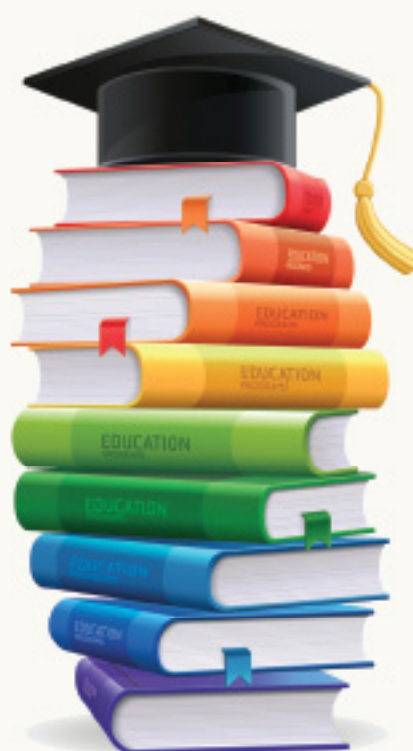


Mainstreaming human rights into curriculum development



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1. Introduction

In 1948, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.⁽¹⁾

As a mechanism for achieving the highest level of human rights, the statement emphasizes “learning” and “education”. Later, at the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna, in 1993, all states and institutions were called upon to include Human Rights, Humanitarian Law, Democracy and Rule of Law as a subject in the curriculum at all teaching institutions, both in formal and informal environments.⁽²⁾ Based on the suggestions of the Vienna Conference, the United Nations General Assembly, in its resolution 49/184 of 23 December 1994, announces the 10 year period beginning on 1 January 1995 - the United Nations Decade on Human Rights in Education.

Based on UN human rights requirements and standards, Kosovo as the newest state in the world that recently joined the family of independent nations is obliged to enforce and respect UN obligations and to rise of awareness of the population on human rights through formal and informal education.

The fact that the University of Prishtina “Hasan Prishtina” - the largest and oldest university in the country, currently having about 50000 students and about 2000 people engaged as university staff -is conducting research on the inclusion of human rights in UPHP curricula, is to be seen as a significant result and indicator at the level of Kosovo or higher education in Kosovo.

This paper explores the inclusion of specific elements and components of human rights in the curricula of the University of Prishtina “Hasan Prishtina”. Quantitative and desk research with processing of statistical data on frequency of inclusion of HR elements in curricula and inclusion of various human rights aspects in the Higher Education of Kosovo are presented through the inclusion of relevant documents and study programs with the aim of answering two questions:

⁽¹⁾ Preamble of the General Declaration on Human Rights, United Nations General Assembly 10 December 1948.

⁽²⁾ Furthermore, see the United Nations Charter: 12 December 1996 - HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS, INCLUDING ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES FOR IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVE ENJOYMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS.

1) **To what** extent are Human Rights dealt with in existing curricula at the University and

2) **How are** they addressed by the University

When it comes to “To what extent”, the focus will be on quantitative aspects, where the frequency of the indicators selected in the research will be explored in different parts of the research subject (documents and curricula).

When it comes to “How”, the focus will be on the quality of data that will be generated by the research, so the nature of the treatment of indicators in different parts of the research subject (documents and curricula) will be analyzed.

Although human rights include many different aspects, I have included and used several indicators through this research through which I have attempted to create a broader picture of the involvement and treatment of human rights at the University and in higher education, focusing the research on the inclusion of human rights in education and learning through study programs, whereas indicator have been selected the following terms/indicators:

- Human Rights
- Special needs
- Ethics, and
- Gender equality

Through these indicators factual data are presented how human rights are included in the curriculum and through it in the higher education system.

In the study I have included a considerable number of study programs, through which relevant data have been obtained, where the following will be presented.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this research is first to present the status quo of the inclusion of human rights in the curricula as a theoretical and fundamental aspect of advocacy and awareness raising of society on this issue and secondly, to present a factual and realistic situation how much the institution addresses human rights issues.

In addition to the above-mentioned goals, the actual presentation of addressing human rights in the curriculum will enable new researchers, based on the data that will be provided in this study, to develop and expand research into other areas and components of rights that are not included in this study.

Last but not least, the factual data and findings serve as a starting point for creating strategies and policies to raise awareness of the factual situation of human rights in higher education.

3. Methodology

During the process of conducting research on the inclusion of human rights in the curriculum, the research method of desk research was used. Study programs of the faculties of the University of Prishtina have been looked into to assess the situation with regard to the treatment of human rights in the curriculum to describe the factual situation during the research; the existing situation and factual data on the study programs of the faculties of the University of Prishtina were assessed.

The research included relevant documents such as the UP Statute, regulations and decisions of the UP management.

In the research 9 UP Academic Units are included. It was tried to make the process as diverse as possible by assessing study programs in a broad range of study fields and disciplines. Thus, out of the total of 144 study programs offered by the UP, 74 or 51% of the field programs and different levels of study were included in the research. At the BA level of the study, 28 programs or 42% of the programs offered at UP, at MA 38 or 63%, and PhD 8 or 47% of study programs are included. Whereas, at the state level, out of 288 study programs offered by the Kosovo higher education system, the survey includes 26% of study programs.

Also, 29 relevant documents were reviewed, including 13 regulations and 16 decisions.

To get more detailed and comprehensive data, the research at the level of study programs is divided into 5 parts or levels. Research has targeted:

- Description and purpose of the program
- Learning outcomes of the program
- Courses
- Description of the courses
- Learning outcomes of the course

In each part of the study program the usage of the terms “human rights, special needs, ethics, and gender equality” were assessed.

4. Research results

4.1 Institutional level

Relevant Documents:

In this section I have reviewed 13 relevant documents, including the University Statute. Out of 12 Regulations only 3 Regulations address issues such as: Ethics, Gender Equality and Special Needs, as it is presented in Figure 1.



Figure 1: Relevant Documents

In the Statute of the University there is one case where Gender Equality is emphasized, while the other components (human rights, special needs, and ethics) are not emphasized in any specific form relevant to human rights, relevant advocacy aspects and the objectives of this research.

“Rights” in the context of the protection of students’ rights and UP personnel, as rights and obligations, are more frequently emphasized, but not subject to this research.⁽³⁾

In the “Rules of Evaluation Procedures for the Engagement of Associates”, **Gender Equality**, as seen in Figure 1, is highlighted in 4 cases in 3 different parts of the regulation, but the emphasis is presented for the same context.⁽⁴⁾ Other human rights elements, which are the subject of our research, are not highlighted.

⁽³⁾ Article 8 of the Statute of the University of Prishtina guarantees Gender Equality in cases of application for employment. This article emphasizes that, “The University provides and supports gender equality. In cases where male and female candidates have equal qualifications and professional achievements, priority will be given to the female candidate.”

In the “Regulation on Disciplinary Measures and Procedures for Academic Personnel”, **Ethics**, appears in 10 cases in 7 different parts of the regulation.⁽⁵⁾

In the “Code of Ethics”, **Gender Equality** is presented in 6 cases, and **Special needs** in 3 different cases.⁽⁶⁾

Relevant decisions:

For this paper, 16 different public decisions of the University of Prishtina “Hasan Prishtina”, dating from 2014 to 2017 have been researched. As a result, out of 16 decisions, only 1 decision represents the aspect of Special Needs, namely in the context of naming students with special needs as one of the categories free from tuition fees.

4.2 Research at the level of the Academic Unit

Inclusion of Human Rights Components in the Curriculum:

The research included 51% of the study programs offered by the UP academic units where the elements or indicators mentioned above were assessed, which are:

- Human Rights
- Special needs
- Ethics, and
- Gender equality

These indicators are required in 5 different parts of the curricula such as:

- Description and purpose of the program
- Learning outcomes of the program
- Course
- Description of the course
- Learning outcomes of the course

In the agriculture and veterinary sciences, at two levels of study (BA and MA), we have 3 programs and 69 courses included in the research, at the Bachelor 1 study program and 27 course of the same program, while at Master level of the study we have 2 programs and 42 courses.

⁽⁴⁾ For more details see “Rules of Evaluation Procedures for the Engagement of Associates” - Article 7.

⁽⁵⁾ For more details, see “Regulation on Disciplinary Measures and Procedures for Academic Personnel” - General Principles, Article 2, Article 3, Article 6, Articles 7 and 11.

⁽⁶⁾ For more see “Code of Ethics” - Article 8 paragraph 4, Article 12 paragraph 2 and Article 14 paragraph 5.

Findings in the Bachelor level program result in the inclusion of the **Ethics** parameter in 2 program subjects, while other research parameters such as **Human Rights**, **Special Needs** and **Gender Equality** are not addressed by the program concerned.

In the two Master level study programs they do not address the components mentioned at all.

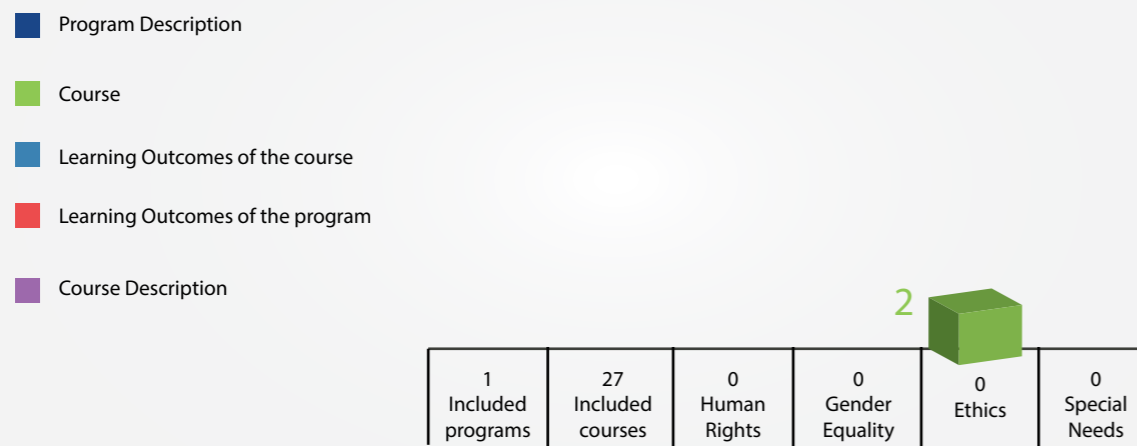


Figure 2: Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary, Bachelor level of study.

In the medical sciences, respectively, at the Faculty of Medicine, 10 study programs were included and a total of 505 courses pertaining to these programs. At Bachelor level, we have 2 programs and 101 courses, in Master 4 programs and 319 courses, and at the PhD level we have 4 study programs and 85 courses included in the research.

As seen in Figure 3, in the 2 Bachelor study programs, the Ethics indicator appears in 9 different cases. In the program description it was presented in 2 cases, in the Learning outcomes of the program in 1 case, in the subject as a main content in 2 cases, in course description in 2 cases and learning outcomes of courses in 2 cases.

The Special needs parameter is presented in 2 cases, and in the Learning Outcomes of the course. Indicators such as, Human Rights and Gender Equality, do not appear in these Bachelor study programs.

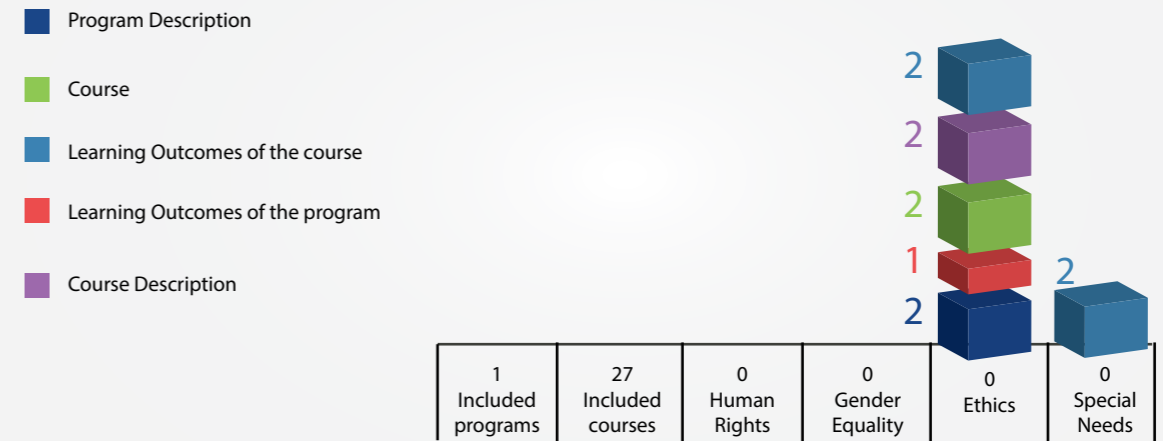


Figure 3: Faculty of Medicine, Bachelor level of study.

In the Master's degree programs, at the Faculty of Medicine, as shown in Figure 4, the Human Rights indicator was presented in 3 cases in the Course Description, and in 3 cases in the Learning Outcomes of the course.

Gender Equality is presented in 1 case, in the Learning Outcomes of the Program.

Ethics is presented in 1 case in the Program Description, in 2 cases in the Course Description, and in 3 cases in the Learning Outcomes of the Course.

Special needs are presented in 2 cases in the Program Description, in 2 cases in the Course and in 1 case in the Course Description.

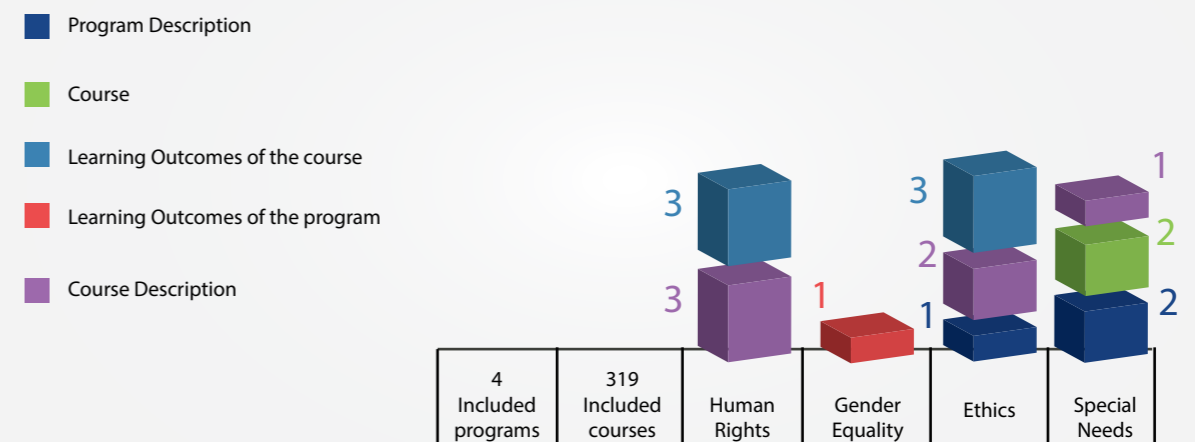


Figure 4: Faculty of Medicine, Master's level of study

In the 4 study programs and 85 courses included in the PhD level of the study, at the Faculty of Medicine, as shown in Figure 5, the Ethics indicator is presented in the program description in 2 cases, the Learning Outcomes of the Program are presented in 2 cases and Course as main content in 6 cases. Meanwhile, indicators such as Human Rights, Gender Equality and Special Needs do not appear in PhD-level programs.

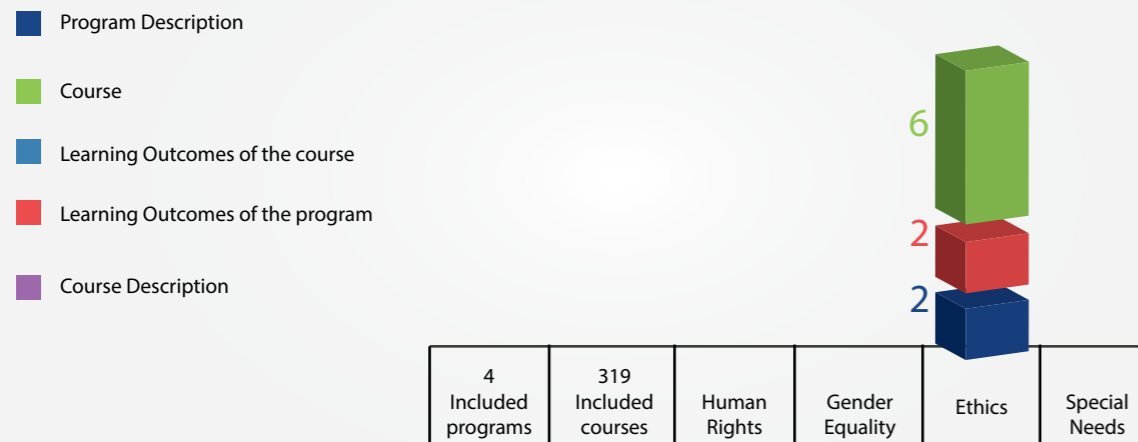


Figure 5: Faculty of Medicine, PhD level of study

In social sciences, 15 study programs and 347 courses are included in three study levels (BA, MA and PhD).

The programs of the Faculty of Philosophy include 6 programs and 179 courses.

At the Bachelor level, 3 programs and 137 courses are included, whereas in the Master 3 study programs and 42 courses are included.

As seen in Figure 3, in the Bachelor programs, the Human Rights parameter is included in the Description of study programs in 2 cases, in the Learning Outcomes of the program is included in 1 case, in the Courses⁽⁷⁾ as the main content in 5 cases, and the learning outcomes of the course in 1 case.

The Gender Equality Parameter is included in the Course as the main content in 2 cases, and in the Learning outcomes of the course in 1 Case.

The Ethics Indicator is included in the Description of study programs in 1 case, in the Learning Outcomes of the program it has been involved in 1 case, in the Course as main content in 4 cases, in Course Description in 1 Case, and Learning Outcomes of the course in 4 cases.

The Special Needs Indicator is included in the Course as main content in 2 cases, and in the Program Description in 1 Case.

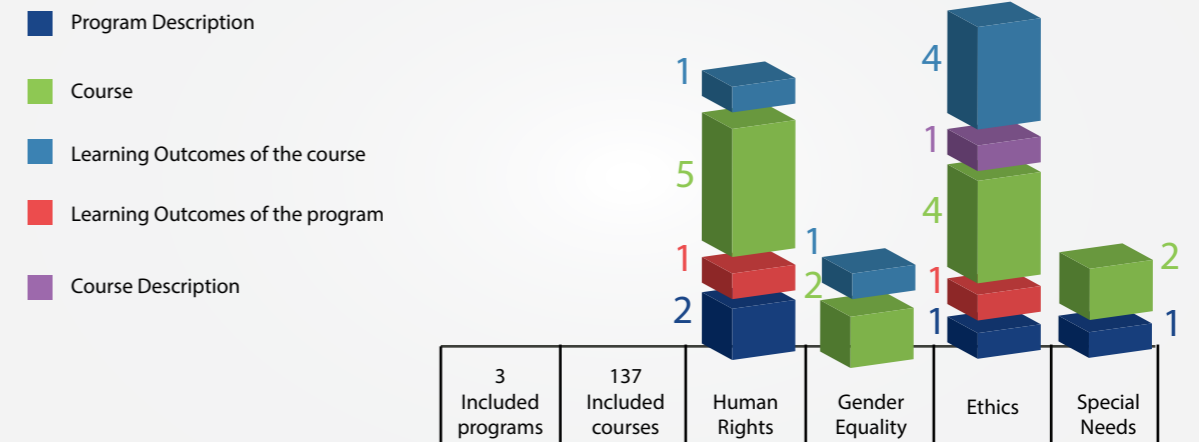


Figure 6: Faculty of Philosophy, Bachelor level of study.

In the researched Master level programs, as shown in Figure 4, Human Rights is presented in 1 case as a main Course content, while in the Description of the course it is presented in 3 cases.

Gender Equality as Indicator, in Program Learning Outcomes is presented in 2 cases, in the description of the case it is presented in 1 case, and in the Learning outcomes of the course it appears in 1 case.

Ethics as indicator, in the description of the program is presented in 1 case, in the Course as the main content is presented in 1 case, in the description of the course is presented in 1 case, and in the Learning outcomes of the course it is presented in 2 cases. The Special Needs Indicator applies in no case.

⁽⁷⁾ When we highlight it as a Subject, it means that the title of the subject has included the parameter as an integral part of the designation

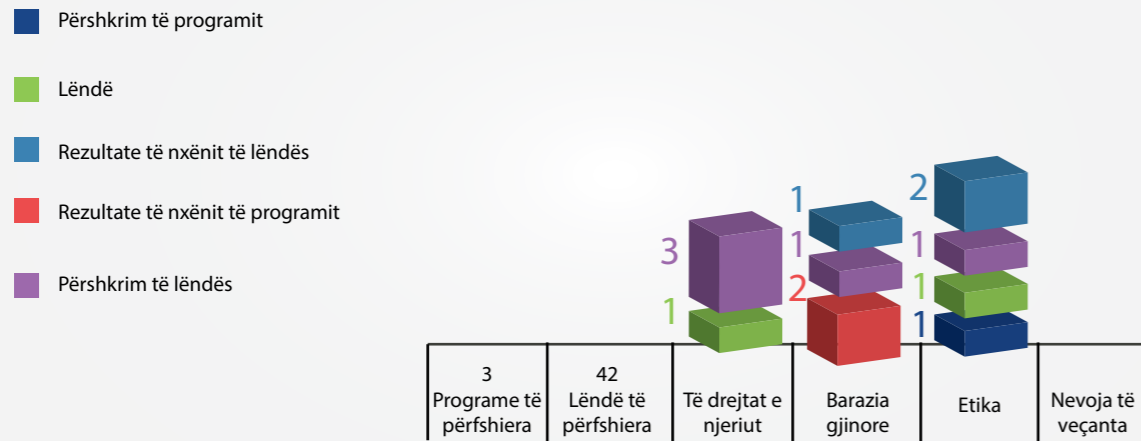


Figure 7: Faculty of Philosophy, Master's level of study.

At Law Faculty are included 9 study programs and 168 courses.

As shown in Figure 5, 6 and 7, at the Bachelor level, 1 study program and 81 courses are included, while in Master there are 6 study programs included and 81 courses, while in the PhD 2 programs of the study and 6 courses are included.

Human rights as a parameter, in the case as main content is presented in 1 case, and in the Course Description it is also presented in 1 case.

Ethics as a parameter is presented only in 1 case and in the Course as the main content.

Gender Equality and Special Needs are not highlighted in Bachelor level of study programs.

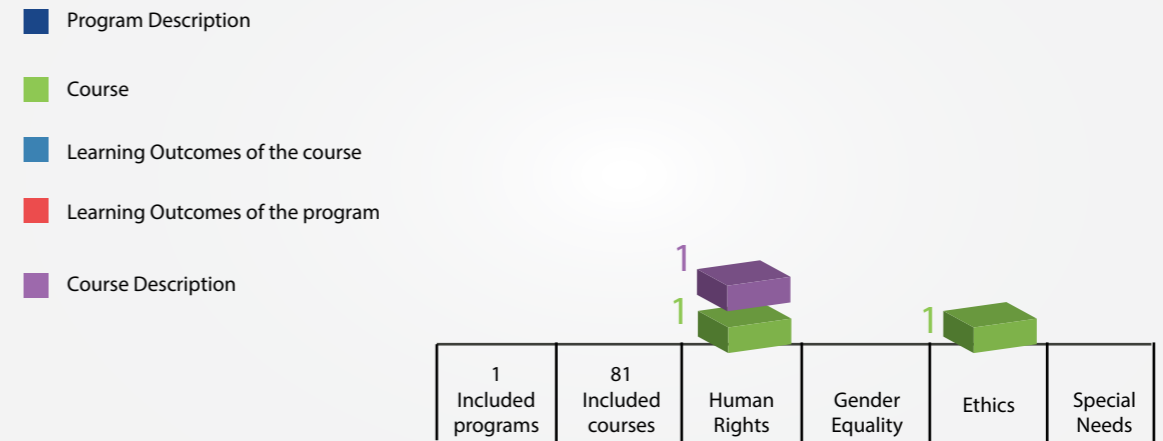


Figure 8: Faculty of Law, Bachelor level of study.

Human Rights as relevant indicator at the Master level is presented in 2 cases in the Learning Outcomes of the Program, in 4 cases it is presented as Course as a main content, while in the description of the Course it is presented in 3 cases.

Ethics as indicator is presented in 2 cases in the Course Descriptor section.

Gender Equality and Special Needs are not emphasized in the reviewed Master's degree programs of the Faculty of Law.

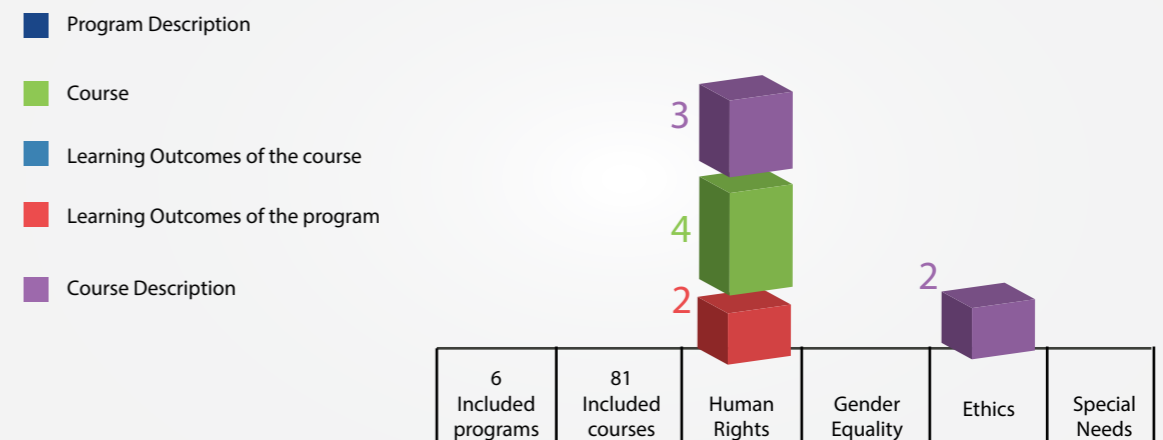


Figure 9: Faculty of Law, Master's level of study.

At the PhD level of the study, involving 2 programs and 6 courses, the Human Rights parameter was presented in 2 cases in the Learning Outcomes of the program. Other parameters are not highlighted.

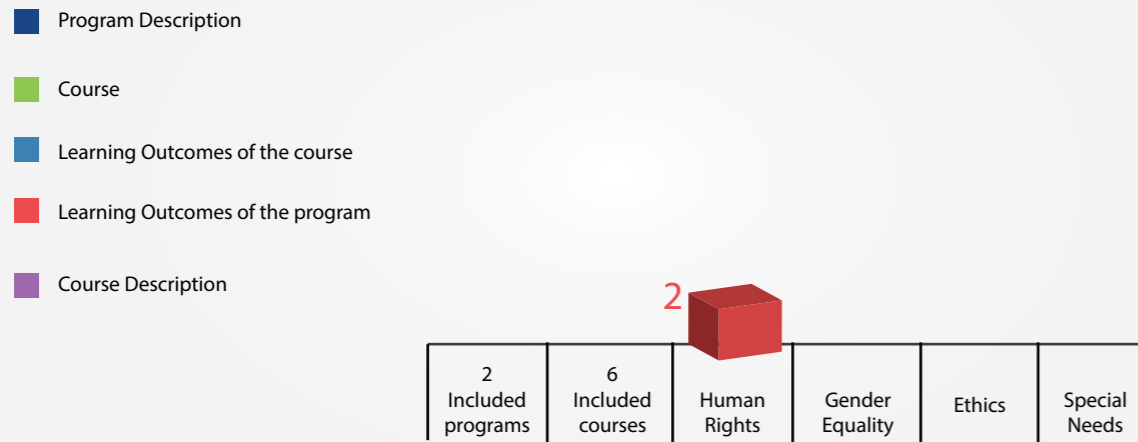


Figure 10: Faculty of Law, PhD level of study.

In the Faculty of Education 9 study programs and 500 Bachelor and Master's degree courses are included.

As it can be seen in Figure 9, three study programs and 155 courses are included in the Bachelor level.

The Human Rights Indicator is presented in 2 cases and in one of them in the Course as a main content and in the other in the Course Description.

Gender Equality as indicator is presented only in one case in the Course as the main content.

Ethics is presented in a total of 5 cases and in 2 cases is presented in the Course as a part of the course, in 1 case it is presented in the Course Description and in 2 cases in the Learning Outcomes of the course.

The parameter Special needs, in total are presented in 5 cases. In 3 cases it is presented in the Course Description and in 2 cases we have it on the Learning Outcomes of the course.

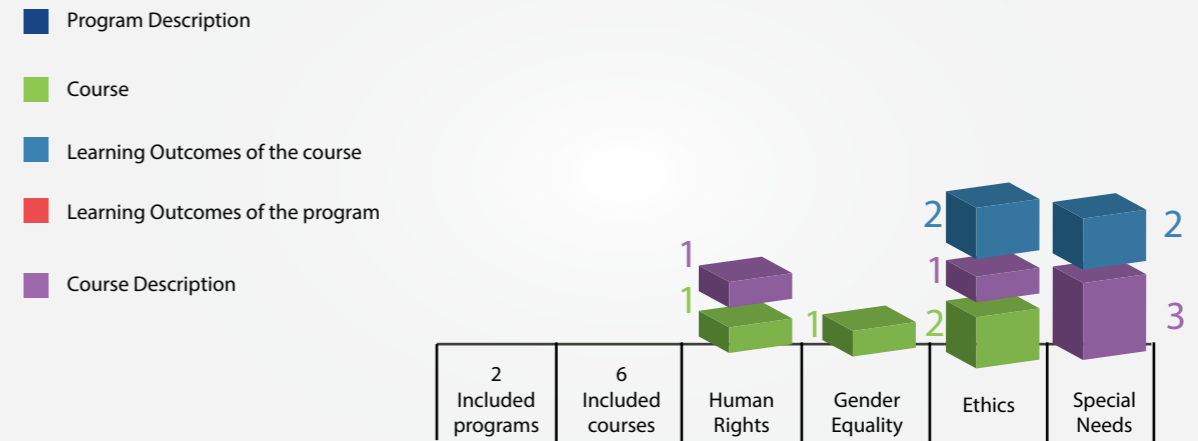


Figure 11: Faculty of Education, Bachelor level of study.

While at the Master level of the Faculty of Education, as seen in Figure 10, we have included 6 study programs and 345 courses.

The Human Rights Indicator is included in 7 cases in the Course Description.

Gender Equality is included in 1 case in the Learning Outcomes of the Program.

Ethics as indicator is included in 4 different cases. In 1 case it is presented in the Program Description, in 1 case is presented in the Course as main content, and in 2 cases in the Description of the course.

The Special Needs Indicator is presented in 6 different cases. In 2 cases we have presented special needs in the Program Description, in 2 cases in the Course Description, and in 2 cases in the Learning Outcomes of the course.



Figure 12: Faculty of Education, Master's level of study.

In the Faculty of Physical Education and Sports, the study includes 3 study programs and 104 Courses. Figures 11 and 12 show the findings for Bachelor and Master levels.

At the Bachelor level, 1 study program and 62 course were included in the research.

From the findings of the research it turns out that Ethics as indicators is presented in 4 different cases, and that in the Learning Outcomes of the program it is presented in 1 case, in the Course as the main content is presented in 1 case, and in the Description of the course in 2 cases. While indicators, Human Rights, Gender Equality and Special Needs do not appear as indicators presented in the program and Bachelor study subjects.

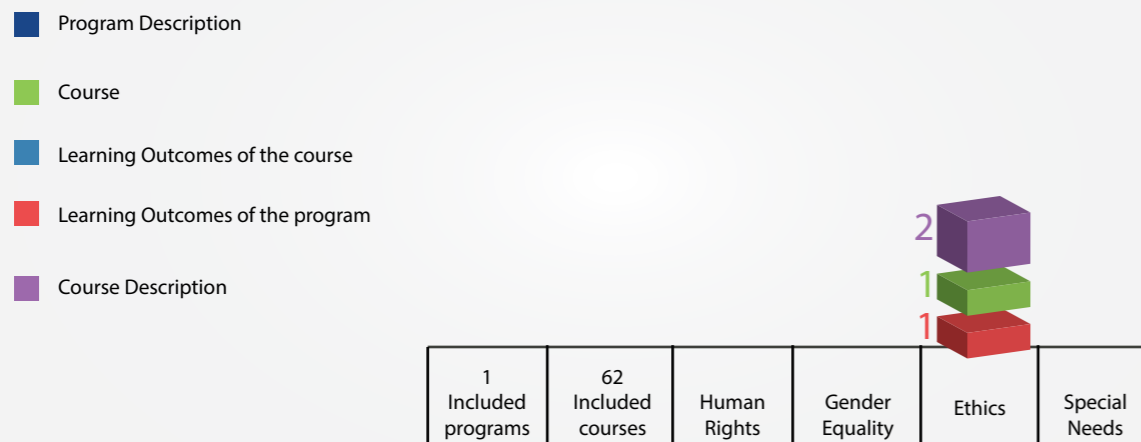


Figure 13: Faculty of Physical Education and Sports, Bachelor level of study.

At the Master level, at the Faculty of Physical Education and Sports, 2 programs and 42 courses are included in the research. As shown in Figure 12, the Ethics indicator turns out to be presented in 5 different cases. In 1 case it is presented in the Course as a main content, in 2 cases it is presented in the Course Description and in 2 cases in the Learning outcomes of courses.

The Special Needs Indicator appears to be included only in one case and in the Program Description.

The Human Rights and Gender Equality indicators do not appear in the study programs and courses.



Figure 14: Faculty of Physical Education and Sports, Master level of study.

In technical sciences and natural sciences there are 34 study programs and 1079 courses which have been included, including three levels of study - Bachelor, Master and PhD. The research has shown that the required indicators are not included in any case, the result for these programs and course equal zero (= 0).

5. Conclusions

From the research we can conclude that the findings can be divided into three categories, in:

- Finding of particular importance,
- Preventive, and
- Implemented

According to the research results based on relevant documents, there is obviously a lack of regulations and decisions by relevant bodies of University for the promotion of human rights at the University.

The importance of the parameters (Human Rights, Special Needs, Ethics, and Gender Equality) is divided according to the hierarchical level of inclusion in the curriculum (Description and Purpose of the Program, Learning Outcomes of the Program, Subject, Course Description, learning the subject). Those parameters that are most emphasized in the part of learning outcomes and in the course are considered to have a higher level of relevance because the student after completing the studies is expected to have knowledge for the particular parameter and the applicability of the concept. In this case, the student will be able to apply the basic concepts of the parameter emphasized in the program and able to better understand these concepts after completing the course or the study program.

In Figure 15, parameters are presented according to hierarchical importance in the curriculum

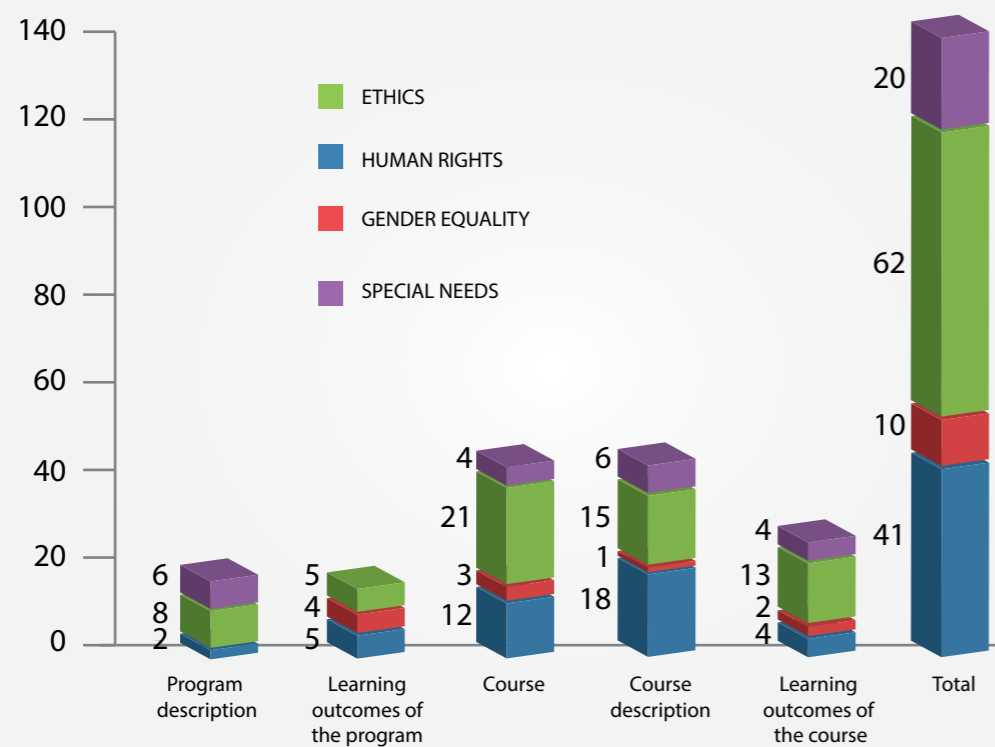


Figure 15: Results by hierarchical importance of the program.

Ethics as a parameter of scrutiny, in the 74 reviewed programs, has been highlighted in 62 cases or different levels of curriculum. Ethics as a parameter turns out to be more integrated in academic unit programs, compared to the other three parameters such as Human Rights which is considered in 41 cases at different levels of curriculum, followed by the parameter Special needs presented in 20 cases, and finally we have Gender Equality which is considered in 10 cases and different parts of the curriculum.

From some academic units, study programs offer lessons and topics that relate more to the creation of preventive conditions for human rights protection and its components, through teaching, in terms of learning for sensitizing and raising awareness on human rights issues.

In some academic units, study programs are offered that relate to the lessons learned from the implementation of concrete measures or safeguards provided by law for the protection of human rights.

The research has shown that human rights are not incorporated in all study programs offered by the academic units of the University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina". As evidenced by the facts, the study programs of technical and natural science faculties do not address human rights issues, but ethics as a component or as a parameter that is included in this research. Whereas, in social science programs, medicine, agriculture and veterinary and education human rights issues are addressed to some extent.

Within social sciences there are differences in incorporating human rights at the different faculties (academic units). For example, at The Faculty of Law, human rights are treated from a legal perspective (e.g. is a certain action in line with existing human rights commitments and principles, how are laws implemented etc.), while in the programs of the Faculty of Philosophy and Education, human rights and its components are treated more from the perspective of advocacy, awareness raising and the prevention.

6. Recommendations/possible ways forward

In order to have a clearer picture of the inclusion of human rights in curricula of the University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina", it was necessary to include in the research a large number of Academic Units with different study programs. Through the inclusion of various study programs in this research on human rights in curricula, it became clear that some faculties (academic units) focus exclusively on the professional preparation of students in the particular field of study without taking into account the broader social context and relevant human rights dimensions. It is therefore recommended to academic units to also reflect in their curricula on relevant human rights aspects.

It goes without saying that human rights should not and cannot be treated in the same way in all study programs. Still, they should be treated in the context of the field of study as relevant. The perception that human rights are not relevant to some areas of study and that thus teaching on human rights is not needed, can be considered as problematic and inaccurate: As a matter of fact, an understanding of ethics and human rights is essential also when it comes to research and can contribute to prevent different cases of abuse e.g. with new inventions which may have a negative impact otherwise. Therefore, the inclusion and incorporation of human rights in curricula should be very significant part of teaching and an integral part of education especially in Master and PhD study programs.

As can be seen from this research, none of the parameters applied in this research is found in study programs of technical science and natural science.

From the research results it can be seen that in study programs of social sciences, education, medicine, agriculture and veterinary, human rights are treated to a considerable extent. There are

altogether 133 cases where the parameters applied for this research (human rights, special needs, ethics, gender equality) are reflected in study programs. Still - this research does not cover how these parameters are addressed in the classroom – e.g. how they are presented to students.

When it comes to technical sciences, as a minimum “ethics” should be included within the study program as a separate subject, especially in Master and PhD studies.

When it comes to natural sciences, the same applies as for technical sciences. Ideally, all parameters covered by this research should be incorporated into curricula, considering the impact which these study programs have in society and in nature.

In those curricula where human rights are already incorporated, relevant parameters should be reviewed in order to strengthen awareness and advocacy aspects.

At the institutional level, Universities should pay more attention to human rights issues by supporting human rights centers at the University and also by organizing more trainings and seminars for students and staff of University in this field.

Human right centers should be engaged and committed to organize extra curriculum courses in field of human rights.

It will be also essential to further develop and compile relevant documents for information, education and communication (including awareness raising and teaching materials) in order to promote human rights to students and university staff.

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