

In the Maze of Competencies: Analysis of the Expected and Actually Developed Competencies in the Tourism Sector

Ágnes Raffay-Danyi, PhD

University of Pannonia, Hungary
raffay.agnes@gtk.uni-pannon.hu

Krisztina Dabronaki-Priszingner

University of Pannonia, Hungary
priszingner.krisztina@gtk.uni-pannon.hu

Abstract

The recent challenges in global economy urgent revision and improvement of competencies in all aspects of education. It is crucial for higher education institutions (HEIs) to follow the changing needs of the labour market to prepare graduates for employment, especially in case of the fragile tourism sector. It is obvious, that a gap exists between the competencies of graduates and the needs of employers. Graduates have limited knowledge about competencies developed during their studies as well as required at labour market. In many cases universities do not have complete freedom in designing curricula due to national requirements. However, HEIs should be aware of the expectations of employers as well in order to prepare graduates for the challenges they will face at their future workplace. This study aims to examine current competency requirements of the labour market in the tourism sector in Hungary. The research is based on the competency definition and classification of the OECD. Competencies developed by the HEIs are defined by the national regulations on educational and outcome requirements, while the competencies required by the labour market are mapped through focus group interviews with employers from different areas of the sector, and by analysing relevant job advertisements and the O-NET job portal. The results of the research will be used in practice to reshape curricular and extracurricular activities of the Tourism and Hospitality BA programme in Hungary in order to narrow the competency gap between the competency development offered by higher education and the requirements of labour market.

Keywords: Tourism and Hospitality BA programme, competency map, competency gap, competency development, higher education