



## **Recent coaching trends in the civil service sector - a comparative international analysis focusing on Hungary**

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### **Abstract**

*The civil service further training systems has been paying an increasing attention to the development of competency in the recent decades in addition to the professional preparedness of the civil service staff. Practical training and e-learning methods have become widespread replacing the traditional training methods. At the same time, several advanced intellectual training forms as e.g. coaching may be only found at scattered places in the civil services of the Central East European region. Our study examines on comparative basis the international and the domestic civil service practice of the appearance of coaching approach based executive training. It introduces in a wide scope the systems, results, possibilities and development trends of the Hungarian law enforcement and public administration executive training. This article was prepared with collecting the coaching experiences of the standard civil service model states and of the Visegrád countries, and with using the statistics and the scientific research results of the domestic civil service management training system. Through our article the reader may obtain an overview of the current civil service coaching experience of the international arena, its institution system, the method of its application, its target group, its results, and its development prospects. By reading the article the reader will get acquainted with the good practices of the Hungarian civil service further training system and the situation of the application of the coaching method (on the development level of the technology of individual, group and coaching approach based management).*

### **Implications for Practitioners**

Our article introduces to the reader the development practice of the Hungarian civil service human resource, focusing on the institution system, on the methodologies, and on the good practices of executive training. It provides an insight into the Hungarian practice of the application of coaching, and in addition to this it focuses on the area of public administration and law enforcement. It compares all this with the international civil service trends, through which the reader may view a comparison on the role coaching has in civil service, on its positioning in its organisation and in its training offers. We introduce the development of the methodology and the efforts that are directed at applying it in the widest scope possible both in the Hungarian and in the international arena.

### **3 bullet points highlighting the tangible implications for practitioners of the work:**

- The article comparatively analyses the international civil service coaching trends.
- It introduces the development policy of the civil service human resource development in Hungary, and within this the current situation of executive development. It introduces its good practices and its development trends.
- It analyses the place, role, and possibilities of the coaching method, and its future within the Hungarian civil service organisation system.

**Keywords:** Hungarian civil service, leadership development, coaching in civil service, international analysis

## 1. Introduction

In each branch of the Hungarian civil service (public administration, law enforcement, national defence, public employees, judicial, prosecution organisations) there is a further training system functioning, which pays attention in addition to professional preparedness also to the competence development of the staff. Instead of the traditional lecture focused training forms, in the recent years the use of the practical training and e-learning methods started to be spread. At the same time, the introduction of several of those training methods are still in their initial phase, with the aid of the integration, development of which the performance of the executives working in the civil service organisation may be increased, and through this the performance of the organisation itself may be also significantly increased.

The first chapter of our study presents to the international reader audience the further training and the executive training systems of the Hungarian civil service occupation systems in the areas of law enforcement and public administration, their good practices. Subsequently, it examines in a comparative manner the international civil service institutions and the practice of the appearance of coaching attitude based executive training. This is followed by the analysing introduction of the Hungarian civil service coaching activity. Our study is closed with the collection of the opportunities and solution proposals that target the development of coaching solutions.

## 2. Overview of the Executive Training System in Public Administration and Law Enforcement

### 2.1 Good practices of the public administration further training system

The national level public administration further training system operates on the bases of the National University of Public Service (NUPS) since 2014. It is a training model, procedure regime, methodology and asset system, which is unprecedented so far in the area of domestic and international civil service adult training. Its novel centralised training system uses modern methods and approaches. It may serve as a good practice and operation model in the entire area of adult training. Approximately 100,000 persons are being continuously trained here.

The national training system providing continuous, lifelong further training to some ten thousand executives in public administration was launched in 2014, adding skills and competency development to the previous training solutions which had a mainly legal and professional approach. The executive training system is being continuously developed, since tackling the existing qualitative and quantitative challenges calls for the introduction of novel, innovative solutions.

The Statute Act imposes a training obligation arranged into four-year training cycles for public administration officeholders. It determines when and which trainings they have to undergo, as well as by whom this process is to be organized, supervised, and controlled.

The full-scale direction and supervision of the institutional system is performed by the Minister of Internal Affairs. It is operated by the National University of Civil Service. The sector-specific management of the further trainings is assisted by the College of Further Training in Public Administration (KTK) as a professional advisory and reference body. This body determines the further training programmes in public administration and their set of requirements. It is here that the certification of the programmes takes place (any institution of higher education, or even an organization itself, can hold internal trainings, which the National University of Civil Service enters into its register). A given programme can be added to the list of further training programmes after a programme certification procedure which guarantees the conformity of the programme, or after a simplified registration procedure.

The transparency of the system and the monitoring of the completion of further trainings is aided by a credit based study points system. During the training terms, officeholders have to collect study points of an amount specified in advance. There are several types of further training programmes, a group of which deals specifically with the training of senior officeholders.

The further training system is no longer aimed only at updating knowledge about legal regulations and training in expertise in the given field, but it has set off in the direction of a complex skills development. As to its methodological solutions, it is now extended beyond the training form with a lecturer in the centre. They include transformation into a training system of a type which focuses on the development of skills and on practice which are necessary for a more attractive career and for a higher efficiency in public administration

and for an increased performance. E-learning, blended-learning and public administration-specific training methods have started to be applied to promote experiential learning.

Training selection is aided by a state-of-the-art IT platform, Probono (<https://probono.uni-nke.hu/nyitolap>), which enables the production of annual further training plans for the staff, programme search, access to all useful information regarding the training, and the e-learning videos (and tasks) are also accessible online. The development and maintenance of the IT system is performed by NUPS. Performing the tasks with one's own device enables reasonable and cost-efficient operation. A team of professional developers is continuously available in this non-profit company, so the system is not subject to orders from the market.

The operation of the further training system is currently provided by a so-called standard contribution to be paid to the National University of Civil Service by the public administration bodies for those officeholders employed by them who are liable to undergo further training.

We can distinguish between middle-level executives (e.g. head of division, deputy head of department, head of department) and top-level executives (e.g. the topmost leaders of public administration bodies and their deputies, secretaries of state, deputy secretaries of state, etc.) programmes, which is justified by the different training needs of these two levels.

In the case of middle executives, subjects which belong to the sphere of general managerial skills development include executive self-knowledge, communication, conflict management, negotiation techniques, group collaboration, leadership style, knowledge in the field of humanities, etc. Executive training offers two types of programmes: classic, two-day training programmes in small groups, arranged into four main subjects (strategy and leadership, leading people, executive communication, managerial skills, leadership personality) with an e-syllabus element (blended learning). Generally, 16 hours of physically attended training are supplemented by 4 hours of an e-learning syllabus. The other type represents a group of purely e-syllabi. These are electronic syllabi presenting a top-priority managerial subject or area of competence. Their characteristic learning load is 8 hours.

In the case of top executives, skills development built on personal interaction takes priority. Problem-oriented help, which can be integrated into their daily schedule, is a useful item for them. Trainings which bring innovations in their methodology were launched for top executives in the second half of 2014, e.g. so-called action learning courses which originated in the USA, top executives' media communication courses, managerial integrity training, all of which work with special syllabi and methods.

There were 2488 programmes in the list of further training programmes at the end of 2019, from which 576 programmes were civil service further training programmes developed and provided by NUPS.<sup>1</sup> The civil service executives could choose in 2019 from 12 blended learning executive training programmes, 6 types of attendance-based and 1 e-learning program. The blended learning type of trainings are started with getting acquainted with one introductory e-learning content, which is followed by a 2-day (16-hour) practical training program, and finally the program is closed with acquiring an e-learning training material part that summarises and systematizes what has been learnt. The attendance-based type of trainings are based on a practical training methodology (2 days, 16 hours). On these programmes altogether 1096 persons participated in year 2019.<sup>2</sup>

The purpose of the renewal of the further training system in year 2021 is to stimulate the voluntary learning of the officers, to wake up their own motivations, to form their attitude instead of transferring static knowledge, and value orientation. To provide self-development opportunities and the adventure of learning in order to eliminate the negative experience of the mandatory character, the examination orientation and impersonality of teaching.<sup>3</sup> In addition to the existing colourful training choice it would be practical to integrate into the system the coaching methodology related training offer.

## **2.2 The good practice of law enforcement further training**

The organisation and activity of law enforcement may be considered to be a special one compared to the other professional branches. Continuous development, the knowledge of the most recent technologies and following

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<sup>1</sup> Report on the public service further trainings implemented in 2019, and on the execution of the annual further training plans, April 2020, pp. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Report on the public service further trainings implemented in 2019, and on the execution of the annual further training plans, April 2020, pp. 26.

<sup>3</sup> Report on the public service further trainings implemented in 2019, and on the execution of the annual further training plans, April 2020, pp. 8.

the environmental, technological development are indispensable. Probably it is most needed in their case to keep abreast with the environmental, societal changes. Due to this, training and further training is a part of the organisational culture. The number of persons working in law enforcement approaches 60,000 persons. This significant number appears also in the further training system. The training forms implemented in institutionalised frameworks were very small even in the beginning of the years of 2000s. The internal training were more dominating, and they targeted only the sustaining of the professional preparedness in most of the cases. In the years of the 1990s the demand appeared and later on it became increasingly more emphasised that it is necessary to develop in addition to the professional competencies the competencies that are needed for their jobs. They started to develop a training system that is based on a completely new methodology from the years of 2000s, which they also stipulated in the legislation soon after introducing it. Through this they tied by the law the appointment of medium and top level executives to the completion of practical trainings. Therefore, each person included in the professional staff, who is in an executive position defined according to the law, has to fulfil a training obligation. On the basis of this, the executive has to complete the law enforcement specialist exam, which is primarily a law enforcement knowledge audit exam. Then subsequently, provided he successfully passed the law enforcement selection procedure that is established for the law enforcement executives<sup>4</sup>, he has to complete the training course that is “preparing the person” for the executive post, the target of which is to transfer the management knowledge in practice. The training centre of the organisations that belong to the Ministry of Interior is responsible for the implementation of both processes, the place of which centre in the organisational structure is in the Law Enforcement Selection and Executive Training Department of the Ministry of Interior (hereinafter referred to as: BM VTTF). Naturally depending on the management level in the focus there are different areas to be developed. In the case of the medium level executives there is a 21-day complex program, in the framework of which the participants develop the most important competencies that are connected to their position: executive function, conflict management, assertive communication and the development of self-knowledge. They developed this training for those medium level executives, who directly work together with their own staff and to whom possibly one-two divisions belong, therefore, in addition to co-ordinating their organisational unit it is also an integral part of their work to motivate the colleagues, to establish co-operation and to manage the challenges that are connected to them. During the top executive training course (20 days) already strategical attitude and knowledge that is connected to the operation of the organisation (e.g. human resource management, project and change management) are in the foreground. Since their majority are already the number one executives of their headquarters, of their organisations, who are responsible for the operation of an entire organisation. The law enforcement executive training and master executive training course provides a stable basis for competence development, however, it is also a significant milestone for the executives, since both courses are closed with an exam, which in their case is the prerequisite of their appointment<sup>5</sup>. Both training courses are unique from the aspect that there are no similar instances within one training course for such a complex, comprehensive and thorough preparation.

Both trainings as regards their methodologies are based on learning through experience and participation focused practical training. The personal attendance occasions are supplemented by e-learning training materials, which primarily contain the theoretical background material. Therefore, the training has been already implemented in blended form for a couple of years. So far close to 4000 middle executives and 828 master executives completed the practical trainings and passed the examinations successfully.

The further training system that has been in operation since January 1, 2014 is also implemented under the co-ordination of BM VTTF, in the framework of which those executives have to mandatorily to collect a defined number of credits, who have a professional legal relationship. The training portfolio is extremely wide, both from the aspect of the methodology of training and its contents. By year 2021 already 432 qualified programmes are accessible in the system. These programmes are generally one-three day courses. In addition to personal attendance based training there are on the list training materials that have been prepared in blended or e-learning forms. The current personal attendance based further training system has to ensure the further training of 3,469 executives of the close to 60,000 person staff. In the course of the future development processes not only the elaboration of the trainings established in blended learning form is the target, but to also increase the ratio of e-learning training course that may be completed within the online space.

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<sup>4</sup> Erika Maléth-Szabó: Science substantiation of law enforcement selection procedure. XIV. volume (2013) Studies from science conference: „current challenges of changing policing” (2021. 05. 10.)  
<http://www.pecshor.hu/periodika/XIV/malet.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Decree 31/2015. (VI. 16.) BM on the personnel management regime involving the official staff of the organisations that implement law enforcement tasks belonging under the leadership of the Minister of Interior

The two executive training systems are different from each other, since public administration does not use longer, several week basic management skills training contrarily to law enforcement. It is similar in the two systems that in both of them it is possible to find an offer of shorter, 1-2 day practical trainings (covering diverse topics). As a methodological similarity the dominance of the practical training and e-learning methods may be observed. At the same time, the system of public administration further training relies much more on the online solution than law enforcement (from the 576 civil service further training programmes 316 were e-learning type of trainings in year 2019). The trainings were introduced into the portal characteristically in the form of e-learning or blended learning training materials. In addition to this, the operation of webinars and channels also appears. Among the law enforcement further training e-learning and blended learning courses also appeared, however, the ratio of personal attendance based practical trainings and practical courses are in a far higher ratio in their case.

The two executive training systems operate under the care of organisations that are separated from each other. However, in some cases it is possible to acknowledge the credit points that are gained at each other's courses, which is due to the fact that they form their program along similar principles. At the same time, there is a certain percentage overlap between the trainers (the 172 trainers containing name list of public administration contains several law enforcement trainers as well).

### **3. Comparison of international civil service coaching activity data**

The training structure that is operated by a given country for its civil service personal staff is differentiated and it depends on a number of factors. Among others the following factors may be identified among the decisive factors: the size of the state, the degree of welfare, the economic situation, the social conditions, the cultural traditions. The organisation of further training may operate on market basis, it may be operated by non-profit organisations, by the state, and may be systems that consist of a mixed set-up of these. It is characteristic that the networks allocated to the governmental agencies, ministries, state and private universities, local governments organise the trainings. The financing related issues are a cardinal factor in the service quality of the further training institutions. The funding typically arrives from different types of sources: from the state budget, from the budget of the organisations, from student fees and other sources, e.g. from the structural funds of the EU. The most typical solution is mixed financing provided by state and private sources, which on one hand makes the training institutions independent (it provides a certain level of autonomy for them), and on the other hand it makes them also instable, since their existence depends also on their external incomes, and this leads to a certain degree of profit orientation. As regards the methodology of the trainings, it is clearly and demonstrably typical of international practice that the role of competence and skill developing practical trainings that assume active participation and interactivity and the executive training partner programmes accompanying the traditional further trainings transferring the theoretical knowledge has been gradually increasing recently, practically in each country. The training and further training systems of the European public administration models, and a significant part of the public administration organisations located outside Europe already provides by today coaching services for its public officers in some form. At the same time it may be clearly seen that there is an intention for the continuous development concerning the application of this technology. The organisations and organisation units dealing with this area played an increasingly prominent role in the training system in the years of the 2000s. The development of the mentioned systems date back to far earlier than the development of the Hungarian systems. Accordingly, the number and organisation of the services develop already according to an established, continuously developing, and proven process.

In Germany, the BAKöV<sup>6</sup>, the centre that is responsible for civil service trainings has five divisions. These are organised around one major territory each. One of them is the Coaching Centre. The portfolio of this centre in addition to its individual and team coaching service includes mediation as well. This service is primarily available to the executives of ministries and to the decision makers of public administration organisations- However, if according to their judgement in a given case it is appropriate, then the services may be used by their subordinates and the selected teams as well. The service users may select from about 160 coaches in the centre. The coaches included in the name list have to fulfil the requirements that are stipulated by the Centre, and they may be included in the list only after they met this condition. The cost of coaching is always covered by the sending organisation, and its amount is defined individually.

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.bakoev.bund.de/DE/02\\_Themen/Coaching/Coaching.html?nn=f69d7e83-e0f7-4a2d-be5f-30d7b003113e](https://www.bakoev.bund.de/DE/02_Themen/Coaching/Coaching.html?nn=f69d7e83-e0f7-4a2d-be5f-30d7b003113e) (2021.01.15.)

Similarly, the Anglo-Saxon countries, as e.g. Great Britain<sup>7</sup> and the USA, were among the first countries that integrated coaching into their civil service executive training, and which voted for the integration of the method of coaching approach based management. In their case the operation of the coaching is implemented on system level, and in addition to individual coaching, they also ensure possibilities for peer coaching, and developing the coaches is also a part of the training system. In Great Britain, the training is organised by the Civil Service Leadership Academy (CSLA). Both the Deputy Director Leadership Program and the Civil Service Leadership Program are parts of it. Both programs prepare in a complex manner the leaders acting on the different levels. At the same time, there are executive and internal coaches – who know the organisational system of civil service and its organisational specialties - equally available to the leaders. CSLA implements the further training of those leaders, who are active in civil service. In the framework of training it supports the integration process and carries out the development of competence. The courses and workshops may be attended for fees. The purpose of this is to sustain the efficient operation of the organisation. Numerous case studies<sup>8</sup> and reviews<sup>9</sup> do also support their successfulness, thanks to which their popularity is uninterrupted. The reviews clearly have shown that satisfaction within the organisation increases upon the impact of the methodology and it also supports the changing of the organisational culture. Coaching is available to any of the leaders, as demanded. Coaching may be also found as a part of the training system in Ireland as a result of the establishment of the public administration training centre (IPA)<sup>10</sup>, which is already accessible online as well.<sup>11</sup> The individual coaching tries to primarily support the top Irish executives in managing the challenges of their work.

In the above mentioned countries they also integrated the different types of the individual and the group coaching methodologies into training and they do regularly apply them. In the Anglo-Saxon countries the executives already voluntarily attend team coaching training courses, in order to be able to manage their teams more efficiently.<sup>12</sup>

The French training structure is somewhat different than the above ones. In their case already not a central organisation but the L'ENA<sup>13</sup> provides the trainings, practical trainings, and further trainings. The university announces practical trainings for those persons, who are active in public administration and also for the representatives of the non-governmental organisations. However, it has specialised primarily on executive trainings. Within its further training offer it provides executive coaching for persons arriving from both public administration and<sup>14</sup> from the civil sector, which may be typically attended as part of executive trainings, individually. The French public administration committed itself in 2010 to introducing individual development and group further trainings on system level. The main purpose of this is to also develop co-operation between the organisations in addition to providing continuous support for the executives. They were looking for a tool, which is able to flexibly follow and support the executives even along the changing challenges. As a result of this, the individual coaching service became available to the executives of the ministries and to a number of public administration organisations in 2011<sup>15</sup>. After introducing the service, based on the experiences, they extended the service to an increasing number of organisations and executive positions. This service is a fee based service.

The Polish National Public Administration School (KSAP)<sup>16</sup> from among the Visegrád countries has already taken steps and efforts to integrate public administration executives coaching into their training offer, most recently, for example, in the framework of a project that was carried out in March 2020.<sup>17</sup> Poland is a leader in this area, since the other two countries (the Czech Republic and Slovakia) so far only took the initial

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<sup>7</sup> [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) (2021.01.15.)

<sup>8</sup> Clare Rigg, Sue Richards: Action Learning, Leadership and Organizational Development in Civil services, USA 2006.

<sup>9</sup> Joseph Edwards, Michael Snowden, Jamie P. Halsall: The Example of Coaching in the Public Sector: A Quantitative Case Study, <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/84915349.pdf> (2021. 01. 20.)

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.ipa.ie/human-resource-management/cipd-foundation-certificate-in-learning-development.2127.html> (2021.01.10.)

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.ipa.ie/leadership-development/executive-coaching.2180.html>

<sup>12</sup> Clare Rigg, Sue Richards: Action Learning, Leadership and Organizational Development in Civil services, USA 2006.

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.ena.fr/Formation/Formation-continue/Offre-de-formation-continue-2021/Management-et-negotiation/Management/Le-executive-coach> (2021.01.10.)

<sup>14</sup> [https://www.fonction-publique.gouv.fr/files/files/publications/coll\\_ressources\\_humaines/coaching\\_pro\\_FP.pdf](https://www.fonction-publique.gouv.fr/files/files/publications/coll_ressources_humaines/coaching_pro_FP.pdf) (2021. 14. 29)

<sup>15</sup> L'ena: Le coaching professionnel dans la fonction publique Définition et méthode, bonnes pratiques ministérielles, outils pour agir [https://www.fonction-publique.gouv.fr/files/files/coaching\\_pro\\_FP.pdf](https://www.fonction-publique.gouv.fr/files/files/coaching_pro_FP.pdf) (2021. 05. 10.)

<sup>16</sup> <https://ksap.gov.pl/ksap/> (2021.01.10.)

<sup>17</sup> <https://akademiarzadzania.ksap.gov.pl/development-center-i-coaching-w-akademii-zarzadzania/> (2021.01.10.)

steps and efforts to apply methodology in the framework of a few projects, however, they have no extensive experiences in connection with its regular application.

Country	Organisation	Target group	Frameworks of its application
Germany	BAKöV (Coaching Centre)	Public administration executives: middle and top executives	Further training system
France	L'ENA	Executives of the public administration and of the competitive sector	In the case of individual development demand
Ireland	IPA	Public administration executives	Further training system
Great-Britain	CSLA	Middle and top executives	In the case of individual development demand
USA	OPM	For the executives of federation management	Executive training
Poland	KSAP	Occasionally/ sporadically PA Executives	As projects
Czech Republic	There is no organisation named	Occasionally/ sporadically PA Executives	As projects
Slovakia	There is no organisation named	Occasionally/ sporadically PA Executives	As projects
Hungary	There is no organisation named	Occasionally/ sporadically PA Executives	As projects

**Diagram 1: Application of coaching in the international civil service arena (edited by the authors)**

In the majority of the West European countries the coaching service operates in an already matured, well-functioning system. This is also proven by the fact that the majority of the institutions responsible for civil service training have an outstanding role in the field of trainings and/or operate it as independent organisational units (e.g.: the BaKöV – Coaching Centre). Moreover, it is characteristic of these countries that they try to continuously extend their coaching technique related services. The team coaching services have also equally appeared in France and in Germany already, the target of which is to operate more efficiently the processes within the group. At the same time, it appears also as a target that they do support the establishment of the relationships between the executives of the public administration institutions and the development of co-operation as well.

Moreover, the table points out that the Visegrád countries are at the first steps of establishing the coaching service for the time being, the same way as Hungary. However, in the future it could be a highlighted target for the Visegrád countries as well to establish vouching services on system level and to apply the methodology in an increasingly wide area similarly to the practices of the West European countries. Its successfulness is justified by the facts that the coaching service has been developing and it plays an outstanding role in the further training systems of today.

#### 4. The data of Hungarian civil service coaching activity based on the research

Let us view now in more detail the application of the *individual coaching* method in Hungary. Hungarian civil service has a history of only a few coaching initiatives. This professional area is still immature, it does not have an abundance of research materials and significant experiences. The project-like initiatives that were accrued so far were implemented only temporarily upon the request of some organisations or organisational units. Even if the impression was positive in respect of them, they did not appear as a part of the long term training plan.

The research titled Civil Service Human Mirror<sup>18</sup> carried out in 2013 also covered the frequency of civil service trainings including the application of coaching. The majority of the participants of the research did not have any information on this form of training and this number was not significantly higher among the colleagues, who deal with human resource management.<sup>19</sup> The training of an internal coach team was started within law enforcement in 2014, however, at this time the development of the coaching processes were still in

<sup>18</sup> Szilvia Szabó: The human process of human resource development in the area of civil service. Partial study ÁROP\_2.2.17. New civil service life career. Human resource management and civil service life career research „Civil Service Human Mirror” research, 2014. NUPS.

their infancy, they occurred only in a scattered manner. Five years later (2018), according to the results of the HR research covering state administration, the local government sector and law enforcement, the application of coaching was not significantly increased within public administration.<sup>20</sup> In connection with coaching only 10 % of those asked said that they were offered this kind of development opportunities. A significant percentage of them was from among the law enforcement employees.

The further training institution system does not ensure at present individual coaching services within public administration. The public administration organisations, primarily the ministries, the bigger organisations delegate coaches occasionally, in a project-like manner, on the basis of their own motivation, from time to time, mostly for supporting the higher executives.

In the field of law enforcement, the department of the Ministry of Interior, being in charge of executive training and further training ensures coaching services. In addition to this it is worthwhile to mention that the coach team set up by the Ministry of Interior cannot be considered to be fully an internal support, since although the coach operates within the training centre of the law enforcement organisations, it is much more like a unit within the system that carries out his/her task as an external coach. It is a big advantage of this solution that in respect of the organisational specialties the coach has sufficient information, and in spite of this, the coach cannot be considered to be a person that has an internal dependency relationship. Therefore, in this respect the coach is still an external coach. Law enforcement, in connection with developing the new civil service career track<sup>21</sup>, set as a target the involvement of the professional staff executives in coaching, and to apply coaching in a wider scope.

The law enforcement executive decides on the basis of the name list of the coaches he/she gets and he/she may request in line with the individual demands the assistance of a coach, which he/she may select in most of the cases on the basis of his/her own motivation from the training offer. In addition to this, today it already occurs that an executive in the interest of the development of his own subordinated executives asks assistance, even for the entire headquarters. The possibility of individual developments centrally supported and established this way is extremely restricted, since this type of development process is unknown for most of the executives working in law enforcement, and therefore its use is occasional. Therefore, the provision of a coaching process due to this cannot be of a system level, it is done only on the basis of individual interests. This is reflected by the numbers as well. Based on the data retrieved from the further training system, in respect of the period of 2014 – 2020 altogether 201 coaching processes were conducted until now, and 3 group coaching trainings were implemented in a targeted manner as a part of organisation development and only 1 was carried out in the form of team coaching.

Nevertheless it points to the future that those organisational units that undertook participation in specific coaching processes, will be more inclined to select with high probability the coaching opportunities in the future as well. It also facilitates the spreading of coaching that the expression coaching appears in the master executive training courses as well together with the expressions of coaching approach based authentic leadership. Within the frameworks of the middle executive preparing practical trainings this topic is also mentioned and even team coaching meetings may take place adapted to this topic, in case the processing by the group and of the topic arisen is facilitated by this methodology. In connection with these initiatives for a long time we will not be able to talk about its system level application. Nevertheless, it may also form an extremely good basis for its being further spread.

Currently we may speak of the scattered appearance of *group coaching* forms within the area of public administration. Robert Kramer, the professor at the George Washington University kept a team coaching as a pilot training in 2014 at the NUPS, on one hand for the civil service top executives and on the other hand for the teachers at the university. These latter ones could already learn the action learning methodology in the framework of a train the trainer course.<sup>22</sup>

The new, mandatory progress training system of the state officers and the government office executives was implemented under the organisation of NUPS between 2016 and 2019. The further training

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<sup>19</sup> Szilvia Szabó: The human process of human resource development in the area of civil service. Partial study ÁROP\_2.2.17. New civil service life career. Human resource management and civil service life career research „Civil Service Human Mirror” research, 2014. NUPS.

<sup>20</sup> Georgina Stréhli-Klotz – Gábor Szakács: The life and work circumstances, social situation of the civil service officers in Hungary, 2018. NUPS.

<sup>21</sup> Zoltán Magyary public administration – development program 11.0, 2011

<sup>22</sup> KRAMER, Robert, JENEI, Agnes: What "Develops" in Public-Service Leader Development? Using Transformative Action Learning to Reframe Leader Education at the National University of Civil service. National University of Civil service Faculty of Public Administration Department of Communication and Civil service Ethics. Budapest, 20. March 2015.



titled Governmental Studies set the target of developing the implementation of executive tasks more efficiently, the management – organisation competence developing three-day practical training was one of the training courses of this program. Team coaching appeared in the framework of this effort. The methodology was rather new for the participants, the officers did not meet before any similar methodologies. Due to the specialties of organisational culture in the interest of successfully applying this method, a longer preparatory process may be needed in the future. Using the action-learning methodology is also indicated in the syllabi of certain practical trainings of the executive training system.

NUPS elaborated also for the top executives of public administration a special competence development targeting training course, which applied the individual and the team coaching process. The exclusive further training announced within the framework of the public administration further training system between 2017 and 2018 titled „*Adaptive leadership in a rapidly changing public administration*”<sup>23</sup> was also carried out with the involvement of international experts.

The intention of spreading coaching approach within public administration executive training also appears within the framework of the so-called *coaching leadership style*. The workers working in executive positions within public administration had the chance in 2020 to get acquainted with the tools set of coaching approach based management, its application opportunities within the framework of a two-day executive practical training. The coaching based leadership practical training had been completed so far by 48 public administration executives. Due to the pandemic the practical training had been restructured into the online space (as an online workshop in 2021). As a result hopefully this year already more executives may also receive this kind of training!

The State Science and International Studies Faculty of NUPS ensures in the framework of a freely selectable course of the same name practical training for the daytime and correspondence MSC students. Altogether 126 students participated on Coaching approach executive training between 2017-2020.<sup>24</sup>

## 5. Summary, Conclusion

With the recognition of the positive impacts of coaching exerted on the organisation and the executives, its different forms became the mandatory accessories of the training practice of the competitive sector in the recent decades. The West European civil service also included in its training offer. And as a part of its training system in several places coaching is available to the public administration executives. The civil services of the region of the Visegrád countries, also including Hungary, apply only in a scattered manner the coaching method. In these countries the over-weight of the methodology of practical training and e-learning may be observed. Among the Hungarian civil service vocations in respect of coaching we may meet forward pointing initiatives in the area of law enforcement, which follow the practice of the competitive sector. However, we still may not speak about system level operation here either.

The purpose of the public administration further training system that is phrased for the years that will follow 2021 is to stimulate the voluntary learning of the staff, to increase their motivation, and to form the attitude, value orientation and the self-development of soft-skills instead of transferring the static knowledge. These targets may be supported the best with the system level introduction of coaching methodology trainings. Therefore, we hope that coaches, who know the operation of the civil service organisation, its management and cultural specialties, and the application of the coaching methodology based training solutions will become gradually increasingly known and accepted in the practice of human resource development. In addition to developing the young executive aspirants and the middle executives with coaching attitude we also encourage the involvement of the top management group into coaching. Always the top executive layer receives the least support, the greatest loads they have to endure, they have such special executive challenges in respect of which coaching would help in establishing the important internal approaches.

Our study pointed out that the coaching method is regularly applied by the decisive majority of the international civil service training practice. This also proves its relevance. This technique may be excellently used in the civil service or in the non-profit environment. Civil service has to react to the external environmental challenges of the 21st century, equally from the aspect of the economic, technological, and societal changes. In the interest of flexible adaptation to the environment and in the interest of achieving higher performance, there is a need for more efficient management solutions. In addition to this the societal changes and the generational differences also represent an everyday challenge for the executives. These

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<sup>23</sup> National Civil Service University Almanach 2017 – 2018.

<sup>24</sup> Data of the NUPS Study Division, 2021.

demands were also recognised by the institutions that deal with civil service training in the international arena, and they introduced into their training offer individual and team coaching, which in the case of law enforcement also supports the co-operation of the international organisations. In the framework of this they create annual programmes, where the team coaching occasion is organised around a specific topic. The representatives of the countries help with their own experiences the processing of the topic. The gradual spreading of the methodology could be enforced in our country as well along similar principles, and in addition to this we may achieve more efficient solutions by applying it on system level as a part of the already existing law enforcement trainings. It would start a completely new and enhanced efficiency learning process for the civil service executives and together with this for the organisations. Coaching is an own adventure-based learning process. It would drive the executives and through them the civil service organisations towards more efficient and more pleasurable operation.

The task of the system of executive development in public administration and law enforcement is to produce a set of tools among which each executive can find the pieces of knowledge required for their individual development and apply them in the long run, consciously, with a need for self-improvement. It is in this way that executive training can become an integrated function of human resources, which supports and maximizes organizational efficiency.

## 6. Implications for practice and future research

This comparative analysis confirms that:

- The coaching of the executives is an integral part of the West European civil service training trends, the systematized collection of which in this article may serve as a useful starting out basis of further researches for those, who are active in this professional area.
- The structure of the Hungarian civil service further training systems, the studying of its institutional and methodological solutions may serve as good practices for the researchers working in this professional area.
- In the interest of increasing and spreading training efficiency, the regular application of the coaching methodologies have to be integrated into the further training systems of Hungarian civil service executives in the future.
- Due to individual developmental needs, besides "canned" trainings and e-learning programmes, the training system should also include coaching methods which help leaders create and develop their own style and leadership tools, in which coaching is one of the best opportunities.

Few public, empirical researches have been made in the past decades which referred to public administration and law enforcement further training methods, techniques, and styles. In this article we have formed a picture and shared best practice about the effectiveness of the further training system in public administration and law enforcement.

As a continuance of our research we think it is necessary to examine in more depth in the near future the international civil service coaching practice (its specialities), and to measure and research with scientific thoroughness the efficiency of the Hungarian civil service further training institution system.

This is on one hand important in the interest of picking up international contact in connection with the civil service coaching activities, and on the other hand in the interest of experience exchanging and partnership co-operations, which are extremely important steps towards developing this professional area and to increase its efficiency in the international arena. We would like to contribute committedly as coaches, trainers, university professors and researchers to the work that is connected to the development of the Hungarian civil service coaching culture and its dissemination.

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