

PERSPECTIVES ON THE MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAMME OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT: *This paper presents a synthesis on the role that the analysed master's degree has on the field of human resources in the West region, in this case in Hunedoara County. Starting from a presentation of the main occupations that the graduates have and of the professional and transversal competences acquired by them, an analysis is made of the labour market in Hunedoara county and the West region.*

KEY WORDS: *labour market, human resources management, master degree programme.*

JEL CLASSIFICATIONS: *D21, L26.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The insertion on the labour market is very important in the present economic and social context and the professional insertion of the bachelor and master graduates is an objective of the strategies in the field of university education. The purpose of universities is to prepare graduates to find jobs in the specializations in which they were trained and which, through the skills acquired, to contribute to the economic and social development of the country.

The communication processes among universities-students-graduates-employers are essential for each of the actors involved to accomplish the objectives they have set, respectively:

- for the university - the training of highly qualified human resource necessary for the socio-economic and technological development;
- for students and graduates - acquiring the qualification and skills necessary for access to the labour market;

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- for employers - access to skilled labour.

Considering the three partners, there has been an increase in the flexibility of graduates on the labour market (Niță, 2017; Dudian, 2008) due to the constant changes in the contemporary labour market, the investment or consumer goods market, the financial market and other relevant markets pursuant to global economic and financial dynamics.

Analysing the factors influencing the insertion of young people on the Romanian labour market, we can consider that they are related to the training of young people, their socioeconomic status, technological changes in companies, the effects of the present economic and financial crisis, which requires a permanent need of fast adaptation to changes in the economic environment, to an increasingly competitive environment (Isac, 2013).

2. MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAMME PRESENTATION

The master's degree programme related to the qualification Human Resources Management aims to offer a specialization to students interested in the field of human resources. The program offers the opportunity to train graduates' skills and abilities that lead to a thorough understanding of the field, the training of experts, competent human resource managers, able to meet the requirements of the environment and the objectives of any organization.

Starting from the fact that the human resources management represents a set of activities, carried out at organizational level that allow the most efficient use of the employees of the very organization, in order to achieve both the general organizational and individual goals. Consequently, the *Human Resources Management* Master's Degree programme is an innovative educational programme designed both for those who want to have a high impact on the performance of human resources in organizations, and for those who share a passion for personal and professional development.

Within the Master's Degree programme of *Human Resources Management*, students will develop their critical thinking skills by being able to identify, analyse, design and develop new models of recruitment, selection, training, development and career that will lead to performance at the level of the individual, group and organization.

Possible occupations of graduates of this undergraduate programme are the following:

- *Human resources specialist 242314*
- *Specialist in organizational development 242322*
- *Specialist in labour relations 242323*

The importance of this study programme is also proved by the fact that the universities have accredited such a study programme not only in the field of Management, such as the one of the University of Petroșani (Dura & Isac, 2014), but also in the field of Sociology such as the University of Bucharest or Alexandru Ioan-Cuza University of Iași.

3. ANALYSIS OF GRADUATES' SKILLS TO BECOME SPECIALISTS IN HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

The mission of the master's degree programme lies in the training of specialists with high managerial and professional skills, able to manage, in conditions of efficiency, the large-scale changes that human capital undergoes in the conditions of the increasingly strong affirmation of the knowledge society. By acquiring the knowledge taught and by forming a critical and realistic thinking system, the field of study aims to train specialists capable of initiating, leading and developing a business and / or a department of an organization based on the theoretical knowledge gained, competences and specific skills. Through the studied subjects, the study programmes are mainly oriented towards the development of the managerial, entrepreneurial and leadership skills of the students, elements that represent the foundation of a successful professional career in the modern business world. Graduates of this programme of study become specialists in the field of human resources and staff and develop skills related to recruitment, selection and evaluation of staff performance, reward, motivation and staff development as well as skills needed in occupational analyses, career guidance or professional careers management.

The professional skills that will be acquired by graduates at the end of university studies are: analysis of the assurance and use of human resources in correlation with the existing legislative framework and the labour market; • use of modern models and technologies in human resources management activities in different types of organizations; • designing strategies for recruiting, selecting, training, motivating and evaluating the performance of human resources in organizations; • initiating and managing changes in the field of human resources; • communicating, negotiating and resolving conflicts within organizations; • conducting studies and research papers and disseminating the results of scientific knowledge in the field of human resources.

In conjunction with these, the transversal competences are: • applying of the norms and values of professional ethics for decision making and the accomplishment of complex tasks / objectives independently or in groups; • planning and organizing human resources within a group or organization, in conditions of awareness of responsibility for professional results; • dealing with the need for continuous training to create the premises for career progress and adapting one's professional and managerial skills to the dynamics of the economic environment.

4. REVIEW OF THE FIELD OF HUMAN RESOURCES AT THE LEVEL OF THE WEST REGION, ESPECIALLY OF HUNEDOARA COUNTY

In order to substantiate the current research and prospects of absorption on the labour market of the graduates of the qualification related to the study programme Human Resources Management, we analysed and corroborated a series of information presented in reference documents at the county, regional and / or national level:

- *Strategy for the development of the West region 2021-2027;*
- *Socio-economic analysis and SWOT - PDR West 2021-2027;*
- *Development strategy of Hunedoara county for the period 2014-2020;*

- *The regional development plan of Hunedoara county for the period 2014-2020;*
- *National Strategy for Green Jobs 2018 - 2025 and the Action Plan for the implementation of the National Strategy for Green Jobs 2018 - 2025;*
- *ManpowerGroup study on the employment prospects in Romania -2021;*
- *National Strategy in the field of youth policy 2021-2027;*
- *Government strategy for the development of the small and medium enterprises sector and the improvement of the Romanian business environment - Horizon 2020;*
- *National Research, Development and Innovation Strategy 2021-2027;*
- *National Smart Specialization Strategy 2021-2027;*
- *Romania National Education Programme. The education system for 2030;*
- *National Strategy for Tertiary Education 2015-2020;*
- *Order of the Minister of National Education no. 5376 / 19.10.2017 regarding the approval of the fields and specializations / university study programs correlated with the economic sectors with growth potential in Romania.*

The socio-economic analysis underlying the elaboration of the Development Strategy of Hunedoara County for the period 2014-2020, presents the structure of the projection of the potential demand on fields of professional training for the period 2013 - 2020 at the level of Hunedoara County and the West Region. According to the authors of the study, it is shown that there is a phenomenon of reversal of employment related to high and low qualifications, employed persons with high qualification level, exceeding the value related to low qualifications. At the same time, there is a significant increase in health and education jobs as well as social and administrative services with direct implications on the level of training and type of training of specialists in these fields that require the development of skills to ensure a deeper understanding of the field of human resources.

At the local and county level, there are public institutions that need specialists in Human Resources Management, such as the Hunedoara County Employment Agency, the County Public Pensions House, the Hunedoara County Council and its subordinate County Directorates, Hunedoara County Prefecture, Town and City Halls with subordinate services - Local Police, Social Assistance Departments - educational units, etc.

Complementary to these types of services with direct addressability to citizens, there is a significant increase in the number of economic agents with a large number of employees and whose development attracts the employment of specialists in the field of human resources (Isac, 2013) who know efficient management techniques of human capital, to implement strategies in the field of human resources or to coordinate working groups and teams.

Considering that some of the graduates of the analysed study programme tend to look for jobs in the neighbouring counties, in this case Timiș and Arad counties, it is possible to line up with the directions in the strategic and operational documents of the West region, respectively the *Strategy for the development of the West region 2021-2027* and the *Socio-economic Analysis and SWOT - PDR West 2021-2027* which shows that the West region will have a prosperous, competitive economy, based on

innovation. According to the 2019 Regional Innovation Scoreboard, Romania has the lowest innovation rating in the EU and the Western region is in line with the national trend. Under these conditions, the training of human resources and implicitly the management of human resources have a special role and aim to "develop and maintain talents in the area" in the perspective of the 2030s.

Moreover, considering the field of the analysed study programme, namely Human Resources Management, these documents emphasize the need for continuous improvement of human resources in the Western Region which is classified in the category of regions with the degree of "Modest Innovator". As we increasingly strive for the development of smarter "smart cities" that increase the quality of life in cities in the region by supporting the use of digital and innovative technologies, it is essential to implement efficient human resource management to ensure efficient operation of administrative systems (Strategia Națională de Cercetare, Inovare și Specializare Inteligentă 2021-2027).

Regarding the training of the labour force at the level of Hunedoara County, the classification of the active civilian population according to the level of education of the last graduated educational institution indicates a high percentage (35%) of people who graduated high school, category followed by people with higher education (21%), middle school (18%) and vocational and apprentice school (17%). The large share of the active population graduating from high school (to the detriment of technical or university studies) raises the issue of the need for training programmes specific to tertiary education to prepare high school graduates for the labour market.

This direction of action is compatible with the provisions of the *National Strategy for Tertiary Education 2015-2020*, according to which special emphasis will be placed on strengthening the capacity of Universities to develop and provide relevant programmes for the labour market - with special emphasis on ensuring transversal skills, but also for the development of those skills necessary for the efficient management of the human capital of the organization.

Moreover, for a deeper understanding of the context in which this study programme is developed, it is necessary to use statistical data on the active and inactive population, namely the employed population in the county. At the level of the West Region, although Hunedoara County occupies the third place in terms of number of inhabitants, its active population represents 23.56% of the total active population of the region, ranking second after Timiș County (38.42%) and before Arad County (23.44 %).

The distribution of the active population in the county territory indicates its concentration in the urban environment (71.5%), this being in connection with the high degree of urbanization of the county, the densest territorial administrative units in terms of active population being Deva, Hunedoara and Petroșani municipalities (over 30,000 people), followed by the municipalities of Orăștie, Brad, Vulcan and Lupeni (between 10,000-30,000 people), as well as the towns of Simeria, Uricani, Călan, Petrila and Geoagiu (between 5,000-10,000 people).

Another interesting indicator that reflects the growing trend of the active population in the West region is the balance of residence changes - the algebraic difference between the number of people arriving by change of address (arrivals) and

the number of people leaving by change of address (departures) showing increasing values from 1829 in 2015 to 3209 in 2019 (<https://www.manpowergroup.com>).

Unlike the active population, the inactive population includes people who have not worked for at least one hour and are not registered as unemployed during the reference period - pupils or students, pensioners, housewives, dependents. The ratio between active and inactive people within Hunedoara County is about one to one, 44% of the population being active and the remaining 56% being inactive.

A situation of the population of Hunedoara County must be completed with the analysis at national level. Thus, the National Institute of Statistics (INS, 2021) shows that in the second quarter of 2021, the number of vacancies was 39.5 thousand, increasing by 1.1 thousand compared to the previous quarter, and the vacancy rate was 0.80%, up 0.01 per cent from the previous quarter. Compared to the same quarter of 2020, the vacancy rate increased by 0.09 per cent and the number of vacancies increased by 5.3 thousand.

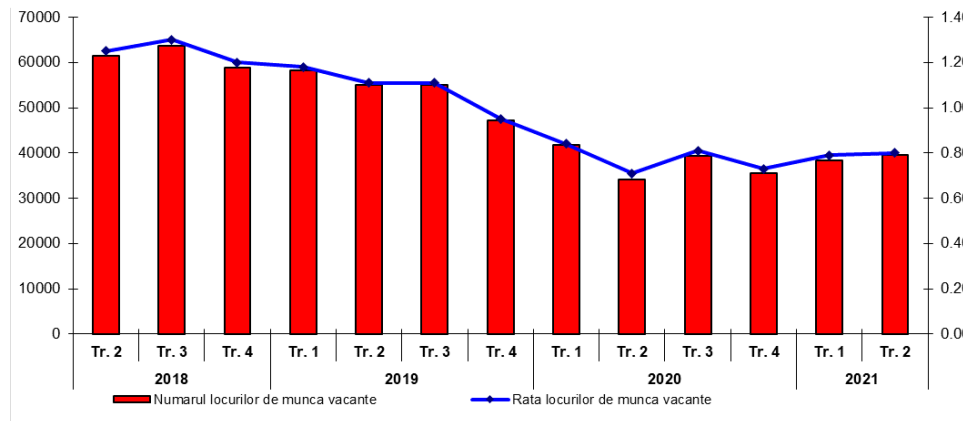


Figure 1. The situation of vacancies in Romania during the period T2 2018 – T2 2021

Labour market trends are correlated with the consequences of the pandemic. However, if a gradual, monthly analysis is made, in the middle of 2021 the economic indicators tend to have an adjustment trend, so that in August 2021, the turnover of market services provided mainly to enterprises in nominal terms increased compared to the previous month both as a gross series by 0.7% and as a series adjusted according to the number of working days and seasonality by 4.1%. Compared to the corresponding month of the previous year, the turnover of market services provided mainly to enterprises increased in nominal terms both as a gross series by 23.7% and as a series adjusted according to the number of working days and seasonality with 24.0% (INS, 2021).

Regarding the degree of adequacy between the level of training completed and the requirements of the current job: only for 44.1% of the employees the level of training largely corresponds to the requirements, for 35.3% to some extent, 13.6% less and 7.1% not at all (Centrul de informare și documentare economică).

Representatives of central and local government, employers' associations in various fields and recruitment companies point out that there are considerable quantitative and qualitative labour shortages and the need for strategies to address these shortcomings. The qualitative shortage of labour shows that an amplification of the improvement of the human resource is necessary.

Manpower (<https://www.manpowergroup.com>), a global leader in labour solutions, one of the largest companies in the labour market, has conducted a study on the *Employment Perspectives* for the third quarter of 2021, undertaken by interviewing a representative sample of Romanian employers. They reported optimistic employment plans for the period July-September 2021. 26% of employers predicted an increase in the total number of employees, 7% predicted a decrease and 64% predicted no change, resulting in a Net Employment Forecast of + 19%.

Assuming that students pursuing the master's degree programme in Human Resources Management will apply to work in public institutions, given their role in providing quality services to citizens, it is interesting to analyse the employment situation in the budget sector where in October 2020 there were 1,240,863 employees working, the highest value in the last four years. Among them, we find the largest number of employees in the Ministry of Education (286,845 people), followed by employees in the Ministry of Internal Affairs with 125,849 employees and the Ministry of National Defence with 74,443 employees. There was also a significant increase in jobs in the local public administration and given the pandemic context, in 2020, 3,298 people were employed.

Romania has a huge potential for long-term economic and social development, especially at the local level, where entrepreneurs will be encouraged and stimulated to capitalize, in a profitable and judicious way, on current business opportunities and predictable perspective.

According to the Hunedoara County Development Strategy, it is necessary to facilitate the dialogue between the county education centres and the county public institutions, the territorial administrative units and the business environment so that the educational requirements on the labour market are correlated with the skills of the graduates. In conclusion, with regard to the development of the university environment, an important direction is to adapt the curriculum to the requirements of the labour market and to facilitate the access of students and graduates to jobs.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The location of Hunedoara County in the proximity of some counties characterized by higher GDP growth / values compared to the national average (Timiș, Arad, Alba, Sibiu) can be a potential advantage, given that the economic dynamism registered on the Timișoara-Arad-Sibiu-Brașov axis could reflect on the revival of the economy of Hunedoara County (Hunedoara County Council).

According to the *Development Strategy of Hunedoara County*, it is necessary to facilitate the dialogue between the education centres in the county, the territorial administrative units and the business environment so that the educational requirements

on the labour market are correlated with the skills of the Human Resource Management curriculum.

The results of this analysis showed that: the pandemic period caused a continuous vibration on the labour market in the field of human resources; took place in the structure of human resources within the company in favour of those with higher education; greater flexibility of human resources specialists determined by IT technology.

In conclusion, with regard to the development of the university environment, an important direction is to adapt the curriculum to the requirements of the labour market and to facilitate the access of students and graduates to jobs.

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