Higher Education and Employability – Current Policies and Future Trends

Skill policies – implementation of competence-based programmes & evidence-based policy

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Overview:

1. EU Agenda for 'Rethinking education'

2. EU Strategy for the Modernisation of Higher Education

3. Graduate employability – spotlight on two ongoing actions

4. EU funding – making convincing arguments

Rethinking education

An EU Strategy – (adopted 20 Nov 2012)

To steer the modernisation of Europe's education and training systems to increase the quantity, quality and relevance of skills supply for a better economy and society

> ## What outputs should EU education and training systems generate?

Key competences for all, Raising attainment levels, Improving learning outcomes, Promoting excellence

> ## How can education and training systems enhance open and flexible learning?

Spreading new pedagogical approaches, Unlocking the potential of digital learning, Promoting pathways across education and training sub-systems

> ## Promoting smart funding and partnerships in times of severe budget constraints

http://ec.europa.eu/education/news/rethinking_en.htm

Modernising
Higher Education

An EU Strategy – (adopted 20 Sept 2011)

to boost graduate numbers, improve teaching quality and maximise what HE can do to help the EU economy emerge stronger from the crisis

➢ *Europe needs more graduates*

  Increase attainment (to 40% by 2020), including among underrepresented, reduce drop-out

➢ *Quality, relevance and employability*

  Student centred, high quality provision with enhanced graduate employability

➢ *Higher education's contribution to economic recovery and long term growth*

Modernising Higher Education

I. **Increase attainment levels , including in particular among underrepresented**
- Progression routes and recognition of prior learning and experience
- Outreach underrepresented, guidance + targeted financial support
- Reduce drop-out

II. **Improve quality and relevance**
- Tailoring learning modes to a diverse student body
- Focus on learning outcomes
- Graduate employability
- Courses informed by and adapted to labour market needs and looking ahead to careers of tomorrow
- Motivating and rewarding excellent teachers

III. Quality through mobility & international co-operation
- Learning mobility windows and moving between programmes
- Efficient recognition of studies abroad
- Improving access & employment for non-EU students and researchers

IV. Education, research & innovation for excellence and regional development
- Stimulating entrepreneurial, creative and innovation skills and environments
- Encouraging partnership and co-operation with business
- Involvement of HE institutions in regional development plans

V. Governance and Funding to support strategic choices
- Sufficient, efficient and well-targeted funding
- Empowering institutions to play to their strengths

Action Lines

- ➤ **Improving the evidence base to support policy-making and increase transparency**
  - 'U-Multirank'
  - Better data mobility and employment outcomes and matching skills + jobs
  - Analysis and peer learning on funding approaches
  - High level group to look at key topics for modernising HE
  - mutual learning: peer learning between public authorities, strategic partnerships between institutions

- ➤ **Promoting learning mobility & international co-operation**
  - 'Erasmus Masters' student loan guarantee
  - Strengthened ECTS
  - Analysis of student mobility flows and franchise education

Modernising Higher Education

➢ **Innovation, job creation and employability**
  – Knowledge Alliances: stronger interaction universities and business
  – European Industrial PhD
  – Quality framework for traineeships

➢ **Internationalisation of higher education**
  – Promoting the EU as a study and research destination
  – Facilitating mobility and exchanges of students and researchers with countries outside the EU

➢ **Strengthening complementarity between EU funding programmes**

Graduate employability

Better data & evidence on employment outcomes and matching skills and jobs

Research project: What makes the difference: A qualitative appraisal of HE graduate employability in Europe: the employers' perspective

➢**Perceived quality of graduates** - how employers see the output of European universities/HEI

➢What **combination of skills, competences and aptitudes** is most likely to secure that first (or early career) job and why?

➢Why one graduate may **'have the edge'** over another with a similar profile.

➢**Implications for curricula** – content and pedagogy?

Graduate employability

Research project: What makes the difference …

12 countries: CZ-DE-EE-EL-ES-FR-HU-IT-NL-PL-SE-UK

6 occupational areas:

finance, engineering, ICT, media & communications, legal, administration   (eg. policy analyst)

choices and dilemmas facing graduates, employers and HE institutions

conjoint study: simulation of reality in recruitment decision – which graduate profiles are most attractive and why, plus in-depth interviews and focus groups

Testing seminar Spring 2013, **Final report** mid-2013

Modernisation of HE

**High level expert group
to look at key topics for modernising HE**

Experts with remit to identify best practices and creative solutions, as well as making recommendations to national and European policy makers, universities and colleges.

➢Chaired by Mary McAleese, former President of Ireland. 8 members

➢Mandated for three years (2013-15)

➢2013: how best to achieve quality and excellence in teaching and learning

➢2014: how to adapt learning in the digital age

➢Working methodology: hearings with experts and stakeholders, plus inputs from studies and peer learning between countries

EU programmes
Modernisation

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❖ **Strong record of expanding evidence base through EU funded projects**: - Erasmus family of programmes, Marie Curie and Research Framework programme , Development Co-operation, Structural Funds

❖ **Budget cycle 2014-20** : European Commission proposals for an increased share of the EU budget to go to education, research and innovation related programmes

❖ **Erasmus for All** proposals – a strong role for policy support actions, in a new generation of more integrated and simplified actions

❖ **Convincing arguments on impact essential**

Thank you

Where to find out more -

EU Higher Education Policy

http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc62_en.htm

Studies and research

http://ec.europa.eu/education/higher-education/doc3039_en.htm

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