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Future of Higher Education

ADDRESSING CAREERS SERVICE INTERNATIONALIZATION CHALLENGES THROUGH TRANSNATIONAL CONSORTIA

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BACKGROUND

- Higher education institutions are not only seeking to attract and retain the best students profiles.
- Growing pressure to 'guarantee' the employability and successful access to labor markets of their graduates.
- Hets challenges to this respect:
 - To deliver a comprehensive education to develop their graduates' employability relevant skills
 - To provide and support students with structures that ease their integration either in the local, national or in the international labor markets.

BACKGROUND

- The responsibility for success does not depend on one particular stakeholder of the university.
- Who is involved?
- Inter- and intra-institutional cooperation can be considered the key to forming integrative impactful strategies and operations in this context – **academia, administration, senior management, students and external partners** need to collaborate in order to create effective practice.

BACKGROUND

- This study aims to outline both the current context and the status of European careers service internationalization and the main challenges faced in this process through and exploratory case analysis.
- To present the model built from the European Center for Careers and Entrepreneurship (ECCE project 2015-2018).

LITERATURE REVIEW

- The Bologna Process has led to an increase in the implementation of career services at European HEIs in order to strengthen the employability of their institution's graduates (Ronald and Sultana, 2009).
- In the 2014-2016 period, internships abroad have showed an upward trend (European Commission, 2018a).

LITERATURE REVIEW

- Universities have developed strategies to internationalize their structures and to favor international mobility.
- International internships has grown with 14%, from 73,338 students (and recent graduates) in the first year of the Erasmus + program implementation to 84,190 students in 2016 (European Commission, 2015; European Commission, 2018a).

HOW FIT ARE CAREERS SERVICES TO FACILITATE GLOBAL STUDENT WORK MOBILITY IN EUROPE?

- The HRK-survey (Böhm & Brandl, 2014) results show that German HEIs have started to internationalize their career services.
- About 61 % of the institutions identified international students trying to integrate into the German labor market, whilst 39 % stated that the focus of their internationalization activities aims at local graduates.
- The responsibility for the integration of international students into the German labor market is largely assigned to career services (57 %)

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- RQ1. How are European career services equipped to adapt to the more and more international dimension of their work -e.g. integrating international students in labor markets or supporting their students to find internships abroad.
- RQ2. How could international career service consortia support HEIs global ambitions.

METHODOLOGY

- Desk research - combined and interpreted already known statistics and surveys about careers services mainly in Europe.
- A case study (5 institutions)
- Data:
 - ECCE consortium
 - The data was gathered mainly during evaluation sessions, where project participants discussed the stage and progress made during the project and through evaluation surveys for the different activities of the consortium.

HOW FIT ARE CAREERS SERVICES TO FACILITATE GLOBAL STUDENT WORK MOBILITY IN EUROPE?

- The main challenge is a student body that might not be accustomed to the specifics of the labor market, face workplace discrimination and language barriers.
- Consequently, most career services aim to minimize the effects of these “disadvantages”, typically via workshops in the job application process, individual coaching for international students, language and intercultural trainings (Böhm & Brandl, 2014).

HOW FIT ARE CAREERS SERVICES TO FACILITATE GLOBAL STUDENT WORK MOBILITY IN EUROPE?

- According to the HRK's survey (Böhm & Brandl, 2014) around 39 % of career services identified home students as the main target of their internationalization activities. Organizing workshops that aim to enable students to find work abroad and/or intercultural training aiming to prepare graduates for a global work environment are the most popular services offered
- Survey responses suggests, however, that institutions quite often do not possess the necessary knowledge internally but have to rely on external coaches providing these workshops, which means, they might be not able to satisfy information needs when in actual demand but only at specific times.

HOW FIT ARE CAREERS SERVICES TO FACILITATE GLOBAL STUDENT WORK MOBILITY IN EUROPE?

- The uneven development of careers services in Europe is also a reason why there are no commonly shared international standards of careers service work (Qareer, 2017), which leads also to the question of how professionals in career services are trained.
- Train and Retain (2015): Despite international students' need for more systematic and coordinated job entry support at the local level, most of them encounter a poorly coordinated patchwork of occasional career fairs, job application training and chance acquaintances with service staff or company representatives who may or may not be able to help them" (ECGFIM, 2015, p. 4).

ECCE MODEL

- Replying to the research questions, we present the ECCE model.
- RQ1. How are European career services equipped to adapt to the more and more international dimension of their work -e.g. integrating international students in labor markets or supporting their students to find internships abroad.
- RQ2. How could international career service consortia support HEIs global ambitions.

ECCE MODEL

- ERASMUS+ strategic partnership project
- That addresses many of the outlined challenges and to improve the service-offer in the involved institutions
- A transnational career service consortium operating under the name "European Centre for Career Development and Entrepreneurship" (ECCE).
- The ECCE-consortium was established between Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Regent's University London, Paris School of Business and EBC Hochschule.

ECCE MODEL

- The project partners aimed to create a small consortium which should, in its core, work like a second-level-support for career officers and support those officers directly on an operational level, meaning helping them to advise and place their students abroad – Liaison officers
- Entrepreneurship education – Summer Schools
- A platform where the partners share resources like job-boards, application guides etc.
- Staff weeks programme - Trainings

ECCE MODEL

- It has four main elements that should be taken into account: a **joint platform and guides**, a **joint training**, **joint networks** and **joint entrepreneurship summer schools**.
- In this model, it is important **to involve and connect with stakeholders** in each country: students, administration (e.g. career services, IOs), academics, companies, other organizations.

- Platform provides job offers and network opportunities for students, career staff, companies and lecturers
- At backend career staff receives second level support from their international colleagues, if their own students want to work abroad

Joint Platform
and Guides

Joint Training

- Train the trainers-approach
- Career staff learns first hand from international colleagues about their labor markets
- Through new network

Joint Networks

Joint
entrepreneurship
summer Schools

- Various activities and outputs grow everyone's network, which again feeds into the offer on the platform
- Each institution has a stronger outreach abroad, compared to the reach the career services had before the project

- Summer schools bring lecturers and career staff together, who organize them: Entrepreneurship skills can also be used as career skills and both parties are interested to involve companies

RESULTS

- The long-term impact of the initiative remains to be seen but preliminary feedback indicates that pursuing such a model could be worthwhile in relation to career services, summer schools, collaborations and the institutions.

RESULT I

Career service

Officers participating in the training expressed their high satisfaction with the training, and felt better prepared to advise their students and appreciated the exchange with their international colleagues. They also indicated that the work led to increased overall work satisfaction, as they have better target specific materials at hand to advice both inbound and outbound students. International job offers overall have increased, though language remains a major obstacle to mobility.

RESULT II

Summer Schools

Participants in the summer schools expressed very high satisfaction with learning outcomes and execution of training; appreciated the enlargement of their international networks and oftentimes stayed in contact with their peers leading to valuable ongoing collaboration; several participants went on to put their learnings into practice by funding their own businesses and led to spin-off projects.

RESULT III

Collaboration

The collaboration between the universities led to increased international academic cooperation and to a larger network of entrepreneurs, academics, administrators and students supporting each other with advice and contacts. From initially 5 project managers there have been now more than 50 staff (academics and administration) contributing to the success of the project from across institutions and institutional levels and external stakeholders.

RESULT IV

Institutions

Currently each institution has nominated a liaison career officer, which helps to transform the initiative from project phase into institutionalization. Other institutions outside the network can benefit from the ECCE-experiences in utilizing several outputs which have been produced by the project team, such as a European career advisor curriculum, which synthesizes the learnings of the staff weeks, the ECCE-concept paper, which documents the project and key learnings, parts of the platform in order to enlarge the entrepreneurship community or a career guide for the involved partner countries, specifically written with international students in mind. (ECCE, 2017a).

CONCLUSIONS

- The **power of consortia** is based on the fact that they allow both large and small, private or public institutions, and like-minded people to come together to try **to solve the problems facing higher education**, and **create services that satisfy the needs of all users**.
- The ECCE results indicate that a lot of **small actively cooperating networks** could have a **larger impact** and offer truly helpful **student-centered support** than large associations would have, though they would not necessarily need to compete, but could complement each other.

CONCLUSIONS

- **Personal relations** will be key if we want career officers to not only broaden their perspectives, but also **obtain the tools necessary** to assist students on a larger scale.
- These **transnational models** have a lot of **potential** to add a new dimension to the new **networks of European universities**.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR
ATTENTION**

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