

THE BEST PRACTICE OF THE BASIC TRAINING OF THE POLICE CADETS AT THE UPS FACULTY OF LAW ENFORCEMENT IN HUNGARY

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Abstract: In Hungary, the University of Public Service Faculty of Law Enforcement prepares future officers in the field of law enforcement at the basic and master's level. The first stage of the bachelor studies is the basic training, where the police cadets meet the requirements of the law enforcement community. The basic training at the faculty consists of two phases, an intensive phase, which means continuous preparation for five weeks, and a further training programme which is integrated into the school-based education.

From the study, the reader learns about the main features and characteristics of the basic training of Hungarian law enforcement students, thus making the Hungarian system comparable with other law enforcement training institutions as an example good practice.

Keywords: selection of the applicants, law enforcement basic training for the cadets, law enforcement bachelor education, Faculty of Law Enforcement.

INTRODUCTION

The University of Public Service Faculty of Law Enforcement prepares experts with a higher education degree in law enforcement organizations in Hungary. The faculty is constantly expanding and renewing its training. The ordering organizations are the law enforcement organizations, the Hungarian National Police, Hungarian Prison Service, the National Disaster Management Directorate and the National Tax and Customs Administration. The organizations ordering the programme are more and more satisfied with the training of the specialists graduating from the faculty every year.

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In the case of the faculty's uniformed bachelor programmes, admitted cadets take part in an intensive (law enforcement) basic training lasting five weeks from the end of August; the successful completion of the basic training is mandatory for all law enforcement students. After a five-week intensive phase, the students undergo a basic training until the end of the first semester, after which they take an officer candidate exam. After that, they can be deployed independently, with a gun to the police patrol service and to a professional practice as an officer candidate.

Basic law enforcement training is an important defining stage of the studies. This very strongly affects the entire police profession, therefore its planning, organization, and conducting is extremely important to the Faculty of Law Enforcement.

From this paper, the reader may benefit some information about the main features of the basic training of Hungarian law enforcement students and see that the Hungarian system is comparable with the systems of other law enforcement training institutions.

THE SELECTION PROCEDURE

The number of students enrolled in the Faculty of Law Enforcement is planned annually. It is determined by the Ministry of the Interior and is always tailored to the needs of the ordering organizations. The total number of applicants for the faculties has shown a significantly decreasing trend in recent years, especially between 2015 and 2019, with almost 1,000 fewer applications per year (one applicant can apply for more than one place). The number of first-place applicants is usually double the number of admissions, but this number is also steadily declining (Kovacs, G., 2019.1).

Overall, the Faculty's programmes are still popular among young people, and the number of students can be easily filled. The number of applications, the number of first place applicants and the number of admissions are shown in the graph.

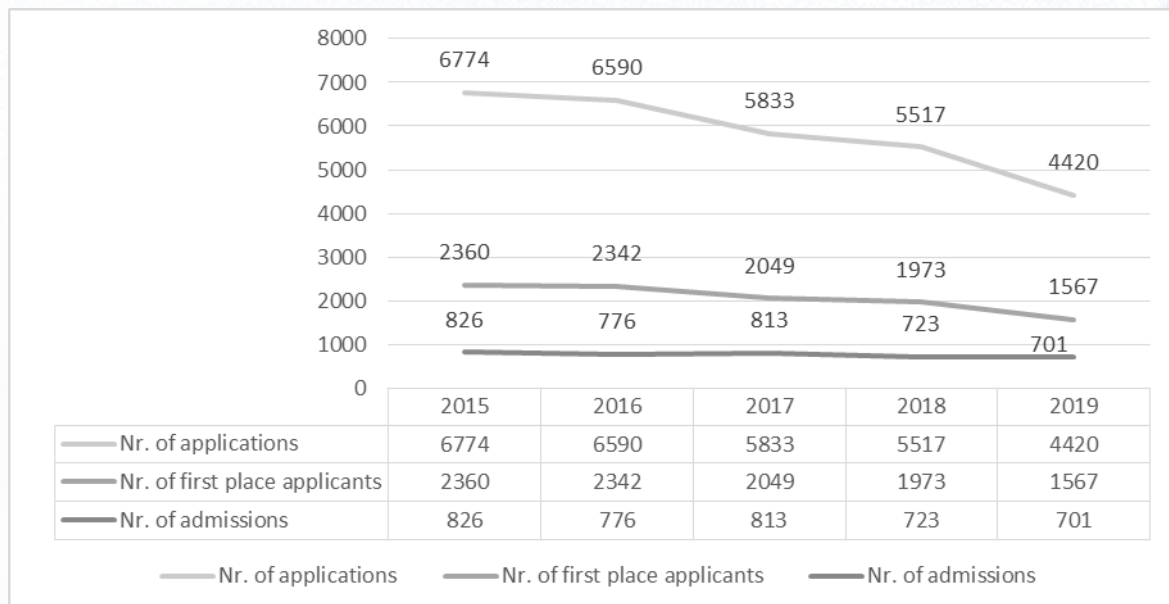


Figure 1. Applications/first place applicants /number of admissions to the Faculty of Law Enforcement /2015-2019/ (Kovacs, 2019)



The admission system is closed and fully automatic; all external interventions are excluded and only objective data is taken into account. The university receives only the list of admitted students at the end of the admission procedure. Despite declining application numbers, faculty programmes are very popular among young people.

The condition for applying for the full-time programmes is the existence of a high school certificate and a B2 language exam certificate in one of the official languages of the European Union or Ukrainian, Serbian, Beas, Lovari, Russian and Chinese (Government Decree 222/2019).

The vast majority of full-time programmes are subject to a strict physical health and psychological aptitude test, which is supplemented by a career orientation and motivational interview, during which a committee examines the candidate's commitment to a professional career.

The high school graduation is decisive in the students' high school education. In the case of traditional secondary school courses, the number of students who have learned the basics of law enforcement fluctuates between 4-11%. Nearly a quarter of the students come from vocational secondary schools, where students study the basics of law enforcement, which also fluctuates between 5-7% per year.

Meeting the requirements of physical education is an important and necessary precondition for the law enforcement profession and it may sometimes pose a significant challenge to applicants. A lot of them (70% of the applicants) consciously prepare to meet the requirements, and accordingly the proportion (40%) of those who seriously prepare for this competition, even for more than half a year, is consistently high. There are also those (5%) who do not prepare or who spend only a few weeks preparing for the test - they say this is enough for them as they have been admitted. Kovacs, G. (2019.2).

In the case of bachelor programmes (where cadets wear uniform) admitted students take part in a five week basic training at the end of August each year, in order to help officer candidates acquire the basics of professional service requirements.

After five weeks, the basic training continues. The training has been integrated into the lessons, and a full day (officer candidate socialization day) is available to the trainers each week. A separate organizational unit, the Law Enforcement Department, is responsible for preparing the students.

At the end of the first semester, the students take an officer candidate exam, at which point the students' 6-month probationary period expires (until this date, both parties may terminate the legal relation without justification). The study contract is then concluded between a student and the organization ordering the programme, which includes an 8-year service obligation after graduation (Act of 2015).

PREPARATION OF THE INTENSIVE PHASE OF BASIC TRAINING

The training staff consists of police officers, deputy police officers and sophomores. The student trainers change every year, but the professional training staff is constant, so over the years they have gained significant professional experience in basic training.

The student training position is very popular among sophomores: they are appointed in June, the preparatory methodological sessions for them start, where in addition to pedagogical, teaching methodological and professional training, various training-type sessions are conducted under the guidance of psychologists, common work with the students and behavior is emphasised.



In the week before the start of the training, intensive methodological sessions will be conducted for the training staff. The five-week training plan includes the content of the curricula broken down into lessons. The training plan contains all the relevant information and data needed to conduct the sessions at a high level.

Subjects and lessons of basic training

The basic training material is grouped into four modules, which are the following: *basic service/law enforcement knowledge, shooting exercise, public order knowledge, police physical education and self defense*. Within these modules, a variety of subjects ensure the acquisition of knowledge.

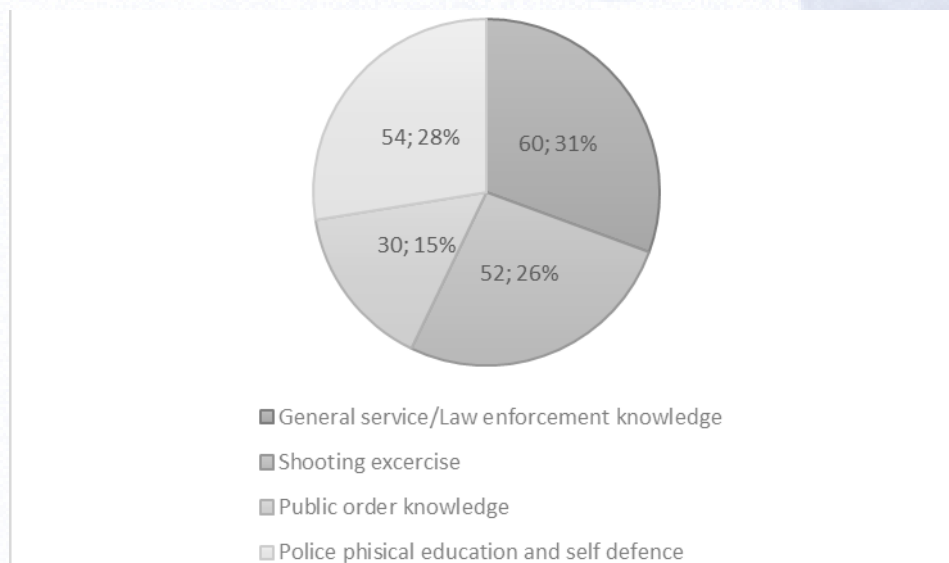


Figure 2. Number of hours (lessons) of basic training

GENERAL SERVICE KNOWLEDGE 60 LESSONS (36 THEORY CLASSES + 24 PRACTICE)

The general service knowledge module consists of four subjects: formal and dress code, document management, case management, basic service knowledge, and first aid. (FLE Dean's Office, 2019)

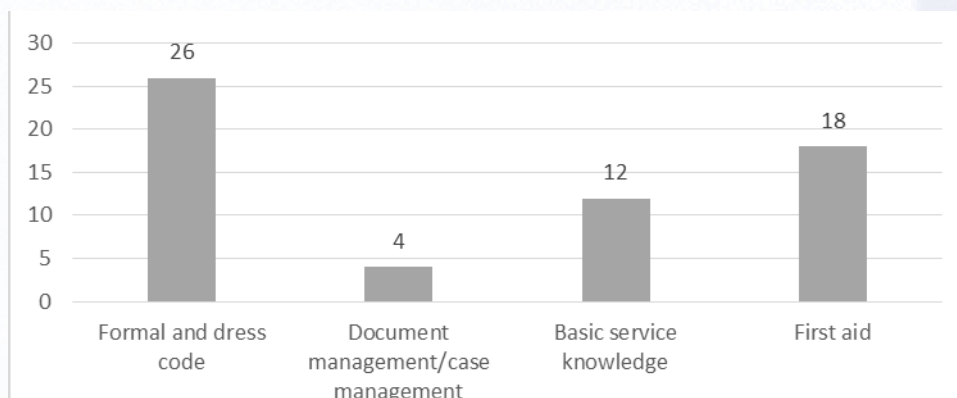


Figure 3. Subjects of the general service knowledge module



Topics of the subject formal and dress code 26 lessons (2 theory + 24 practice): basics of individual formality (superior-subordinate, ranks), rules of service contact, practice, the order of entering and leaving a place, lining up, basic shapes, turns in a stand, "watch and relax" position, starting, moving, stopping subunits, respect individuality, exit shape, march to foreman, practicing procession in bond-age, formal inspection.

Topics of the document and case management course: confidentiality (4 lessons): document and case management rules, management of service documents, confidentiality rules, preparation of reports and minutes.

Topics of the Basics of Service course (12 lessons): Legislation and regulations concerning the employment of members of the professional staff. The importance and role of the hierarchy in law enforcement organisations. Staff groups and ranks at law enforcement organisations. Significance of the career model. The concept of protection, I and II degree of object protection features of the protection modes.

Topics of the Basics of Work, Environment, Fire and Health subject (18 lessons): Work-, Accident-, Fire-, Environment Rules and Possibilities of complying with rules. General and special rules for first aid. Theoretical and practical foundations of the injured and wounded care. Life-saving and resuscitation in simpler cases. Environmental regulations, environmental tasks. Environmental protection, procedure in case of environmental pollution detection. Basics of defense administration and disaster management, legal basis of qualified periods, order, implementation and operation procedures.

The course is supplemented by *Workplace health and safety* (4 lessons), First aid (6 lessons). Disaster management (4 lessons), Environmental protection (2 lessons), Information about the National Protective Service (2 lessons).

Topics of the 52 lessons (6 theory lessons + 46 exercise) shooting course: ballistics and its branches, the structure of the weapon, its operating principle, material knowledge, material knowledge of ammunition, its effects. Disassembling and assembling systematized weapons, trapping methods, targeting criteria, targeting errors and their correction. Elimination of obstacles during shooting, maintenance of weapons, knowledge of safety regulations, protective equipment, presentation of bulletproof vests. Performing various shooting exercises with regularized firearms within 7-15 meters.

Public order class 30 lessons (24 theory lessons + 6 practice) focus on three subject groups:

Topics of the course of *Basics of Service II*. 12 lessons (12 theoretical): The relationship between superiors and subordinates, superiors and lower-ranking ones. Subordinate reporting obligations; Rules of service contact; Significance of the service trip, rules of observance; Duties of a member of the professional staff, restriction of fundamental rights; Personal and labor, disciplinary and financial knowledge; Rules of compensation procedure; Provisions for examination of health, mental and physical fitness.

Topics of the 12 lessons (12 theoretical) course: The place and role of law enforcement organisations in society, forms of service at law enforcement organisations, suitability for service, requirements for entry into service, service briefing, acceptance of handover, reporting, service work (time) systems. General provisions for the performance of the service, cooperation between law enforcement organisations, rules for giving and requesting information, content and form requirements for written activity, significance of the use of coercive tools, types of coercive means, clothing, package inspection rules.



Topics of the 6 lessons subject of the *Integrated Practice of Public Order Protection*: Factors influencing police action, The right choice of the location of the police action, the position of the officer, safety distance, safety shapes, communication with the person subject to the measure, practical implementation of clothing and package screening.

Police physical education and self-defense 54 hours: (6+48) includes two main topics:

Topics in *Improving physical fitness* (26 lessons): Development of physical abilities according to the general requirements for members of law enforcement organisations. Field exercises. Preparing for and completing physical fitness examination. Completing obstacle course.

Basis of Self-Defense 28 lessons (6+22): The definition of self-defense, close-quarters combat, the essence of its application in official law enforcement proceedings. Psychology and anatomy of close-quarters self-defense. Anatomy of the human body, its sensitive and vulnerable points. Basics of self-defense: defense, attack, physical laws in self-defense. Position on the ground, falls, rolls. Basic punching and kicking techniques. Basic techniques of physical coercion, application of drainage grips in case of passive and active resistance. Practicing liberation techniques. Getting rid of grips and strangles. Mastering deviations from the direction of attack. Blocking punches and kicks by dodging, blocking, taking to the ground. Preventing device attacks with bare hand.

RESULTS OF A SURVEY OF OFFICERS CANDIDATES

In the course of the research, the willingness of students to respond is higher than what we experience in other research studies at the university. The questionnaires have been completed in the digital form, using the UniPoll system, anonymously, every year since 2013. The completion rate of the questionnaire is over 80%.

Knowing and analyzing the opinions expressed by the officer candidates will help the university management and the law enforcement trainers of the Department of Training and Education to continuously update and, if necessary, modify the basic training program for the coming years. It can be stated that the skills of the students developed significantly during the basic training.

For first-year university students, there are memorable moments in attending the opening ceremony of the academic year, which can only be reached by those who have successfully completed the requirements of the intensive phase of the basic training. The responses from the students revealed that 74-80% of the staff are proud to have successfully completed the basic training.

Their “pride after the opening ceremony of the school year” has risen since the low point of 2015, and overall the upward trend of previous years is authoritative, with a clear positive message Kovacs, G (2019.2).



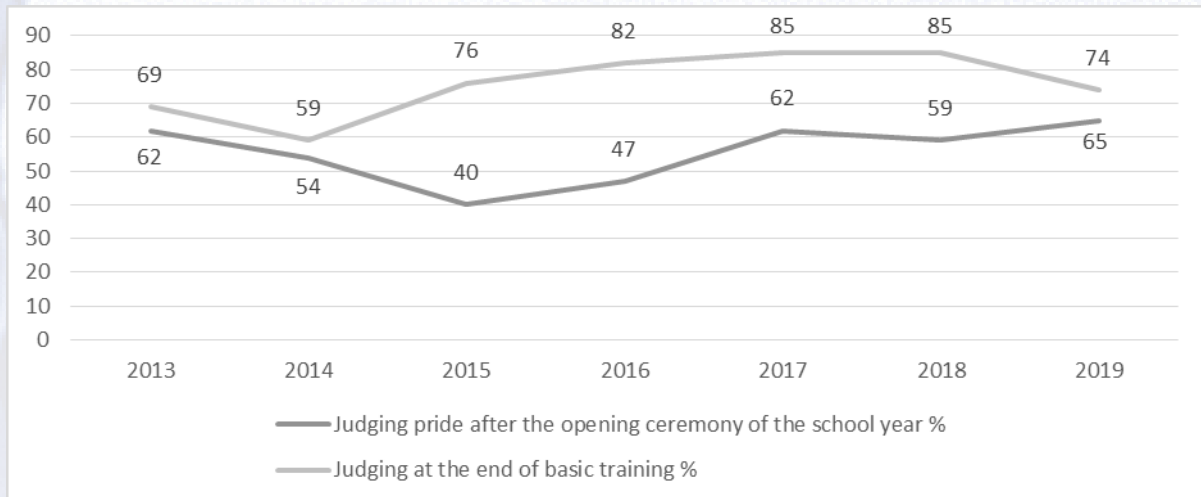


Figure 4. Judging pride after the opening ceremony of the school year or at the end of basic training (n=189;190;181;168;196;117;141) (Kovacs, 2019)

During the basic training, students are given serious tasks that they have to complete. As a result, the self-esteem and self-confidence of half of the students increase significantly during the basic training. The year 2017 was outstanding in this respect.

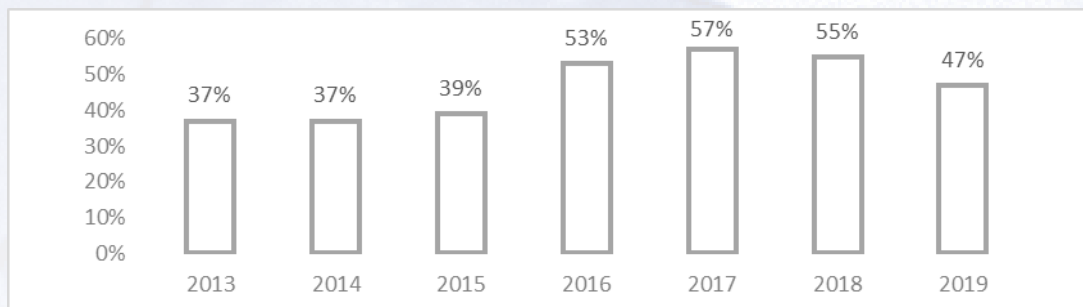


Figure 5. How much did the basic training increase your self-confidence / self-esteem? (n=189;190;181;168;196;117;141) (Kovacs, 2019)

The work and activities of student and faculty trainers, theoretical and practical instructors are very important for the success of the basic training. Respondents rated the work of their trainers with an overall improving trend from year to year. The result of this trend is probably due to the methodological and psychological preparation of the student training staff.

Thorough preparation brings the expected results, so in the future it is recommended that not only students but also professional trainers and educators receive methodological experience in preparation for the basic training.

Opinions on the overall assessment of the intensive phase of the basic training are generally positive. Students were mentally less weary of training (between 13% and 14% of those who were weary). Similar numbers are shown in respect of the difficulty and fulfilment of physical training (11% and 14% of students had difficulty, which is not a significant number). There is a consistently high proportion of those who consider that they learn a lot of new things in the basic training and who would like to take part in the basic training tasks. The perception of the instructors has clearly changed in a positive direction compared to the initial years.



Good practices

- The number of students applying for admission is constantly decreasing, therefore the active recruitment work should be continued; it is justified to find new methods by which the applicants can be reached more effectively.
- The involvement of secondary schools providing basic law enforcement training in partner schools is necessary.
- Further development of methodological sessions conducted among students and lecturers who are responsible for training is justified, which should include the joint processing of the results of the student questionnaire.
- Under the current admission system, the validity of the physical admission preparation course has been proven.
- In the intensive phase of the basic training, it is justified to gradually increase the physical requirements step by step.
- About 70-80% of the participants think about giving up the basic training, this deadlock can be expected to occur after 2 or 3 weeks, when it is recommended to involve psychologists to motivate and help the students.
- It is necessary to involve future head teachers in the intensive phase of the basic training (he/she gets to know its students and can provide significant help during the initial training, where he/she can also perform a kind of mentoring task).
- The formal education agenda needs to be further tailored to the students' needs.
- Through effective communication, the trainers need to be made aware that the implementation of the intensive phase of basic training is a significant achievement, the first serious stage of training that rightly makes the candidate proud.

CONCLUSION

The comparative analysis of the multiannual questionnaire and the annual surveys made it possible to make student opinions on the implementation of the intensive phase of the basic law enforcement training comparable in relation to successive classes. The popularity of filling in the questionnaire proves the actuality of the examined topic, the high willingness of the respondents provided good quality samples, the results of which can be used with great certainty for the further development of the intensive phase of law enforcement basic training.

The vast majority of students still come to the university from high schools and, overall, the proportion of students who have already encountered law enforcement skills within the walls of the high school is rising. The distribution of the responses of the studied classes shows almost similar values, but in the case of their comparative analysis a positive shift can usually be seen. Forms of basic training are evolving, the results are encouraging, but further development is in the common interest of faculty and students.

It can be stated that students are more physically prepared from year to year, as they feel that the period of the basic training is less physically exhausting. However, the extent of the psychological burden associated with the basic training remains negligible, with a consistently high proportion of students considering disarmament, during the five weeks, typically the second or third weeks they felt to be in a deadlock.

Striving for further development of various abilities and skills is a priority task.



Each year, the successful completion of the intensive phase of the basic law enforcement training is a priority task for the faculty. Asking for the opinion of the participating students to provide feedback after the formal training greatly contributes to the development of the training. Overall, the tendency can be identified from the majority of the data that the efficiency of the training develops from year to year and that its methods and content increasingly meet the needs of both trainers and students.

The intensive phase of the basic training is crucial for all participants. In the spirit of the relationship between police officer training institutions, it is recommended to study each other's good practices on the spot and share experiences.

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