EQUNet
Conference on the Future of Social Dimension in Higher Education,

8-9 November 2011, Sofia
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EURASHE - EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF INSTITUTIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

EURASHE

- **The European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (**1990) is an international association that promotes and emphasizes Professional Higher Education (PHE).

- Its members are Colleges HE, Polytechnics, University Colleges, Universities of Applied Sciences and Universities with their professional trainings.

Main objectives of EURASHE

- Capacity Building for professional HEIs
- Developing professional higher education in Europe
- Reinforcing the European Higher Education and Research Area (EHERA)
- Promoting the transnational cooperation between its members and other HE stakeholders

Key references for Eurashe SD Policy

- Berlin Communiqué 2003
- Bergen, Communiqué 2005
- London Communiqué 2007
- Leuven / Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué 2009
- Council conclusions on the SD of Education and Training, 11 May 2010, (2010/C 135/02)
- EUA: Glasgow Communiqué 2005

EURASHE: 10 Commitments for the European Higher Education Area in 2020

- Social dimension : social cohesion, inclusion
- NQF's (LO and QA)
- Employability of graduates
- LifeLongLearning LLL
- Student-centred learning // teaching mission HE institutions
- Education, research and innovation
- International openness
- Mobility
- Multidimensional transparency tools
- Funding

EURASHE's policy: Social Dimension

- SD is part of a multidimensional, political and socio-economic matrix.

- Widen equitable access to HE as step to a more sustainable, democratic society, for individuals with different backgrounds regardless of socio-econ., cult. or national background.

- Remove all social, econ. and cult. barriers to HE. Legal frameworks + organizational structures for paths to and through HE for learners unfamiliar with traditional academic terminology and/or reticent towards long study programs.

World café exercise:

Reality of social dimension

Engaging in an authentic dialogue process on the status of SD

Dialogue should cover explicitly at least:

- Transition to HE from secondary school
  - Actions at pre-primary and primary school level!
- Access to HE
- Retention in HE
- Transition from HE to employment
- All key issues mentioned in "Evolving diversity' 2009 report of EQUNet
- SD as to students + as to Lecturers

Engaging in an authentic dialogue process on the status of SD

Dialogue between all stakeholders:

- Students, lecturers, HE institutions (+ their organisations / associations!)
- Providers of adult education
  - Formal, informal, non formal
- National, regional and local authorities
  – Services dealing with SD in HE
- European Commission & European organisations

Engaging in an authentic dialogue process on the status of SD

Dialogue between all stakeholders:

- Counselling services at different levels
- Career services
- Social partners: Trade unions
- Associations representing certain social groups
- Foundations / charities
- Companies: non profit and profit-making
- Chambers of commerce Etc.

Engaging in an authentic dialogue process on status SD in HE

Target groups
- All students with specific attention to 'weaker' or 'disadvantaged' groups or 'groups at risk'
  - See ESU: Equity handbook
- Special attention to
  - Level ISCED 5B
  - SCHE (level 5 EQF) and adult students
  - Men (especially from disadvantaged groups - seriously underrepresented in HE)
  - Women in certain studies: engineering, MST
- Authentic dialogue with concrete focus
- Quality data!

Conducing in-depth exploration of key strategic challenges & opportunities for SD in HE

- Research & analysis
- Describing and exchanging good practices
  - Within HE institutions
  - Comparing national, regional strategies / legislations:
    - Aim Higher (UK),
    - Experimentation Sociale (FR),
    - Diversity charters (Bnl)
    - ECHO initiatives (NL)
- Developing and implementing pilot projects
  - At local, regional or national level
  - At European international level

Generating input, sharing knowledge & stimulating innovative thinking for policy update

Generate input & sharing knowledge

- Develop new partnerships:
  - Between 'traditional ' partners within HE institutions
  - With outside 'partners': companies, chambers of commerce , social / adult ed. organisations, etc.
- Database good practices: Link SD observatory
- Evaluation tool of SD policy in HE institution:
  - e.g. Diversity barometer (BnI) / FLLLEX tool
- Overview of research carried out as to SD in HE carried out at national or Eur. level

Generating input, sharing knowledge & stimulating innovative thinking for policy update

Innovative thinking

- Students as key agents in enhancing SD in HE: tutoring systems, buddy-systems
  - Social and societal engineering (in the HE curriculum)
  - Students as active citizens
  - SD by and for students!
- Students as SD ambassadors
- Mobility (SMS and SMP) in SCHE level 5 EQF
- Diversity (SD) charters in all HE institutions
- Mentoring of students by companies (NL)

Panel discussion: targets and tools to strengthen focus on SD in HE

Exploring the context of how the future of SD looks like, what possible solutions can be used and agreeing on future steps

Tools for SD in HE

- The European Observatory of SD in HE:
  – Practice and policy
  – Defining indicators for SD in HE
  – Building on what has been achieved:
    - e.g. ECHO (NL), Expertise centre diversity HE
- For policy makers, decision-makers in ministries, Eur. & National Organisations HE
  – Organisation of PLAs:
    - peer reviewing, comparing approaches
- European / international / national / regional / local projects

Tools for SD in HE

- National, regional policies as to SD in HE
- Centres for SD expertise
- Setting targets and developing indicators
- Scientific research and monitoring
- Developing a framework for SD in HE:
  - Pedagogy of excellence UCLA (USA): Ac. Adv. Programme
- Student counselling and orientation / Career services
- Appropriate information and PR activities
- Flexible and part-time learning pathways
  - United colours of Nursing (Bnl)
- Promotion of academic language learning in HE
- Tutoring and mentoring: i.a. buddies
  - by students for students
  - By students for pupils

Examples of tutoring systems

- INTIZE engineering students (SE)
- Ecole des Mines , Nantes (F)
- Ecole d'Ingénieurs ARMINES, Saint Etienne (F)
- Buddy system (all HE institutions involved in teacher education or social studies, Leuven B)
- Buddies + ambassadors, ECHO, NL

Studies / research

- Centre Peer Learning, University Dundee (UK)
- University of Ghent (Bnl)

Raising awareness on the SD Observatory

With all stakeholders concerned:

- Students, lecturers, HE institutions (and their organisations!)
- National, regional and local authorities
  - Services involved with SD in HE
- Counselling services at different levels
- European Commission & European organisations
- Social partners: Trade unions
- Associations representing certain social groups
- Foundations / charities
- Companies: non profit and profit-making
- Chambers of commerce
- Etc.

Discuss the SD Observatory and steps to make it a reality

Define with a selected group
- Overall aims and objectives
  - Setting targets and develop indicators
- Status of the observatory:
  - an international NGO?
- Structure and organisation
  - Organisational membership: EUA, EURASHE, EQUNet etc.
  - Institutional membership: for HE institutions
- Funding and fund-raising
  - Sustainability of SD Observatory
- European projects:
  - Tool to analyse / enhance SD policy of institutions of HE

Finding solutions to tackle the current barriers of reaching a true SD

- Define current barriers & obstacles
  - Analyse existing SD practice in HE where solutions have been found
    - Describe good practice to benefit of other HE
    - Develop a tool to analyse / evaluate SD policy in HE institutions
- Tackle current barriers and obstacles
  - Improve quality of practice through research
  - Launch pilot project in specific areas
  - Strengthen and develop PLAs

EURASHE: possible contribution to the SD observatory

- Strengthen policy development on SD within Eurashe

- Contribute actively to the creation and development of the SD Observatory

- Promote development and exchange of good practices as to SD in PHE

- Promote research as to SD in PHE

- Participate in European projects on SD in HE

Thanks for your attention !

QUESTIONS ARE WELCOME !

EXTRA SLIDES

Berlin Communiqué 2003

Ministers reaffirm the importance of the social dimension of the Bologna Process. The need to increase competitiveness must be balanced with the objective of improving the social characteristics of the European Higher Education Area, aiming at strengthening social cohesion and reducing social and gender inequalities both at national and at European level.

In that context, Ministers reaffirm their position that higher education is a public good and a public responsibility. They emphasise that in international academic cooperation and exchanges, academic values should prevail.

Bergen Communiqué 2005

The SD of the BP is a constituent part of the EHEA and a necessary condition for the attractiveness and competitiveness of the EHEA.

We therefore renew our commitment to making quality HE equally accessible to all, and stress the need for appropriate conditions for students so that they can complete their studies without obstacles related to their social and economic background.

The SD includes measures taken by governments to help students, especially from socially disadvantaged groups, in financial and economic aspects and to provide them with guidance and counselling services with a view to widening access.

London Communiqué 2007

HE should play a strong role in fostering social cohesion, reducing inequalities and raising the level of knowledge, skills and competences in society. Policy should therefore aim to maximise the potential of individuals in terms of their personal development and their contribution to a sustainable and democratic knowledge-based society.

We share the societal aspiration that the student body entering, participating in and completing HE at all levels should reflect the diversity of our populations.

We reaffirm the importance of students being able to complete their studies without obstacles related to their social and economic background.

We therefore continue our efforts to provide adequate student services, create more flexible learning pathways into and within HE, and to widen participation at all levels on the basis of equal opportunity.

2007 Annex 2 Suggested approach of work on national strategies on the SD

- Measures to promote equal opportunities
- Measures to widen access to and participation in HE for underrepresented groups (gender, ethnic origin, immigration, socio-economic status and background, disability, geography etc.)
- Study environment that enhances the quality of the student experience
    - A, Provision of academic services
    - B, Provision of social services
- Measures to increase formal and actual student influence on and participation in HE governance and other HE issues
- Finances in order to start and complete studies
- Monitoring: The participating countries should establish national measures to monitor and evaluate the impact of the national strategy and action plan.
- Stakeholder involvement

Leuven / Louvan-la-Neuve Communiqué 2009

The student body within HE should reflect the diversity of Europe's populations. We therefore emphasize the social characteristics of HE and aim to provide equal opportunities to quality education.

Access into HE should be widened by fostering the potential of students from underrepresented groups and by providing adequate conditions for the completion of their studies. This involves improving the learning environment, removing all barriers to study, and creating the appropriate economic conditions for students to be able to benefit from the study opportunities at all levels.

Each participating country will set measurable targets for widening overall participation and increasing participation of underrepresented groups in HE , to be reached by the end of the next decade.

Efforts to achieve equity in HE should be complemented by actions in other parts of the educational system.

Council conclusions on the SD of Ed & Tr, 11 May 2010

Raising aspirations and increasing access to HE for students from disadvantaged backgrounds requires strengthening **financial support schemes and other incentives, and improving their design**. Affordable, accessible, adequate and portable student loans as well as means-tested grants can successfully increase participation rates for those who cannot afford the costs of HE.

More flexible and diversified learning paths - for example recognising prior learning, part-time education, and distance learning - can help to reconcile higher education with work or family commitments and to encourage wider participation.

Implementing measures aimed at monitoring and increasing the retention rate in HE, at providing individualized support, as well as at enhancing guidance, mentoring and skills training - particularly during the early stages of a university course - can improve graduation rates for disadvantaged learners

Council conclusions on the SD of Ed & Tr, 11 May 2010

Special efforts are needed, especially with regard to funding, to ensure that full account is taken of the needs of disadvantaged students, who are often unable to benefit from the **mobility** schemes available.

The fight against inequality, poverty and social exclusion can be strengthened by recognising that HEI have **a social responsibility** in returning the benefits of knowledge to society, in putting knowledge at the service of the wider community - at both the local and the global level - and in responding to social needs.

HEI can also exercise social responsibility by making their resources available to adult and **informal and non-formal learners**, strengthening research on social exclusion, fostering innovation and updating educational resources and methodology.

EUA: Glasgow Declaration 2005

- In refocusing the Bologna Process, universities undertake to give a higher priority to the SD as a fundamental commitment, to develop policies in order

- to increase and widen opportunities for access and support to under-represented groups, and to promote research in order to inform policy and target actions to address inequality in higher education systems. Governments are called upon to remove legal obstacles to implementing these policies.