because we are participating in its development.

The presence of market economy creates a strong competition between various higher educational institutions both on the national and international markets for educational services.

In assessing the competitiveness of a university, it is essential to understand its value as a market entity and the value of the products offered. The competitive advantages that higher education institutions form and support, become decisive. And they develop, taking into account external and internal factors. At least the value of the educational services of the university depends both on the evaluation of consumers, and on the learning process itself and its results.

In the conditions of market economy and a constant deficit of public funding for higher education, there is a growing need for effective management of higher education institutions and their adaptation to the characteristics of the labor market. Specialties of graduates should satisfy the demands of the economy, attract interest, provide the holders of the diploma the

opportunity for successful professional growth and a high standard of living.

The economic environment surrounding us and the state of the labor market require continuous improvement and improvement of people's skills, as well as the acquisition of new knowledge and skills. Increasing investment in education brings the greatest dividends, and therefore, efforts should be focused on creating a modern, flexible educational system. This in itself is already a serious challenge, as it deals with the conditions that provide a person with lifelong learning.

#### 2. Mobility and rotation

Internationalization in the field of higher education has become one of the most stable modern trends.

Globalization and internationalization of the economy and business put forward new goals for higher education – providing training for professional staff able to work effectively in the ever-changing global market conditions.

Cooperation between universities in the international aspect is connected with organization of exchange of students and teachers, the offer of special programs for foreign students, development of research projects.

The main forms in which this process is implemented are the following:

- mobility of students and teachers,
- compatibility of curricula and programs,
- creation and expansion of regional and international university networks,
- quality of education,
- sharing knowledge,
- international recognition, etc.

A characteristic sign of changing benchmarks and values is student mobility, within which an annual increase in the number of students studying abroad is observed. Mobility itself is supported by various programs (international, national, regional), which leads to the need for concluding bilateral and multilateral agreements in the field of education. One of the priority European academic exchange programs is Erasmus, which has now been transformed into Erasmus+. Its beginning was laid in 1987, and the main goal was to create a common European educational market. The program allowed to expand contacts with countries that are not members of the European Union. Academic exchange has become a serious means for strengthening the market, targeted use of specialists and qualified personnel. Rotation of knowledge, increase of competence determine the development of society as a whole.

Many universities enter into cooperation agreements that deal with different aspects of teaching and research. Often the objects of these agreements are exchange of students and/or teachers, offer of joint training programs.

#### 3. Training of transport specialists

Transport is one of the fastest growing sectors of the economy, and it urgently needs specialized training to meet these growing needs. Todor Kableshkov Transport University is a state higher education institution with 94-year-old traditions in the field of transport education in Bulgaria. The students are trained in 16 specialties of the bachelor's degree, 23 specialties of the master's degree in two main areas of higher education:

- social, economic and legal sciences,
- technical sciences,

in seven accredited professional directions of study:

- economics,
- machine engineering,
- electrical engineering, electronics and automation,
- communication and computer equipment,
- transport, navigation and aviation,
- architecture, construction and geodesy,
- general engineering,

and also within the framework of 22 educational programs for the educational and scientific degree «doctor».

The university has a strong competitiveness both in the national and international education markets, is a member of the Erasmus University Charter, which provides student mobility for training in more than 40 European partner universities and mobility for internships in foreign partner institutions. In 2016, a project was developed for the Erasmus + program, within which student and teacher exchanges will be conducted in Russia, Serbia and China.

Training of highly qualified transport specialists in the conditions of internationalization depends on the cooperation established between educational institutions. Exchange of experience and best practices, qualified teaching staff, development and use of scientific infrastructure, laboratories, stands provide opportunities to achieve a high level of education. One aspect of the quality of education is related to the dependence between the educational process and the professional realization of specialists.

The object of close attention and observation is the correspondence of theoretical knowledge and practical skills of students to the requirements of the market and consumers of staff, since this determines the successful professional activity of graduates in the transport system, logistics, various organizational and industrial branch and administrative structures.

Todor Kableshevskov Transport University maintains partnership relations with 52 foreign universities, with which agreements have been concluded on the exchange of teachers and students, on the organization of student internships, scientific research, and others.

Partnership with Moscow State University of Railway Engineering (MIIT) has been going on for many years. A university with a 120-year history, occupying leading positions in the Russian and international education markets, is the most important partner of the only transport university in Bulgaria. Fruitful cooperation between us is aimed at the realization of a number of tasks:

- We share our experience in development of curricula and programs in various disciplines.
- We create joint scientific projects, publish educational and scientific literature.
- We take part in the scientific conferences of both universities.
- We exchange teachers for lecturing and organizing training.
- Our scientists are members of the editorial boards of scientific journals and program committees of scientific conferences.
- We support each other in the career development of teachers, many of whom have passed from the position of assistant to the positions of associate professor and professor.
- We develop joint scientific and applied research activities on the main operational and infrastructural areas of modern transport science.
- We publish joint scientific developments in specialized publications.
- We carry out an annual exchange of students, doctoral students and teachers for international internships.

Experience and knowledge accumulated in the process of organizing educational and scientific national and international forums provide an excellent opportunity to create large-scale scientific networks, clusters that contribute to the formation of a knowledge society.

Prospects for development of transport education in conditions of internationalization include:

- Deepening of cooperation and exchange of experience in order to popularize achievements in scientific research conducted in partnership between business and universities of different countries.
- Innovative sustainability with an emphasis on practical results.
- Development of a mechanism for formation of joint teams of experts based on creation of an effective and long-term model of cooperation between universities, business and research institutes.
- Transfer of scientific and technological achievements.
- Support of joint training programs with mutual recognition of diplomas.
- Formation of international scientific groups to assess the impact and internalization of external costs associated with traffic, greenhouse gas emissions, local and noise pollution.
- Development of research and development activities aimed at maintaining positions in the production of transport equipment, using specific engineering technologies and increasing investment in infrastructure.

Training of transport specialists is difficult due to its complexity and specifics, but we are deeply convinced that the right way to quality and effective training is through cooperation between universities, the use of flexible and attractive educational forms, development of scientific infrastructure on the basis of joint projects.

Caring for young specialists is a serious challenge for our countries, because creating favorable conditions for their education and professional development simultaneously works to improve the demographic situation and improve the quality of life.

**Conclusion.** As specialized universities in the field of transport, we seek to stimulate the process of lifelong learning and the possibility of continuous improvement of professional skills and competence. The training of students and doctoral students in transport universities is not only a guarantee of obtaining modern education, but also a reliable basis for professional implementation in one of the most dynamic and promising sectors of the economy.

Multilateral cooperation and friendship between universities is a winning formula for development of education in the process of internationalization. It is not by chance that in life we value friendship above all good and believe that the threads of friendship should not be ripped under any circumstances. Close university ties at the level of our countries confirm the mutual benefit from integration of interests and approaches to education, training of transport personnel.

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