# **PROCSEE>** Policy Directions for Professional Higher Education in Central and South-Eastern Europe

procsee.eu

**Report from the 2nd PHE Excellence Forum** 

2017-05-31 to 2017-06-03

Vis, Croatia

Version 2



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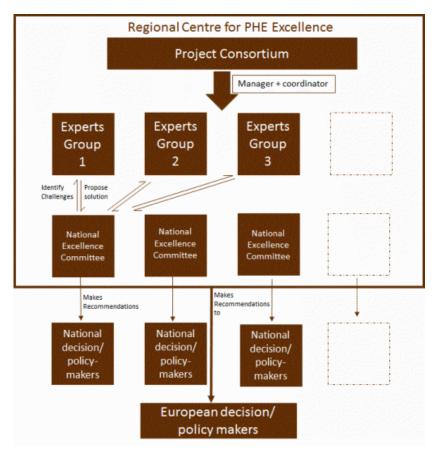
### **1** Introduction

The Professional Higher Education Excellence in Central and South-Eastern Europe (PROCSEE) project is a policy-oriented project, aimed at strengthening the provision of professional higher education, by strengthening the policy-work conducted by umbrella organizations representing professional higher education institutions in Central and South-Eastern in Europe (CSEE), specifically in Slovenia, Romania, Croatia, Czech Republic and Hungary. The PROCSEE project partners and experts started to work together in 2015 and will continue to do so until 2018, to provide specific policy inputs on how to address the following priorities in each participating country, as well as across the CSEE region:

- Identify the main challenges facing Professional Higher Education (PHE) in the region
- Propose policy solutions to address those challenges in the short-to-midterm, through a mixture of good-practice identification and stakeholder consultation
- Bring together the main actors in PHE in each participating country to build implementation roadmaps for the identified policy solutions

This report represents the second and third steps of this process, and comprises the policy solutions proposed to address the challenges faced by the PHE sector throughout Central and South-Eastern Europe.

PROCSEE is made up of a wide selection of experts and the ones contributing directly to this report are listed under "Contributors" at the technical fiche on page 2.



• The project consortium serves as a management board of the Centre for Excellence, which in turn hosts all policy analysis and recommendation activities.

• Four thematic peer-learning groups, which are made up of experts in each of the fields, are responsible for finding and analysing case studies, and for proposing a toolbox of policy solutions for addressing identified challenges.

 In each country, a national excellence committee consisting of representatives of business, institutions, students and policymakers is formed. This "PHE excellence committee" is responsible for identifying local priorities and challenges, and feeding these to the expert groups for policy analysis. The national excellence committees are also responsible for selecting appropriate interventions from the



toolbox developed by the expert groups, and adapting these for their own institutional or regional/national contexts.

PROCSEE's four thematic areas are:

- Alignment of PHE with regional, local and economic development strategies
- Promotion of PHE in responding to skill shortages
- Organising and Monitoring Student Placements in the World of Work
- Personalised Learning Environments in PHE

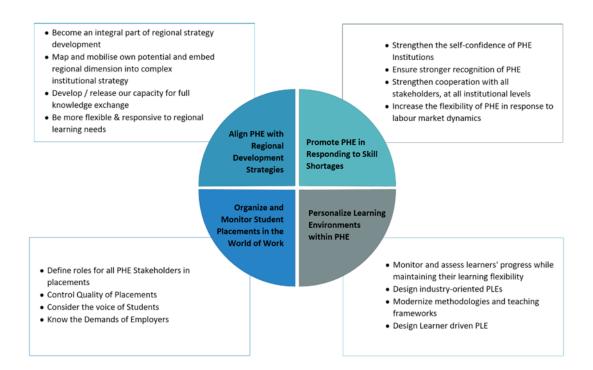


### 2 Methodology

This report is the result of the 2<sup>nd</sup> PHE Excellence Forum, one of the activities of the PROCSEE project during 2017, held in Vis, Croatia, from May 30 to June 3.

This 2nd PHE Excellence Forum was a direct follow-up to the 1st PHE Excellence Forum and also National Committees for PHE Excellence which were held between October 2016 and April 2017 in participating countries. It was also a follow up of collected database of best-practice case studies as an answer to the policy challenge statement (extract below):

### Main Challenges for PHE in Central & South-Eastern Europe



The purpose of the Forum was to identify addressable root causes for stated challenges, analysis of best practices and in addition preparation of recommendations/interventions.

There were four groups of experts according to PROCSEE's four thematic fields, with two partners as moderators, sharing and understanding what needs to be addressed and developing best policy recommendations. Altogether, thirty-four participants were included in the forum.

The participants received instructions on how to prepare themselves in advance for the Forum and on how to work during and after the Forum, as described below.



Before the Forum, the participants received the elaborated cases provided by other experts on their thematic area together with a briefing sheet summarising the relevant case study for the thematic area. They were asked to read through the provided cases prior to the meeting, since the discussions in their thematic group would be focused on the provided case examples.

They were also asked to think and identify in advance any possible European key policy documents, interventions, initiatives and relevant research studies within their thematic area, which would be useful in formulating policy recommendations based on the challenges identified during the first Forum. As all sources above mentioned could be included in the discussions relevant to the theme, the participants were also asked to share the documents or links to them with the other members of their thematic group.

During the four days of the Forum the main aim of the discussions was to further discuss the best practise cases provided by the thematic experts according to the root causes by each category. In order to achieve this, the groups took a six steps approach:

Step 1: Presentation of Background and Available Best Practices.

Step 2: Discussion of Root Causes by Category: What are the primary (category) problems for this challenge?

Step 3: Identification of (max) 3 solutions. Methodology: Brainstorm and Vote.

Step 4: Map back to Root Causes (Number of Solution next to the root cause).

Solution	Government (regional or	Institutions of PHE	Associations of	l	
Step 5: Discussion of 3 solutions. Those solutions were mapped as following:					

Solution	Government (regional or national)	Institutions of PHE	Associations of PHE	European Commission
Solution 1				
Solution 2				
Solution 3				

Step 6: A SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, responsible, time-related) assessment was applied to each of the proposals and they were modified as needed.

Based on the discussions and analysis held, each group has:

- Identified primary problems for the challenge;
- Identified solutions to these problems;
- Mapped the solutions back to the root causes.

The results of the forum discussions and work served as an input for the formulation of specific policy recommendations to be published as a **Policy Intervention Toolbox,** summarising an overview of policy environment on each thematic field and best practice interventions for PHE Excellence.

More information about this and other PROCSEE events can be found online at: https://procsee.eu/events



### **3** Conclusions from the Forum: The Recommendations

As requested, the four groups formulated the policy recommendations for their theme, using the common format for the Policy Intervention Toolkit. These Recommendations (R) were numbered, and are presented in the next pages, by thematic area.



# **3.1 Alignment of PHE with regional, local and economic development strategies**

R1.1 – Review and develop the policy framework in terms of financial, legal, governance and QA instruments to support regional engagement of PHE.

Government	PHEIs	PHE Associations	European Commission
Create specific funding schemes for supporting regional engagement of PHE. Create legislation reflecting regional engagement.	Create non-prescriptive quality management standards.	Create non-prescriptive quality management standards.	Create specific funding schemes for supporting regional engagement of PHE.

#### **R1.2** – Embed regional engagement in internal policies and strategies of PHEIs

Government	PHEIs	PHE Associations	European Commission
Support (PHEI) Policy implementation with adequate structures and resources.	Partner and consult with relevant authorities. Align PHEI strategies (T&L, RDI) and their implementation with regional needs and opportunities. Develop the structures within institutions (financial support). Set objectives and actions <-> reg. dev. as integral part of strategic plan. Engage regional stakeholders. Policy and strategy: - developed in consultation with external partners and authorities; - include clear objectives and targets; - support implementation with; adequate structures and resources. Involve key stakeholders in the curriculum design and development as well as research agenda.	Support (PHEI) Policy implementation with adequate structures and resources.	



# R1.3 – Measure the impact of regional role of PHEI against institutional targets

Government	PHEIs	PHE Associations	European Commission
Create relevant indicators to inform strategic development and make them available.	Create relevant indicators to inform strategic development and make them available.	Demonstrate impact on economic, social, cultural and internal development.	

# R1.4 – Recognize and communicate the importance of the proactive role of PHEI in regional development

Government	PHEIs	PHE Associations	European Commission
Improve the perception of PHEI by regional actors.	Improve the perception of PHEI by regional actors.	Improve the perception of PHEI by regional actors.	
Participate in decision making groups.	Participate in decision making groups.	Participate in decision making groups.	

### R1.5 – Review HR policies in terms of recruitment, rewarding, career progression, staff development for regional engagement

Government	PHEIs	PHE Associations	European Commission
Include regional development in HR policies.	Include regional development in HR policies. Implement processes to manage staff development and career progression.		



R1.6 – Innovate T&L methods and develop regional networks in order to engage students in regional-focused knowledge services (T&L, RDI)

Government	PHEIs	PHE Associations	European Commission
	Measure the quantity and quality of engaged learning and research opportunities for students.	Measure the quantity and quality of engaged learning and research opportunities for students.	

R1.7 – Develop capacity to identify and address changing needs of specific groups within the population (underrepresented groups, specific minorities, upskilling, reskilling, life-long learning)

Government	PHEIs	PHE Associations	European Commission
	Get proactively involved in mapping and responding to needs.		
	Implement processes to accommodate various students' groups from within the region (regular students, adult learners, any specific minorities identified as target groups, etc.).		



R1.8 – Facilitate and coordinate various regional strategies' development in a complex manner (skills, education, RDI, industry, etc.) and harmonise these through a facilitated process at a national level with key stakeholders' participation.

Government	PHEIs	PHE Associations	European Commission
Implement evidence-based harmonized regional development strategies to promote cross-sector synergies.			Implement evidence-based harmonized regional development strategies to promote cross-sector synergies.

### R1.9 – Involve PHEIs in the development and implementation of innovation, regional funding programs, smart specialization strategies

Government	PHEIs	PHE Associations	European Commission
Assure the presence of PHEI within relevant fora and perception of impact.	Assure the presence of PHEI within relevant fora and perception of impact.		

# R1.10 – Facilitate staff mobility between PHE and world of work (open up, remove obstacles, develop incentives)

Government	PHEIs	PHE Associations	European Commission
Create procedures, structures and make support available for	Create procedures, structures and make support available for	Use qualitative and quantitative indicators of mobility.	Use qualitative and quantitative indicators of mobility.
mobility.	mobility.	Remove barriers to mobility.	Remove barriers to mobility.



R1.11 – Develop and review requirements and the process for selection, promotion and capacity building of leaders at all levels, reflecting the PHE and its regional role. Engage stakeholders in the process. Promote capacity building of leaders at all levels.

Government	PHEIs	PHE Associations	European Commission
	Include regional engagement in the job description of leadership roles.	Include regional engagement in the job description of leadership roles	
Include regional engagement in the job description of leadership roles.	Implement processes to manage leadership capacity building programmes.	Implement processes to manage leadership capacity building programmes.	
	Implement processes to engage stakeholders and provide evidence of their engagement.	Implement processes to engage stakeholders and provide evidence of their engagement.	

#### **R1.12** – Review governance structures to engage external stakeholders

Government	PHEIs	PHE Associations	European Commission
Review governance structures to reflect the specific role of PHEs.	Provide evidence of stakeholders' engagement	Review governance structures to reflect the specific role of PHEs.	
Provide evidence of stakeholders' engagement in governance structures.	in governance structures.	Provide evidence of stakeholders' engagement in governance structures.	

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### **3.2** Promotion of PHE in Responding to Skill Shortages

R2.1 – Create close and meaningful partnerships between the institutions of PHE and other actors from the world of work

Government	PHEIs	PHE Associations	European Commission
Enable, promote and support HEI & industry collaboration in curriculum design, evaluation, assessment, practical training, permeability between industry and teaching career, research projects and others.	Engage with the WoW in curriculum design, evaluation, assessment, practical training, permeability between industry and teaching career, research projects and others.	Collect and share good practices of HEI and WoW.	Map engagement of HEI of PHE and the WoW. Share practices at European level. Support member states in promoting interaction between HEI and the WoW.

#### R2.2 – Collect relevant data; analyse and report it at institutional and system level with the aim of building a knowledge basis for evidence-based policymaking

Collect relevant data;Collect relevant data;Collect relevant data;analyse and report it.analyse and report it.analyse and report it.	
Collect relevant data;	,
Build a knowledge basis for evidence-based policy- making.analyse and report it.Promote PHE, raise public awareness, identify good practices & benchmark.Build a know evidence-base	vledge basis for sed policy-



### R2.3 – Increase the information, transparency and comparability of the provided and recognized qualifications

Government	PHEIs	PHE Associations	European Commission
Increase the information, transparency and comparability of the provided and recognized qualifications.	Increase the information, transparency and comparability of the provided and recognized qualifications, learning outcomes, learning environments and student experience such as work based learning to all relevant stakeholders, especially to the WoW.	Communicate about the qualifications and achieved learning outcomes to all relevant stakeholders, especially to the WoW.	Increase the information, transparency and comparability of the provided and recognized qualifications.

#### R2.4 – Establish alliances and synergies between education institutions

Government	PHEIs	PHE Associations	European Commission
Enable, promote and support alliances and synergies between education institutions among different levels and types of institutions	Establish alliances and synergies between education institutions among different levels and types of institutions to facilitate the sharing of experience, resources, promoting the study offers, joint projects and permeability.	Establish alliances and synergies between education institutions among different levels and types of institutions. Share experiences, resources, promote the study offers, joint projects and permeability.	Promote and support alliances and synergies between education institutions among different levels and types of institutions



# R2.5 – Implement and support new pedagogical approaches, modes of delivery and skills of teaching staff

Government	PHEIs	PHE Associations	European Commission
Support new pedagogical approaches and staff development trainings.	Apply a student-centred learning approach, particularly in the development of civic/transferable skills through work-based learning in traditional/formal programmes as well as in lifelong learning programmes.	Support new pedagogical approaches and staff development trainings.	Support new pedagogical approaches and staff development trainings.

#### R2.6 – Enable flexible and fit-for-purpose quality assurance procedures

Government	PHEIs	PHE Associations	European Commission
Enable flexible and fit-for- purpose quality assurance procedures that consider the specificities of PHE, the diversity of institutions of PHE and institutional autonomy.	Develop flexible and fit- for-purpose quality assurance procedures that consider the specificities of PHE, the diversity of institutions of PHE and institutional autonomy.	Promote the development and adoption of flexible and fit-for-purpose quality assurance procedures that consider the specificities of PHE, the diversity of institutions of PHE and institutional autonomy.	Promote the development and adoption of flexible and fit-for-purpose quality assurance procedures that consider the specificities of PHE, the diversity of institutions of PHE and institutional autonomy.

# R2.7 – Promote Professional Higher Education to prospective students and non-traditional learners, as well as to wider society

Government	PHEIs	PHE Associations	European Commission
Promote Professional Higher Education to prospective students and non-traditional learners.	Take smart communication actions about the role and mission of PHE and opportunities it provides, especially involving current PHE students, recent graduates, career counsellors and the WoW.	Take smart communication actions about the role and mission of PHE and opportunities it provides, especially involving current PHE students, recent graduates, career counsellors and the WoW.	Promote Professional Higher Education to prospective students and non-traditional learners.



### **3.3 Organize and Monitor Student Placements in the World** of Work

R3.1 – Create the role of "WBL/Apprenticeship Manager" to serve as an interface between the students, the stakeholders and the world of work

Government	PHEIs	PHE Associations	European Commission
Legislate the need of the role of "WBL/Apprenticeship Manager" at PHEs. Allocate the resources to enable the creation of the role of "WBL/Apprenticeship Manager" at PHEs.	Establish the structure and define the job description for the role of "WBL/Apprenticeship Manager".	Support the PHEs with know-how and guidelines for the role of "WBL/Apprenticeship Manager".	Create funding programmes specifically designed for PHEs.

# R3.2 – Involve students in the process of obtaining / applying for work placement and competing for the best practical training

Government	PHEIs	PHE Associations	European Commission
Define contractual minimum requirements (negotiated with Commerce Chambers and trade unions).	Establish the conditions for watching students and the world of work.		



R3.3 – Set up a committee structure at institutional level for strategy development, study programs and quality management, having regular meeting and a rigorous definition of roles

Government	PHEIs	PHE Associations	European Commission
Legislate the installation of specific structures.	Establish a strategy policy. Establish committees. Cooperate with chambers, to establish a committee based on social partnership. Mandate the committees to identify all the relevant topics, objectives (mid- and long-term ones), issues, stakeholders, directions and approaches for the PHEI to follow.	Provide the PHEs with know-how and guidelines. Monitor the work of the committees.	Recommend policies for electing the committee.

# R3.4 – Provide a framework for learning outcomes tailored for the work placement, as part of curricula

Government	PHEIs	PHE Associations	European Commission
	Define learning outcomes during the work placement. Decide the learning outcomes in cooperation with the Commerce Chambers who should also provide feedback on them.	Define milestones and frame for the learning outcomes.	Prepare a common framework and define principles.



### R3.5 – Create practical and quality tools (handbooks, manuals, data base etc.) for stakeholders, students, mentors and tutors

Government	PHEIs	PHE Associations	European Commission
Provide resources and promote financing the elaboration of manuals, trainings, data bases.	Collaborate with the Commerce Chamber in order to create manuals and to define tools dedicated to mentors and tutors of students.	Provide the framework.	Provide and promote funding programmes.

# R3.6 – Establish alumni department with dedicated staff to manage alumni data base and keep in contact

Government	PHEIs	PHE Associations	European Commission
	Establish Alumni department and dedicated staff.		

### R3.7 – Implement a PR awareness campaign, targeting the employers, about the benefits of student placement

Government	PHEIs	PHE Associations	European Commission
Run a PR campaign influencing the culture of CSR.	Publish testimonials.	Publish testimonials.	
Define the benefits of student work placement for society and the WoW.			



### R3.8 – Increase work-based learning/teaching in PHE institutions by using practitioners as guest lecturers, on a regular base

Government	PHEIs	PHE Associations	European Commission
Create a flexible, legal	Create an infrastructure		Enlarge the offer of funding
frame for allowing guest	for allowing external		programmes to support
lectures to perform some	`teachers" coming from		staff exchange between
parts of education.	the WoW.		the PHEs and the WoW.

#### **R3.9** – Define policies for student's engagement in companies

Government	PHEIs	PHE Associations	European Commission
	Define the expected Learning Outcomes of Apprenticeships.		

R3.10 – To offer economic incentives (tax reduction, tax exemptions, mentor paying) for companies that are accepting students as interns

Government	PHEIs	PHE Associations	European Commission
Offer economic incentives for companies receiving students: tax reductions, tax exemption, paying the mentor.			

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### **3.4 Personalise Learning Environments within PHE**

R4.1 – Use competence frameworks & Occupational profiles to allow students to map their way through a personalised learning journey

Government	PHEIs	PHE Associations	European Commission
Organise skill councils bringing together WoW, PHE and others.	Provide modular courses to match specific skills at specific levels. Allow students to build their own qualification from modular offer. Use MOOCs, blended learning etc, to provide wide access to modules.	Organize members to participate in skills councils. Monitor implementation of skills based approach and feed improvements back to government.	Harmonise skill descriptions across EU. Link work on occupational skills with existing transparency & recognition instruments.

#### R4.2 – Reward good & excellent teachers & use them to inspire change

Government	PHEIs	PHE Associations	European Commission
Create (through QA Agencies) teaching quality frameworks. Involve stakeholders from across society in defining quality teaching.	Establish WoW-informed KPIs for teaching quality.	Identify and recognise the best teachers Tell their stories through media to inspire Distil & Distribute best practices Support HEIs in implementing best teaching practice (methodology DB/support).	Distil & Distribute best practices.



### R4.3 – Assess students' ability to personalise and direct their own learning, and provide instruction to fill gaps

Government	PHEIs	PHE Associations	European Commission
Create competence- frameworks for 'learning to learn' at every level of education, Including PHE. Incorporate learning to learn skills into national minimum curricula. Create national strategies for learning to learn, including feedback from PHE & enterprise.	Assess all students' ability to learn and direct their own learning on admission. Create modular courses on learning skills to be taught as necessary. Mainstream RPL.	Create recommendations on how to link academic and enterprise visions of self-directed learning.	Create competence- frameworks for 'learning to learn' at every level of education, Including PHE. Create guidance on identify self-directed learning skills through RPC.

# R4.4 – Record every learner's personalised learning journey through life, and use these records to empower their learning and career paths

Government	PHEIs	PHE Associations	European Commission
Establish technical trust infrastructures for qualifications and learning achievements.	Create institutional management systems which track students through PHE. Use data collected to: -Evaluate students' progress (formative assessment); -Identify issues (low/high performance) and address them.	Bridge HE and WoW, to offer standards for personalised learning in PHE.	Restructure EUROPASS to fully record experience & skills. Establish technical meta- data standards for recording learning, experience, achievements and certifications, covering formal, non-formal, informal from education & employment.



#### R4.5 – Provide National PLE Infrastructures (People & Tech)

Government	PHEIs	PHE Associations	European Commission
Establish (if not already) national PLE infrastructures, including: -Technology; -(Personal) Networks; -Support Services. Make these equally available to, and adapted for, the needs of PHE, and include industry providers. Avoid 'picking winners' for technology, and encourage use of open standards.	Assess infrastructural needs for PLE & inform government. Incentivize staff to actively participate in national PHE networks. Seek out collaborative development projects with other members of the platform.	Co-construct / manage platforms with government. Evaluate & Pilot infrastructures for PLE with government.	Set up initiatives to connect national platforms. Mainstream standards & meta-data for PLE platforms. Use an open method of coordination for establishing national platforms. Consider FP 9 funding for EdTech especially PLE in PHE.

# R4.6 – Leverage instructional design to identify, teach and assess skills in a personalized environment

Government	PHEIs	PHE Associations	European Commission
Introduce instructional design requirements into Quality Assurance criteria, considering the diversity of potential learners.	Set up trans-disciplinary teams, focused on identifying, piloting and rolling-out latest teaching & learning methodologies throughout the institution, and support teachers in their implementation (institutes of learning innovation). Establish & implement institutional instructional design guidelines which involve the World of Work at every step without infringing upon academic autonomy. Establish policies to ensure traceability between: -Learning outcomes; -Learning activities; - Assessment	Support the networking of the institutes of learning innovation. Provide institutions with guidance on how to roll- out instructional design across entire institutions.	



### **4** Next Steps

In order to bring theory into practice, a list of actions to be taken by the PROCSEE Partners after the 2nd PHE Excellence Forum were recalled, discussed and agreed as listed below.

#### Actions to finalise and polish the recommendations:

- Recommendations are sent to each group for feedback;
- Feedback on good practices is provided and new good practices are authored;
- Group co-chairs author paper bringing together lessons from practice and current state of policy in the area;
- WebEx Meetings are held to present papers;
- Papers and Recommendations are brought together in the form of a policy toolbox;
- Experts are asked to provide feedback on the policy toolbox;
- Policy toolbox is published.

#### Actions to use the recommendations:

- Each Country will hold series of Nacional Committee on PHE Excellence (NCPHEE) meetings with the aim of converting toolbox into:
  - Set of demands from government;
  - Set of recommendations to members;
  - Set of actions to be integrated into their own strategies.
- Each country will organize a national seminar to present these results to members, government and wider community;
- EURASHE will do the same at European level through a policy-paper and workshop.

A final NCPHE will be held in Croatia, with the theme "Policy to Practice – Monitoring the Implementation of the PROCSEE Recommendations".

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### **5** Abbreviations

**CASPHE:** Czech Association of Professional Higher Education **CSEE:** Central and South-Eastern Europe ECTS: European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System EURASHE: European Association of Institutions in Higher Education HE: Higher Education HEI: Higher Education Institution NCPHEE: The National Committee for Professional Higher Education Excellence **PHE:** Professional Higher Education PHEI: Professional Higher Education Institution PLE: Personalised Learning Environment PROCSEE: Professional Higher Education Excellence in Central and South-Eastern Europe **QA:** Quality Assurance R: Recommendation(s) **RDI:** Research, Development and Innovation SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Responsible, Time-related T&L: Teaching and Learning

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### Strengthening professional higher education

PROCSEE is a policy-oriented project, aimed at strengthening the provision of professional higher education, by strengthening the policy-work conducted by umbrella organizations representing professional higher education institutions (PHE) in Central and South-Eastern in Europe (CSEE). Working together over three years, the project consortium intends to:

- identify the main challenges facing PHE in the region
- propose policy solutions to address those challenges in the short-tomidterm, through a mixture of good-practice identification and stakeholder consultation
- bring together the main actors in PHE in each participating country, so as to build implementation roadmaps for the identified policy solutions

The result of the 2<sup>nd</sup> PHE Excellence Forum, this document outlines the Policy Recommendations for actions to be taken by the main actors in the PHE sector in the CSEE region, as well as by the European Commission, with the aim of promoting quality improvement and better recognition of PHE in the future.

#### procsee.eu

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