

Legal Background of Health Promotion in Hungarian and Portuguese Higher Education

Contexto jurídico da Promoção da Saúde no Ensino Superior na Hungria e em Portugal

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Abstract

Perhaps the most important thing for people's health is a healthy lifestyle. In the development of a healthy lifestyle, health education at all levels of education is decisive. The study examines how this applies to higher education in a Western European and an Eastern European country. Through the example of specific university solutions, this article attempts to answer the question of how to integrate the knowledge needed to choose a healthy lifestyle into the education system. The research focuses on the factors that shape the health awareness of a higher education institution in Hungary and Portugal in everyday life, and whether - and if so, how - health education appears in the basic tasks of the examined universities - in education and in research. The significance of this study lies in the fact that the presence of health promotion in higher education institutions results, on the one hand, in healthier students pursuing a healthier life, and on the other hand mobilizes the wider social environment towards a healthy lifestyle.

Resumo

Talvez o mais importante para a saúde das pessoas seja um estilo de vida saudável. No desenvolvimento de um estilo de vida saudável, a educação para a saúde a todos os níveis de educação é decisiva. O estudo examina a forma como isto se aplica ao ensino superior num país da Europa Ocidental e num país da Europa Oriental. Através do exemplo de soluções específicas nas universidades, este artigo procura responder à questão de como integrar os conhecimentos necessários para escolher um estilo de vida saudável no sistema educativo. A investigação centra-se nos fatores que moldam a sensibilização para a saúde de uma instituição de ensino superior no dia-a-dia, na Hungria e em Portugal, e se - e se sim, como - a educação para a saúde aparece nas tarefas básicas das universidades examinadas, quer no ensino, quer na investigação. A importância deste estudo reside no facto de a presença da promoção da saúde nas instituições de ensino superior resultar, por um lado, em estudantes mais saudáveis que prosseguem uma vida mais saudável e, por outro lado, na mobilização do ambiente social mais vasto para um estilo de vida saudável.

1 INTRODUCTION

In order to effectively improve the health of our societies, in addition to minimizing adverse environmental impacts, it is essential to improve a personal health culture and, in this context, to help citizens change their attitudes and lifestyles. Based on estimates, it can be said that an individual's health is affected by genetic factors of approximately 15-30%, the standard of health care is 10-15%, while the remaining 55-75% are due to lifestyle factors closely related to socio-economic status and education. The principle of the interaction and variable prevalence of genetic and environmental factors in the development of diseases can be considered generally accepted today (ÁDÁNY, 2011).

In general, therefore, we can say that lifestyle is of paramount importance among the factors determining an individual's state of health. And the role of health education in the development of a healthy lifestyle is indisputable, especially in the field of education. The implementation of healthy lifestyles and behaviours should appear at all levels of education. The university is the last level where knowledge related to a healthy lifestyle can be transferred in the form of an organization. In our study we are trying to find out whether these evident social expectations appear in the requirements and regulations of Hungarian and Portuguese higher education.

2 LEGAL BASES

2.1 REGULATIONS IN HUNGARY

The right to health is called second-generation fundamental right, which took root in the European constitutional states in the first half of the 20th century. At the same time, this right has a broader content in European constitutional regulations than health care: it includes, for example, the right to a healthy environment, a healthy lifestyle, or state support for sport (CSERNY; TÉGLÁSI, 2014).

The fundamental right enshrined in the Fundamental Law of Hungary is the right to physical and mental health, which is sub served by the state - among other things - by providing access to healthy food, organizing health care and supporting sport and regular exercise. The constitutional requirement, defined as the right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, is the obligation of the state to create an economic and legal environment conducive to a healthy lifestyle for its citizens, adapted to the carrying capacity of the national economy and society and way of life. The "highest level" is thus based on the country's current economic capacity, not on the development of medicine [56/1995. (IX. 15.) AB decision].

From the point of view of constitutional law, it is a significant issue that the provision of health care is the sole legal/moral obligation of the state, or that society also has a moral responsibility for it. On the other hand, at the same time, the question arises as to whether the obligation in question of the state can be formulated as an individual right of citizens. The majority of European constitutions on these issues generally assume that prevention in health care, that is the protection of society as a whole, is a purely state task, whereas the coverage of treatment is shared between the person concerned and the state in different proportions and principles (SÁRI; SOMODY, 2008).

Thus, the protection of health is not only a state task, especially in the health sector, despite the fact that the incentive role of the state in the field is indisputable, e.g. in legislation or institution development. Health protection and health promotion are also to a significant extent an individual responsibility, in which state organizations and non-governmental organizations must also play a decisive role. At the same time, the development of individual responsibility also requires a supportive environment where the right patterns can be learned and the latest information based on scientific research is available.

According to the wording of Act CLIV of 1997 on Health the "health promotion" is an activity aimed at increasing the health knowledge of the population, healthy behaviour, and the prevention of health-damaging harms and diseases [Act on Health § 37 (1)].

Consequently, health promotion aims to improve health and quality of life and to protect health. There are two main tools available to achieve this: prevention of health problems on the one hand, and health education on the other. In this context, the Act on Health determines the theoretical content of health education in the universities.

In higher education, students should be introduced to - inter alia - information on healthy lifestyles, in particular healthy eating, regular exercise, non-smoking and alcohol abuse, and the creation of a healthy environment, and the health-promoting role of exercise and sport [Act on Health § 38 (1) points b.d.].

The quality of health promotion is significantly determined by its ability to fit into the structure of the area to be developed. The responsibility of the state - among the health status of the population - integrating the knowledge needed to make healthy lifestyle choices into the education system [Act on Health § 141 (3) point g.]. In our opinion, it is worth integrating this obligation into the basic tasks of universities, displaying it in research topics, incorporating it into education, and into educational curricula. The developments and changes can be effective in a systematic approach involving universities as a whole. Above all, however, the commitment of university leaders is

necessary to the goals of health promotion, as well as its reflection in institutional strategies and in the management of day-to-day tasks.

2.2 REGULATIONS IN PORTUGAL

Under Portuguese Law, a specific section (article 64) is dedicated in the Constitution of the Portuguese Republic to “Health” (CRISÓSTOMO, 2016). It indicates: “Everyone has the right to the protection of health and the duty to defend and promote health.” (§ 1). This perspective of health seen not only as a right, but also as a duty, is rather original, especially when one compares the constitutions of the European Union member states.¹

This vision of a “duty to defend and promote health” actually refers to the issue of prevention, including proactive activities done by the common citizen in the collective sphere (public health). In addition, this duty is implicitly connected not only to the respect public health norms strictly speaking, but also ones related to the protection of the environment, and having clear consequences on human health.

We may question whether it would be possible to see this “duty” as an individual duty, and an obligation for the individual to remain in good health, opting for a healthy lifestyle, doing sport activities and also preventive health exams for example. The analysis of the remaining paragraphs of article 64 of the Portuguese Constitution give an indication, by mentioning sport, and at the same time putting the emphasis on the responsibility of *all*, and not only of the state, to create the conditions for the “right to the protection of health” (and not to the right to health as such, noteworthy to mention). Yet, the “responsibility of all” may refer not to the citizen itself, individually, but instead to organized bodies, including the ones more specifically in charge of education in its broader sense. Indeed, the creation of the conditions of the right to the protection of health includes, in the Portuguese Constitution terminology, developing sport at school and also a broader “health and hygiene education”. Paragraph 2 of article 64 is clear on this aspect. It reads as follows:

“ 2. The right to the protection of health shall be fulfilled: (...) b) By creating economic, social, cultural and environmental conditions that particularly guarantee the protection of childhood, youth and old age; by systematically improving living and working conditions, and *promoting physical fitness and sport*

*at school and among the people; and also by developing the people's health and hygiene education and healthy living practices.*²

In addition, another section of the Portuguese Constitution deals more specifically with “Physical education and sport”(article 79). However, this provision does not refer, quite oddly, to education. It simply mentions: “Everyone has the right to physical education and sport” (§ 1).

The legal regulation of health, and more specifically health policy in Portugal, is in fact the object of the Framework Law on Health (Law 95/2019 of 4 September). This Framework Law is a landmark in the Portuguese legal system, and only originated in 1990, being revised for the second time in 2019. The current version of this major law is composed of 37 “basic principles” which are binding for all decision-law makers, and regulates compulsorily all the forthcoming laws on health, health policy and health care in Portugal.

Paragraph 2 of Principle 4 of the law, on “Health policy”, indicates that “The foundations of health policy are: (...) e) The promotion of health education and health literacy, enabling the realization of free and enlightened choices for the adoption of healthy lifestyles (...)”³

Principle 32 of the Framework Law on Health is dedicated to “Higher education”, and its two first paragraphs contain a guideline to regulate higher education health studies, rather than health in higher education properly speaking. They read as follows:

“ 1 - The ministries responsible for health, education and science and education collaborate with public higher education institutions in the definition of pre-graduate education, with the objective of adapting the curricular content of the courses with the needs of providing high quality health care and adapting the number of students to needs of the country.

2 - The ministries responsible for health, education and science and education in conjunction with universities, health units and the structures and associations representative of health professionals, coordinate post-graduate training policies, with the objective of ensuring access to post-graduate education for all health professionals of high scientific, technical and humanist levels.

Finally, and as regards the regulations on Higher Education, the Portuguese Law is ruled by Law 62/2007, of 20 September, defining the Legal Regime of Higher Education Institutions. There is no mention at all in this law to health, or to the promotion of physical activities in general. However, the law states the contents of Academic Social Aid and other educational aids (article 20) and, within this topics, mentions that the “indirect” modalities of social aid are: a) access to food and accommodation; b) access to health services; (c) support for cultural and sporting activities; d) Access to other educational support (cf. article 20 § 5 of the Legal Regime of Higher Education Institutions). 4

¹ . For example, the Spanish Constitution, Section 23, contains a provision on the right to health which mentions the duties, but in a clearly different perspective than the Portuguese Constitution does. In effect, after referring that “The right to health protection is recognized” (§ 1), it indicates that “It is incumbent upon the public authorities to organize and watch over public health by means of preventive measures and the necessary benefits and services. The law shall establish the rights and duties of all in this respect” (§ 2)(our underlining).

² . Our underlining.

³ . Our translation.

⁴ . Our translation.

Despite this rather limited reference to health in the Higher Education Institutions, a recently approved legislation established the status of Student-Athlete in Higher Education (Decree-Law 55/2019, of 24 April). The detailed analysis of this decree shows that the advantages of being a student practicing sport at competition level are in fact quite reduced (possibility to justify absences in a certain type of classes, excluding practical ones; exceptionally the possibility to register in additional exam sessions, and some material and financial aids). Yet, the bureaucratic aspects (e.g. the need to prove attendance to a minimum number of sport trainings; and the need to register in a sport federation to get the maximum advantages), make it difficult to imagine how a true culture of health and sport at university could emerge from this law.

As regards the more specific aspect of sport and physical activity, the legal background in Portugal is a bit older, dating back 2007. The Framework Law on Physical Activity and Sport is contained in Law 5/2007, of 16 January.

Only two brief mentions to higher education are made in this law: the first concerns State incentives to research in this area (article 10); the second reference (article 28) regards the practice of physical activities in education institutions, and contains a specific paragraph on higher education, stating: “§ 3 - Higher education institutions define the regulatory principles of sports practice in their communities, recognising the relevance of student associations and their governing structures in the field of organisation and development of sports practice in this context.”

As a general comment, it is possible to say that this reference is rather short, and that it does not establish any connection between health and physical activity, nor provide an incentive to a culture to collaboration between higher education institutions and the society in general on this issue.

To sum-up, the Portuguese legal context is a rather complete regulatory legal scope, in what concerns the promotion of health in general, with interesting references to the right and duty to protect the right to health, and a reference to physical activities. As regards higher education, the regulatory framework appears as a voluntarist legal framework, relying on the proactivity of the institutions. It also classifies the health, cultural and sport activities in the social aid policy of institutions, which may be in the end counterproductive, giving an undervalued image of the referred activities. One of the issue to extract from the Portuguese legal context is that it relies on the belief that a collective dynamic, promoting health and healthy practices in communities and giving the main role to self-organized groups like associations, will have a systematic impact on the society and also on individuals' options and practices of healthy lifestyles.

It remains to be seen if the regulations contained in the

law, as concerns the promotion of health on a large scale, in the society, and in a small scale, in the higher education institutions, are actually working in practice. This point may actually be debatable, and requires a closer screening, not only in Portugal but also in Hungary.

3 HEALTH PROMOTION IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

3.1. ELEMENTS

In our study, we consider it important to clarify the concepts that most frequently appear in our writing, such as health culture, health education, health promotion, health protection, and health awareness.

In the interpretation of Kiss (2006), health culture is a system of community goals and tools for preserving, restoring, and improving health, associated with the individual and community behaviours. According to Hruschka and Hadley (2008), health culture includes knowledge, values, habits, expectations, and rules of conduct related to maintaining health and preventing disease that also appear at the community level and influence the behaviour of community members. Through them, they help the individual to regulate, optimize his/her health, meet his/her health-related needs. Accordingly, health culture can also be interpreted as a set of learned beliefs, values, and habits related to health that guide individuals' health-related behaviours in a given society.

From the point of view of our research topic, the priority areas of health culture are health promotion and health education. In Hungary, these two terms are very often used synonymously with each other, despite the fact that in health education the knowledge of the individual has a decisive effect on the state of health; health promotion is a broader concept that includes measures to improve health, including health education. While health education is primarily prevention, knowledge acquisition, knowledge transfer, health promotion is the utilization and expansion of acquired knowledge.

The Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion provides a clear guide to distinguishing between the two concepts, according to which health promotion is a broader category: “Health promotion is the process that gives people, communities a way to better manage and improve their health. In order to achieve a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing, an individual or group must be able to articulate and realize their desires, meet their needs, and change or adapt to their environment. Health promotion is therefore not just the responsibility of the health sector.” Health promotion is thus a process in which an individual seeks, on the one hand, to maintain and improve his or her state of health, as well as to change it, except for genetic inheritance, which cannot be modified. On the other hand, people do not directly

improve their health, but seek to change the environmental and economic factors and determinants that affect their health. Healthy individuals increase their control over improving their health, gaining the ability to lead a healthy lifestyle (FREYER; HORVÁTH; NAGY, 2020).

The World Health Organization defines health education as a “set of consciously created learning opportunities” as part of health promotion, with the fundamental aim of helping individuals and communities to maintain their health and shape their healthy behaviours and lifestyles by broadening their knowledge. In the research of this issue in both the international and Hungarian literature, the definitions formulated by the WHO are usually the starting points, which are coloured by variations of health culture prevailing in the given region. As in most languages, including Hungarian, the “health promotion is translated as health development, so this term is also used in Hungary.

Among the concepts related to health, the higher education sub-project of the priority project No. TAMOP 6.1.1.-12/1-2013-0001 of the National Development Institute, entitled “Creation of a Professional Network for Health Development”, has also suggested the use of term “health promotion” recently (BÁRDOS; KRAICINÉ SZOKOLY, 2018). In Hungary, as indicated earlier, the Act on Health affirms the content of health promotion.

The concept of health awareness includes the attitudes and behaviours of individuals/communities towards health. Relevant research usually uses indicator structures, namely: health-conscious lifestyles and/or health-conscious education, health-conscious attitudes, and health-conscious behaviours in specific age groups and/or status groups (NAGY; KOVÁCS, 2017). The above topics are mainly studied along the health dimensions, i.e. they try to explore some age, occupation, residence, etc. the level of health awareness of populations in relation to nutrition, exercise, self-harming behaviours and lifestyles. A recurring theme is the study of the interactions between health awareness and health determinants, i.e., mapping how health awareness affects the impact of health determinants on the one hand, and how health awareness influences health behaviour on the other. Individual responsibility, that is the responsibility of the person for himself or herself, for the preservation of his or her integrity, which requires us to take care of our wellbeing, physical and mental and relationship balance, plays a key role in health awareness (BAGDY, 2010).

Harris and Guten (1979) model, which can be considered a classic, we can distinguish eight main components of health-conscious behaviour: conscious nutrition, personal hygiene, regular health self-monitoring, avoidance of harmful substance abuse, balanced mental life, rest hygiene, adequate hygiene, screening. Although other health-protective behaviours were

written at the time the theory was born, the components of health-conscious behaviours have hardly changed in the decades since. The multifactorial list grew pretty much with just the right amount of sleep and enough fluid intake.

3.2 INTERNAL REGULATION OF HUNGARIAN AND PORTUGUESE HIGHER EDUCATION

The professional task of the university can be defined in the triangle of research, curriculum development and education (FREYER; NAGY, 2018). However, in addition to cultivating the above-mentioned functions at a high level, the university also passes on cultural values to the intellectuals of the future. Based on this, the authors further examine the legal definition of health education and its presence in higher education institutions within the field of health culture.

Given that the central legislation in Hungary and Portugal does not formulate specific expectations for higher education institutions regarding their health education tasks, we assume that the expectations for universities appear in the educational requirements, scientific topics, curricula and educational portfolios of the institutions. In the course of our research, we focus on what other factors/indicators besides normative and individual regulations shape the health awareness of the institution. We would like to know whether health education and health awareness appear in the everyday life of these institutions.

Questions related to research areas:

- Does health appear in the strategies of the universities and their output training requirements?
- Is there any research related to health education?
- Does health awareness education appear in curricula and education?
- Does the infrastructure of the institution provide a healthy environment?
- Are the services of the institution health conscious?

We conducted our research at two medium-sized Hungarian universities - where teachers, sports professionals, government officials, diplomats, military and law enforcement officers are trained - and at one bigger Portuguese university with a comparable wide range of activities. The universities have been selected due to their historical relevance in the national educational landscapes, and also due to their official commitments to general and specific aspects of health promotion.

3.2.1 University of Physical Education (Hungary)

The University of Physical Education is the oldest physical education institution in Europe, founded in 1925, which seeks to adapt its

traditions and culture to the new challenges of the knowledge-based society, taking into account the changing needs. The aim of the University is to train professionals who play a key role in the healthy physical and mental development of the nation, thus contributing not only to the social, economic and cultural vision of sport, but also to the lifestyle, quality of life and health-conscious approach of society.

Accordingly, health awareness is of paramount importance in the undergraduate, master's and special postgraduate courses of the University, and in their subjects. For example students choosing a specialization "Recreation and Health Promotion" Bsc. will be able to create and develop the conditions for a health and lifestyle culture in different social strata and in social, health, educational institutions and non-governmental organizations. The "recreation managers" in MSc training have the highest level of theoretical and practical knowledge needed to achieve a healthy lifestyle and develop physical education. The activities of "human kinesiologists" in the master's program are also aimed at maintaining and promoting health, developing methods for improving health, and planning and applying related nutrition programs. The University's traditional "physical education, physiotherapy and health teacher training" programs also emphasize in addition to sports science training, teaching sports education methodology and pedagogical psychology subjects and knowledge related to school health promotion. Last but not least, the specialists in the field of "sports-specific dietetics" - among other things - they will be able to provide sport-specific advice to athletes in competitive situations, series competitions, preparation and regeneration. As a result, they will be able to develop strategies to support athletes in maintaining health, optimizing performance, and achieving goals.

University research objectives are usually aligned with ad hoc objectives funded by government institutions, of course keeping in mind the basic tasks of the university (Applied Research and Development in Health - Founding Charta of the University of Physical Education 4.4).

The purpose of the University, as stated in its Founding Charta of the University of Physical Education is - among other things - to provide opportunities for sports as well as services that serve the healthy lifestyle and health care of students and teachers and the population (Founding Charta of the University of Physical Education 4.3.). In this sense, the university sports association provides opportunities for university and non-university citizens who want to train and compete in many sports. The swimming pool of the University (and later the additional sports facilities that will be completed) will provide the opportunity for the public to move around in a way that is accessible to the public. The University of Physical Education's recently established portfolio of services through its integrated laboratories provides services to university citizens and partners, as well as athletes and the general

public, such as sports cardiology, sports orthopaedics, body composition, muscle strength measurements, 2D motion analysis, sports dietetics and psychology, or the so-called traditional blood sampling and laboratory diagnostics.

It is hoped that by the third decade of the 21st century, training and services that are constantly renewed in terms of content will be supported by an appropriate infrastructural background. The education and service centre of the university, the most modern campus of Hungary also aims at the complete renovation of educational buildings and sports facilities, as well as the construction of new facilities. The technical equipment related to the developments, the technological and IT infrastructure supporting the pedagogical and training methods will be designed in accordance with the most modern needs of the age. Multifunctional educational and sports facilities, laboratories and community spaces, which can provide the highest level of quality and comfort, are ideal conditions for students to enrich their knowledge in the field of health promotion in addition to their studies and for the benefit of society.

3.2.2 National University of Public Service (Hungary)

NUPS is the newest university in Hungary, founded in 2011. There are currently four faculties in the institution. The Faculty of Law Enforcement and the Faculty of Military Science and Military Training, where officers are mainly trained. At the Faculty of Political Science and International Studies in Public Administration students receive the knowledge necessary to perform the domestic and international tasks of diplomacy, while the Faculty of Water Sciences is preparing water management specialists.

NUPS was built in a 23-hectare park in the centre of Budapest, largely with the renovation of completely new facilities and historic buildings. The educational buildings have three restaurants with six buffets and countless lounges and communal spaces. Two dormitories with double rooms were made for the students. A swimming pool, outdoor and indoor sports fields, as well as a shooting range and an obstacle course were built for special training. The infrastructure is needs of the 21st century, also of international quality.

In accordance with the profile of the institution, the training palette consists primarily of the transfer of legal knowledge and the professional knowledge necessary for the later vocation of students. It can be said in general that there is no subject specifically related to health awareness at the university. Indirectly, however, health awareness information appears in a few lessons. Students can get answers to their questions related to physical health in physical education classes and mental health in behavioural science classes. A special area in the two officer training faculties is physical education and training, where, in addition to a high level of physical preparation, candidates can acquire life management

skills related to their later profession. Among the Output Training Requirements for Candidate Cadets, a health education task appears in the line of skills and attitudes. The ability required for Faculty of Law Enforcement and Faculty of Military Science and Military Training is the appropriate physical condition. The capability to be developed is to “maintain the expected level of physical condition of law enforcement professionals”. In the category of attitudes, the expectation is that, be “Resilient to the mental and physical stress of work and be familiar with institutional and individual solutions to stress management”. These expectations are also reflected in the descriptions of the subject programs. Health aspects are also taken into account in the organization of education. The number of hours has decreased throughout the university. NUPS has a cyclical schedule that makes it possible to plan the workload of students. Candidate cadets’ agendas include lunchtime when a session cannot be arranged.

Not only in training, but also in the regulation of the institution, health-conscious measures have appeared in the recent period. In the NUPS Sports Concept, a healthy lifestyle has been given a prominent role in the physical education and workplace sports. The University has a sports association with 23 departments. In addition to free physical education classes, the institution funds our students’ participation in university, home affairs, and military tournaments. As a service, the University organizes morning aerobics and afternoon football classes for its employees. Public employees and professionals participate in annual health screenings, and medical care is on-going. The citizens of the university can visit the sports facilities of the NUPS with a discounted sports card.

3.2.3 University of Coimbra (Portugal)

The University of Coimbra is the oldest university of Portugal, and one of the oldest in the world. It was created on 1st March 1290 at the initiative of the King Dinis I of Portugal, with the papal bull of the Pope Nicholas IV. Operating first in Lisbon, the university was transferred to Coimbra in 1308 and after several changes between the two cities, settled permanently in Coimbra in 1537. It has a special place among the Portuguese universities, in part due to the fact that it was the only university centre in the country until the 20th century. It also has a strong tradition of student’s cultural associations, with the oldest Portuguese student’s association, the Academic Association of Coimbra, founded on 5 November 1887 (SILVA, 2006). The University, with around 25,000 students, is the home to one of the country’s largest international student’s communities. It is among the most cosmopolitan university in Portugal, with 5275 foreign students, including more than 1100 international exchange programs’ students. It participates in the European university exchanges of the Utrecht Network and the Coimbra Group. In addition to that, the university main place, a beautiful medieval place (called the ‘Paço das Escolas’, which is to be translated by “main place of the schools”), is visited every year

by nearly 200,000 tourists from all over the world, and is UNESCO worldwide heritage.

The University of Coimbra is organized in eight different faculties, which number has been growing over the last ten years. This includes the Faculty of Humanities, the Faculty of Law, the Faculty of Science and Technology, the Faculty of Pharmacy, the Faculty of Economics, The Faculty of Psychology and Education, and indeed the Faculty of Sport Sciences and Physical Education. The university offers currently 36 undergraduate courses, 115 Master courses, and 72 Doctoral degrees. The university also offers more than 200 courses which are not degree courses, but are indeed useful for professionals for example. Oddly, none of the undergraduate courses include explicitly in its title the issue of health or other aspects most specialized (e.g. Sport and physical education). It is only at Master and Doctoral levels that this focus can be found. At Master level, the most relevant degree in this field is the Master in Exercise, Health and Well-being for Special Groups, a Master course provided within the Faculty of Sport Sciences and Physical Education. This Master degree main angle of studies is “psychological well-being by means of the participation in programs of regular physical exercise in groups with special needs that usually have a greater tendency to a sedentary lifestyle” (UNIVERSITY OF COIMBRA, 2020a). One of the original competence that student can acquire with this course is the knowledge of specific methodologies for adapted sports coaching in each area of disability, and also “skills aiming to plan and organize physical activity and adapted sport events” (*id.*).

Another Master course related to health is the Master Degree in Sports Medicine. Albeit explicitly aiming at training physicians and also dentists of Sports Medicine, in order for them to be able to “evaluate athletes and others dedicated to Sports and Physical Activity”, the Master course does not limit admissions to these professionals, despite the fact that it depends on the Faculty of Medicine (UNIVERSITY OF COIMBRA, 2020b).

A third Master course is worth mentioning. It is the Master in Management and Health Economics, which depends on a third Faculty, the Faculty of Economics. Its description is not too specific and rather vague on the objectives of the course, but at least clarifies that the students shall grasp “specialized qualifications for exercising functions in the health field, namely at public organisms, associations and companies” (UNIVERSITY OF COIMBRA, 2020c).

As regards the Doctoral programs, only two programs deal directly on health issues, namely the Doctorate Program in Sport Sciences (depending on the Faculty of Sport Sciences and Physical Education)(UNIVERSITY OF COIMBRA, 2020d) and the Doctoral Programme in Health Sciences (which is linked to the Faculty of Medicine)(UNIVERSITY OF COIMBRA, 2020e).

As indicated earlier, the University of Coimbra also

offers non-degree courses, with a more limited number of hours and a more modest format, in almost all of the above-mentioned designated degrees, both Master and Doctoral levels.

This whole set of training is completed by a rather modest range of services to the community. It is true that the University of Coimbra is actually linked to one of the main hospitals of the city, which works in articulation with the university for the training of all areas of health. Still, the health consultations offered at the University of Coimbra campi are mainly directed to the members of its community, that is the students and teachers themselves. Two exceptions to this are the services offered by the Faculty of Psychology and Education, providing a full range of community consultations, namely paid services in Psychology, for all ages and types of problems (FACULDADE DE PSICOLOGIA E CIÊNCIAS DA EDUCAÇÃO DA UNIVERSIDADE DE COIMBRA, 2020), and the clinical analysis laboratory harboured by the Faculty of Pharmacy since the 1980s (FACULDADE DE FARMÁCIA DA UNIVERSIDADE DE COIMBRA, 2020).

The Statutes of the University of Coimbra mention only once the issue of Health, and doing so is only replicating the contents of the Law 62/2007, of 20 September, defining the Legal Regime of Higher Education Institutions.

Article 28 § 1 of the Statutes indicates that “The Social Action Services of the University of Coimbra (SA SUC) pursue the objectives that the law assigns to them, supporting students: a) with direct social support measures: scholarships and emergency aid; (b) with indirect social support measures: access to food and accommodation, *access to health services, support for cultural and sports activities*, and access to psych pedagogical support and other educational support”.⁵

Despite this somehow limited mention of health in its Statutes, the University of Coimbra has been developing in the last two decades initiatives that differentiates it from other universities in Portugal, in the area of promotion of health in higher education. Indeed, in May 2012, the University of Coimbra launched the Portal “e-prevenç@o”, which is a Safety, Health and Environment Portal aimed at informing in a proactive and interactive way students, and also academic staff and other workers of the university. More specifically, it deals with three objectives: first, to “transmit information on risks existing in the places of study and work”; second, “contribute to the development of a culture of prevention and environmental awareness”; third, “disseminate the best practices of the University of Coimbra institution in the field of safety, health and the environment” (UNIVERSITY OF COIMBRA, 2018).

In 2014, a study conducted by three researchers of this university measured the health behaviours and attitudes and related it with the personal lifestyle of freshers (first year students), focusing especially on the “transition” to higher education, which may represent a risk factor for healthy lifestyles. The sample of first-year students of the University of Coimbra included in this study was composed of 564 students. The study reveals that “[a]lthough the prevalence of health behaviours/attitudes have changed with transition, most of the students have maintained a healthy lifestyle, except for alcohol consumption and physical/sports activity.” (SOARES; PEREIRA; CANAVARRO, 2014, p. 357).

In fact, the problems identified are serious. Letting apart the using of alcohol consumption, the observed decrease in the physical activities of students when starting their studies in higher education may contradict totally the legal and policy global objectives in health.

Yet, apparently, the University of Coimbra is among the top universities in Europe in the promotion of physical education standards of excellence. It was awarded the EUSA (European University Sports Association) Best University Award four times (in 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2018), being the European university with which won more times this award (EUSA, s/d). Oddly, the installation of the University of Coimbra for sport are more reduced than one can expect. It is true that the university has agreements with the local swimming pool, two fitness centres and a yoga centre, but these are either public or even private structures and not academic installations. However, the University of Coimbra has a stadium complex, which includes the possibility to practice many modalities, such as athleticism, football and rugby, and also handball, futsal, among other modalities; and also to practice tennis. However, this seems to be a reduced set of possibilities for the large number of students registered. In addition, it can be observed that the number of students having the status of student-athletes is actually relatively reduced (115 overall, along the academic year 2019-2020), which confirms one of the conclusions evocated higher on the difficulty to access this status.

Apart from the fact of promoting physical activities on its campi, including organizing European sport competitions, the University of Coimbra explored entirely new avenues, connecting health and environment in the daily life of students. This is the case with the ban of beef meat, announced in September 2019 by the recently appointed Rector of the university. The ban entered into force in January 2020. Currently, not a single of the 15 canteens within the campi of the University of Coimbra actually sell beef meat or beef products at all. The ban, based on the fact that the production of beef meat is resource-intensive and generates large amounts of greenhouse gas emissions, is integrated in a broader strategy of the Portuguese State to fight climate change. Other universities in Europe have done the same, but they are extremely

5. Our underlining.

rare. Since 2016, Cambridge University has not offered beef or lamb in its canteens' meals. In 2019, Goldsmiths, University of London has also taken the decision to no longer offer beef (MOYLER, 2019). This option of banning beef meat can be seen as a fashionable and even a smart option, in terms of sustainable development goals. Yet, many other issues may also have been priority, and even more immediate priority, as regards healthy lifestyle and even environment, such as the question of alcohol consumption among the students in and around the campus.

Finally, it is important to indicate that the culture of health at the University of Coimbra is not limited to students. There is also a broader strategy, especially through programs such as the one called "UC+Ativa", which is a physical activities program promoted through the Sports Office of the University of Coimbra, and which aims at contributing to the promotion of an active and healthy lifestyle for "all professors, researchers and technical staff of the University of Coimbra who, taking advantage of their breaks at work, remain active and contribute this way to maintain a good postural position in their daily job".⁶ This program is replicated with an option "UC+Ativa Casa" ("Home"), allowing for advises of exercises to do while at home.

Completing these initiatives, the University of Coimbra has a program called "UCicletas" (which can be translated by the term "UBykes"), which permits all members of the university community (including researchers) to borrow a bicycle with the logo of the university, free of charge (except the cost of the insurance). Despite the fact that this is a joint initiative of the Faculty of Sport Sciences and Physical Education and of the Nucleus of Students in Sport Sciences and Physical Education of the Academic Association of Coimbra, what is striking, here again, is the impressively low level of use of this system. During the past academic year, for instance, only 19 students overall have used the program "UBykes". Among the reasons explaining this lack of interest, there may be the fact that the city is not totally adapted to bicycles, being rather hilly. Moreover, many foreign students may ignore this program because the webpage of the University of Coimbra Sports Services is not fully translated into English (UNIVERSITY OF COIMBRA SPORTS SERVICES, 2020), which is also true for the program UC+Ativa and UC+Ativa Home.

4 CONCLUSIONS

A key government goals, both in Hungary and in Portugal are to expand the range of sports, physical education and health education programs, as university sports events, sports opportunities, as well

as sports and recreational service opportunities that promote regular physical activity, mobilize not only the higher education institution but also the wider social environment. Thus, the prestige and attractiveness of both the institution and the city increase. It is important to mention that the significant community, cultural and sports infrastructure of higher education institutions primarily, but not exclusively, serves students and faculty, as in smaller university cities, the sports and recreational needs of the population are often met by these facilities. The expansion of the university infrastructure, the presence of health promotion in the institution, results in healthier students pursuing a more health-conscious lifestyle. Intellectuals leaving higher education generally have a higher level of physical activities and consciousness of the importance of health in their daily life, and can later have a significant positive effect on the health and way of life of their environment as a leader in the course of their work (EMMI, 2016; MINISTÉRIO DA SAÚDE - PORTUGAL, 2017).

An important aspect in the qualitative development of infrastructural conditions is that the service system surrounding students has appropriate socialization effects that promote regular exercise, a good lifestyle and health-conscious behaviour. Accordingly, these services should be open not only to students and lecturers, but also to the surrounding society, so that institutions with free infrastructural and service capacities can be involved in meeting local needs (EMMI, 2016; NORONHA; SANTOS; PACHECO, 2018).

Health promotion can be most effectively integrated into the daily lives of universities through research, curriculum development, and education. At the same time, health promotion is not only a university issue, but also serves market demand. The ideal in this respect is that economic actors and employers formulate specific expectations and requirements for recent graduates. This is because it is a significant economic benefit for employers to reduce the number of sick days of their employees. In addition to being properly motivated and professionally prepared, the physical and mental health and workload of employees are of value to the employer, as they are obviously related to their performance.

However, in order to show this, a change of attitude on the part of labour market actors is also needed. At the macro level, therefore, it is primarily necessary to draw the attention of employers to the fact that health promotion serves the interests of their company and organization. On the other hand, students must be asked to demand more and more physical and mental health conditions, as their knowledge is much more valuable and competitive if they have the right physical and mental foundations. Consequently, higher education institutions are expected to face a dual expectation in the field of health promotion in the future: they must simultaneously meet the demands of the labour market and their students. Effective higher education monitors and maps

⁵. Our translation.

the needs of the market when designing its training structure. Particularly in the light of declining demographics, universities with an up-to-date training portfolio may be successful. Their services are tailored to the needs of both the market and students. Therefore, in the future, graduate follow-ups, or so-called “success tests” health promotion is an integral part of modern higher education, it belongs to the new model of holistic education, the importance of which can be predicted to increase, which gives feedback on the readiness, location and suitability of graduates. It is also a response to the challenges of ever changing market demands. In addition, the end goal of the process is nothing else than strengthening the performance of higher education in order to increase the competitiveness of the economy.

Based on our research, it can be stated that, in the case of Hungary, the Hungarian legislation (Fundamental Law of Hungary, Act on Health), government strategies (e.g. Fokozatváltás a felsőoktatásban középtávú szakpolitikai stratégia) and institutional regulations (Founding Charta of the University of Physical Education, NUPS Output Training Requirements) contain expectations and requirements that enable health promotion and on the right track to expand this area. In the case of Portugal, and looking at a bigger university in size and also number of years of activity, the conclusion cannot be so clear. There is a certain contrast between the number of degrees and training offered, on the one hand, and the efficiency of the practice of healthy behaviours, on the other hand. This may be in part resulting from the fact that the Faculties dealing with health courses are not necessarily the one providing services to the community. Moreover, the access to sports on campus (or campi), for instance, lacks a truly effective strategy of popular physical activity, which still seems to be reserved to an elite or, as seen in the regulation scope, to social aid. In the middle, the common student may not find her or his space, nor fill that sport is truly important. Oddly, the University of Coimbra, among the oldest in Europe, is also one with more international connections and international exchange programs. Apparently, this fact has made possible a stronger diffusion of healthy habits, and still is much to be learned in the field,

The efficiency of the health and physical activities programs may also depend on a more global attitude from the rest of the society, and from a better harmony between concrete conditions in the field (the option of offering bykes in a hilly city is paradigmatic), the global access to information (in several languages), and the connection between the courses and the services provided to the community. On top of that, the size of the institutions may reveal an impairment to build effective strategies, and more recent and smaller universities in Portugal and in Europe may do better in this area, despite the lack of visibility in terms of organization of international events. The motto “big is beautiful” may not reveal totally true, as far as health promotion in higher education is concerned.

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