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**Abstract**

Currently, societies exert varied and sometimes contradictory pressures on universities. These pressures have been provoking discussion on the best role of these institutions to meet the needs of contemporary societies. Universities will assume different forms and models of organization, according to what each one will define as being its mission for the future. One of the most important assets of universities? management is their facilities and, these days, universities face the challenge of their expansion and management. The investment in the work during the planning phase of new facilities must be always higher when institutions are facing new challenges that force them to rethink their mission and strategic objectives. Sharing experiences of past projects allows the assessment of the procedures, identifying both, strong and weak points, in a process of continuous learning and improvement of the processes. Portuguese practice related to the level of planning of construction projects for university facilities does not allow the use of the benefits of these types of records on past experiences. In this article 10 construction projects of university buildings of a Portuguese public

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universities are presented. The analysis of the planning documentation concerning each one of them is presented, especially of the Preliminary Program (PP), trying to assess the maturity of this document, in each one of the projects, as a main document for the characterization of the objectives of each project's owner. For the comparative assessment of the degree of maturity of the preliminary programs being studied, the Project Definition Rating Index (PDRI) is used as study framework. The application of this rate is carried out by a team of four technicians, highly experienced in the monitoring of these types of projects, some of them having collaborated in some stages of the projects. The 10 programs analyzed proved insufficient and fragile for the appropriate characterization of the projects and their objectives. The results attained point towards the need of increasing the effort of detail and definition of the technical information produced in the early stages of the construction projects, in order to improve the performance of the projects, both in terms of costs and time. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)