

**FUTURE OF HIGHER EDUCATION - BOLOGNA PROCESS RESEARCHERS' CONFERENCE
(FOHE-BPRC), FORTH EDITION**

29-31 January 2020, Bucharest, Romania

Session 3: Advancing learning and teaching in the EHEA: innovation, links with research, and cooperation with the ERA

1. Recognizing student activism. Analyzing practices in recognizing informal learning in the EHEA, *Marita Gasteiger and Janine Wulz*

This paper aims to answer the question of how recognition of student engagement as informal learning takes place in HEIs within the EHEA. It identifies best practices, challenges and learnings in order to perform the recognition of informal learning in the EHEA in general. Questions of transparency in recognition of informal learning in student activism, their legal basis and ways of implementation as well as student representatives experiences are discussed.

Analysis was undertaken based on two surveys in 10 countries in the EHEA. The first survey addressed student representatives at national level, aiming for insights in legal conditions and practices of higher education institutions' recognition of informal learning of student activists. The second survey focussed on student representatives at institutional level, sharing their experiences on formalities, barriers and practicalities within implemented policies of recognition of prior learning in student activism. Based on the collected data findings and recommendations are presented in the last part of the paper.

2. Assessing students' perspective on teaching and learning. The case of national students' surveys, *Ştefan Marius Deaconu (University of Bucharest, Romania), Roland Olah (University of Oradea, Romania), Cezar Mihai Haj (Executive Unit for Financing Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation, Romania, Romania)*

As SCL is still at the core of the Bologna Process, the instruments which are meant to record the students' perspective, as important as it is, it still lacks the needed research that would lead to efficient ways of delivering positive outcomes for the entire academic community. In that sense, this paper will focus on how such questionnaires have been developed in several countries, as there are several reasons to consider this instrument as one of the most efficient, especially in consolidating and developing learning and teaching.

The paper will take into consideration three examples from the European Higher Education Area: the National Student Survey (United Kingdom), Studiebarometeret (Norway) and the National Sociological Research about Students' Satisfaction (Romania) and will approach aspects such as the structures and stakeholders which are involved in developing and coordinating the process, the subjects tackled by those questionnaires, why and how they were selected.

Our study provides an insight regarding the usefulness of a national student survey in order for the future development of European Higher Education Area. It also shows the potential relevance of these questionnaires for the Bologna Process. The paper will also present how these instruments have

evolved across time and how they were received by the public opinion. We will draw a set of guiding principles starting from examined good practices. As a result of this paper, we consider that a national students' survey represents one of the most useful tools for HE stakeholders in order to assess, for instance, the quality of learning and teaching.

3. Innovative EU training/career development programmes for young researchers – Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions as a tool for strengthening ERA and EHEA, *Anca-Adriana Cucu and Patricia Elena Rischitor (European Commission, Research Executive Agency)*

On 25 March 2017 the leaders of EU Member States committed to work in order to deliver “a Union where young people receive the best education and training (The Rome Declaration). Moreover, the EU needs “a massive investment in skills and a major rethink of education” (White Paper on the Future of Europe), which can be done through innovative learning and teaching, at all levels, including at doctoral level. For this last one, EU provides support for innovative learning and education via its research and innovation funding - Horizon 2020, which is “world’s biggest multinational research programme, that drives innovation” (White Paper on The Future of Europe), and more specifically through Marie Skłodowska Curie actions (MSCA). For example, one MSCA action - Innovative Training Networks (ITN), aims to support competitively selected joint research training and/or doctoral programmes, implemented by European partnerships of universities, research institutions, and non-academic organisations.

“Europe is home to some of the most innovative educational and advanced vocational training systems in the world” (COM 2017(206)). However, there are still many challenges ahead: removing burdensome recognition procedures to ensure mobility of students and graduates, increasing the relevance of higher education programmes for an ever-transforming labour market, or recognition and awarding excellent teaching, as well as good research (Bologna Process Implementation Report 2018).

Therefore, our paper aims to analyze where are now the ERA and the EHEA in achieving their objectives, as declared in the Treaty of the Functioning of the EU? What are the measures which can be taken in order to ensure that the higher education system at doctoral level prepare the young researchers with the most innovative training methods in order to help them to be able to address the societal challenges? What did the Marie Skłodowska Curie programme achieved so far in strengthening ERA and EHEA? What role for this programme is planned under the next Research Framework Programme - Horizon Europe?

4. Closing the Circle: Research and Policy-making in Higher Education, *Simona Iftimescu (University of Bucharest, Romania), Carmen Proteasa (University of Bucharest, Romania), Georgeta Ion (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain), Romiță Iucu (University of Bucharest, Romania), Elena Marin (University of Bucharest, Romania) and Mihaela Stîngu (University of Bucharest, Romania)*

Starting from the underlying scope of shaping a more coherent image of the educational system as a whole and arguing for shared responsibility between higher education institutions and policymakers, this paper aims to analyse the configuration of factors contributing to research uptake in education. One subsequent objective is to identify mechanisms for developing better synergies not only between educational practice, research and innovation, but also between these and educational policy.

The paper relies on results drawn from a survey administered to a selected sample of public servants in the Romanian central administration involved in the planning, evaluation and implementation of public policies in the field of education. The survey covered topics related to the institutional inner-mechanisms of research uptake and utilization (communication and dissemination strategies, clarity, access and availability of research data, policymakers' preferences for certain research topics) and aspects aligned with the perceived relationship between researchers and policymakers (the strength and nature of the relationship, policymakers' general involvement in research studies, etc.).

The findings of our study pave the way for an in-depth analysis of organizational factors likely to affect research utilization: research culture and engagement with researchers; the political and managerial context likely to promote research transfer; and the financial context needed to foster quality results. Thus, there is a growing need to enhance the partnerships between policymakers and researchers, focusing on high-quality research, well-developed transparency and social responsibility mechanisms, as well the "third mission" as an academic priority.

5. The Integration of Experiential Learning in Higher Education Institutions - An Assessment of The Romanian Universities, Mihaela V. Cărăușan, (National University of Political Studies and Public Administration, Bucharest, Romania)

The role of university education in the United Nations Sustainable Agenda has been underlined since 2002 (Johannesburg Plan), and Rio +20 has reinforced the need to develop a partnership with higher education institutions (HEI) to sustain an education and research system that supports local efforts for sustainable growth, and connectivity with public decision makers. At the same time, the OECD offers a new vision in the Education Strategy 2030 and draws attention to some guiding principles on the future of education system and the use of specific elements to the process of experiential learning: Anticipation-Action-Reflection. Moreover, the European Union supports Member States in their efforts to provide education and training for all citizens - "Education for everyone". Considering the manifested interests of the international organisations, in our research we will determine the way in which Romanian educational strategies are aligned with them. Furthermore, starting from the research hypothesis - Romanian HEI are not ready to fulfil the requirements of the future generations, we will do an assessment of the main universities (state and private universities) based on their organisational and educational instruments publicly presented in the admission process for the academic year 2019-2020. The research questions considered are: Which are the non-formal, experiential education instruments used by HEI? Which subjects/disciplines were and/or will be adapted to the use of new technologies and training methods? Have Romanian HEI the academic culture to integrate in the teaching/training system the new technologies, training methods required by future generations? The instruments used to find an answer to all the questions raised within the research are in the same time qualitative – strategies review, structured interviews with professors and managers, and quantitative – assessment of the educational instruments presented in the admission process by Faculties of Public Administration and Management.

6. Exploratory strategies on research mobilization in training of academics, Roxana Zus, (University of Bucharest, Romania)

Although the declared mission of the universities is a dual one, of teaching and research/ innovation, the applied strategies and the criteria of evaluating and rewarding the staff performance are dominated by research results. Most studies confirm that teaching and research in higher education institutions are scarcely correlated and building an effective link is a challenge debated in many specialty articles. The main factors in forming the connection between research and teaching (and if

one should consider one group of strategies or another, as “Research into Teaching” or “Teaching into Research”) are related both to the particularities of the field and the level of study, but also to the educational institution/ department. We investigate approaches for mobilizing research in various stages of training of higher education staff, focusing on the bachelor level, viewed as the most difficult one. An experimental situation is carried on, involving on one hand, a scientific research driven domain, namely physics and on the other hand, a domain focusing on research into teaching, namely pedagogy.

7. Perspectives of Higher Education Language Policy Development in Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine and Policy-Driven Research, *Lusine Fljyan (Northern University, Armenia)*

The article focuses on the foreign language policies related to the internationalization of higher education in Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. The topic is relevant to all the Eastern European countries as they started to modify their systems of higher education immediately after the fall of the Soviet Union, however, the significant changes both on the national and institutional level took place after the accession to the Bologna process.

A lot of measures have been taken in the countries under study to integrate the universities into the internationalization activities which led to the changing of the role of the foreign languages, however development in this area has still been very sluggish and fragmented and in most of the countries. The paper includes the following aspects of national and institutional policies and practices:

1. National and institution policies on foreign languages for internationalization of higher education.
2. Measures targeted to improve the quality of foreign language teaching (implementation of profession oriented language teaching, linking of syllabi to Common European Framework of References).
3. Number of foreign language courses and programmes.
4. Number of international publications.
5. Role of foreign languages for enhancing the number of international mobility of students and staff.

From the case-study analysis it has become obvious that the models that are used by the universities are in most of the cases English-only study programmes; the number of courses and programmes in other foreign languages is restricted. The countries under study should develop national policies on the foreign languages in higher education with the focus on strengthening international dimension at higher education institutions.