Highlights from EURASHE
since the BFUG meeting in Brussels on 11 November 2019

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PAST EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

EURASHE Statement "More Diversity, Better European Universities: Participation of Universities of Applied Sciences"

In November 2019, in view of the opening of the second Call of European Universities' Initiative, EURASHE released a Statement on the participation of Universities of Applied Sciences within the aforementioned European Commission's Initiative.

EURASHE' expressed its commitment to further support the Initiative and also invited the European Commission to take into account the specificities of UAS and other PHE institutions that have emerged on the occasion of the first call, in particular:

- Take a full advantage of the diversity of European higher education
- Consider all higher education qualification levels, while taking into account the limits of national regulations for UAS and other PHE institutions in this aspect
- Take into account the difficulties the UAS may face regarding the requested students' participation and engagement in the Alliances due to the shorter period of time students spend in UAS in comparison with traditional universities
- Clarify the doubts about the sustainability of the Alliances and the realisation of the common long-term strategies beyond the funding period
- Consider the specific profile of UAS students that could impact the desirable mobility.

EURASHE organised a series events, private online consultations, information sessions for the PHE representatives on the European Universities Initiative including a practical workshop "European Universities Initiative and Universities of Applied Sciences (UAS): reflections for future success" in Brussels, the 29th EURASHE Annual Conference in Budapest, the UAS Leadership Forum 2018 (October), the EURASHE Summer cocktail 2018 and others.

Read the full Statement here.

Roundtable "Regional Engagement of Universities of Applied Sciences: concept and impact", 13 February 2020, Brussels, Belgium

On 13 February EURASHE organised a Roundtable "Regional engagement of Universities of Applied Sciences: concept and impact" which gathered professional higher education experts and policymakers to discuss the importance of the Universities of Applied Sciences (hereafter – UAS) in the European regions. The event was hosted by the Portuguese Permanent Representation to the EU.

The Roundtable was launched with the welcome speech by Ambassador Pedro Lourtie who emphasised the importance of UAS in fostering European competitiveness and innovation. His welcome was followed by Michal Karpíšek, EURASHE Secretary General who presented EURASHE activities and recently launched project 'UASiMAP' on mapping regional engagement activities on European UAS.

John Edwards, Project leader at Joint Research Centre (European Commission) gave an overview of the ongoing project Higher Education for Smart Specialisation (HESS project) which focuses on how higher education and Higher education institutions can contribute to the successful implementation of Smart

Specialisation Strategies. Andrea-Rosalinde Hofer from the Directorate for Education and Skills at the OECD presented results of the Benchmarking Higher Education System Performance (2019). Ninoslav Šćukanec Schmidt, Executive Director, Institute for the Development of Education in Croatia, presented the results from TEFCE project, which aims to develop innovative and feasible policy tools at the university and European level for supporting, monitoring and assessing the community engagement of HEIs. Peter Baur, from DG Education and Culture (EAC), presented the European Commission and the OECD initiative HEInnovate which serves as a self-assessment tool for HEIs who wish to explore their innovative potential.

The outcome of the Roundtable will feed into ongoing 'UASiMAP' project activities and developments.

More information here.

FUTURE EVENTS

30th EURASHE Annual Conference, 20-21 May 2020, Plovdiv, Bulgaria

EURASHE will organise its **30th Annual Conference *"Professional Higher Education and sustainable development: creating a change that endures"* on 20-21 May 2020 in Plovdiv (Bulgaria) together with its member the University of Agribusiness and Rural Development (UARD)**.

The conference will be structured along the five pillars of Agenda 2030 (People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnerships), with the aim of building up a set of Specific Recommendations and discussing a potential Action Plan for their implementation by professional higher education and its stakeholders over the next years. The Conference will also be the occasion to celebrate EURASHE's 30th anniversary.

We invite Universities of Applied Sciences' leaders, the entire community of professional higher education, European business and public institutions, and European students' representatives to attend the Annual Conference to share their experience and learn about trends, models and inspiring practices.

Registration will open soon. More information here.

SELECTED OVERVIEW OF KEY PROJECTS BY THEME

Regional engagement of Universities of Applied Sciences

UASiMAP - Mapping Regional Engagement Activities of European Universities of Applied Sciences

EURASHE is leader of the UASiMAP project on mapping the regional engagement activities of European Universities of Applied Sciences by promoting, evaluating and facilitating their analytical measurement through both new and traditional indicators.

The project aims at:

- Developing a unified "working definition" of the specific characteristics of UAS' applied RDI and regional engagement;
- Building up a set of recommendations on how to read and utilize UAS' indicators and data on performance measurement;
- Developing policy recommendations to further develop the role of UAS in the local environement

- Creating a self-reflection tool for the identification of the current UAS' RDI engagement and its further development possibilities.

Work-based Learning

ApprenticeshipQ - Mainstreaming Procedures for Quality Apprenticeships in Educational Organisations and Enterprises

The ApprenticeshipQ project addresses the lack of work experience and the skills mismatch between labour demand and supply, which represent one of the greatest challenges for young people in their transition from the world of education to the world of work.

The project aims at developing:

- A categorisation of apprenticeships and the description of their characteristics (available here);
- A requirement standard to manage the quality of apprenticeships;
- A management toolkit, which will contain documents to support the implementation of an "apprenticeships quality management system";
- A validation pilot, which will test and validate the developed set of documentation by piloting it in six European countries.

More about the project: https://www.eurashe.eu/apprenticeshipq/

ApprenticeTrack - Smart Electronic System for Tracking Apprenticeships

The ApprenticeTrack project addresses the improvement of the Work-Based Learning quality. Apprenticeships at the professional higher education level provide students with opportunities to build up new skills and knowledge both on and off the job, while providing companies with a reliable way to evaluate and shape potential future hires. However, despite their clear advantages, apprenticeship systems are extremely challenging to manage, as the learning needs of students and the needs of specific enterprises are extremely difficult to mach.

The project aims at:

- Proposing technological methods to strengthen the management of apprenticeships;
- Creating a tool-prototype for management of apprenticeships;
- Developing and implementing a course on apprenticeship-management;
- Testing and validating the tool in live environments.

More about the project: https://www.eurashe.eu/0_calendar/library/library/projects/sat/

SPRINT - Standardize Best Practices about Internships

Internships play a key role for young people's integration into the labour market. They are essential in bridging the skills gap between education and work. However, the great majority of internships do not fulfil their purpose.

Many quality frameworks for internships/traineeships have been developed to identify and guarantee a quality internship. The problem is that these best practices and standards have been developed in parallel, most of the time locally (or at the national level) without much concertation between each other.

The objective of SPRINT is to unite these different initiatives to create a common standard, working and recognised for the whole Europe. Thus facilitating the mobility of young people. This common standard should create transparency on the internship conditions within companies in Europe.

More information about the project: https://www.eurashe.eu/sprint/

Quality Assurance

DEQAR - The Database of External Quality Assurance Reports

The DEQAR project has developed a database that provides reliable information on higher education institutions/programmes externally reviewed against the European Standards and Guidelines (ESGs), to be used by a broad range of users and recognition officers, representatives of higher education institutions in general, students, quality assurance agencies, ministry representatives and other national authorities to satisfy their information needs and support different types of decisions e.g. recognition of degrees, mobility of students, portability of grants/loans.

More about the project: https://www.eurashe.eu/deqar/

ESQA - Effective involvement of Stakeholders in external Quality Assurance activities

The ESQA project aims at supporting the activity of the Peer Group C on stakeholders' involvement in external quality assurance (EQA). It will explore various categories of stakeholder engagement and expectations stakeholders have towards EQA with the aim to make this engagement effective and diversified. Recommendations will be provided to the national authorities and QA agencies in terms of stakeholders' involvement, regarding ways to strengthen dialogue and cooperation, as well for their effective involvement in QA processes. A Study and a Guideline on stakeholders' involvement will be developed, and respectively peer-learning activities will be organised with the participation of the TPG C on QA members.

More about the project: https://www.eurashe.eu/projects/esqa/

Recognition of Prior Learning

RPLip – Recognition of Prior Learning in practice

The RPLip project aims to promote different ways of recognising competences for access to further studies and for credits. The objective is to encourage, through structured peer learning, the participating countries to develop quality assured and consistent processes/working methods to recognise non-formal and informal learning.

An important starting point will be national guidelines and the European guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning developed by Cedefop. Some communal additional standards will be considered but the main objective is that each country develops its own working method through the peer learning process organised within the project. Taking into consideration the autonomy of the HEIs it will provide guiding principles that should be of help to institutions in their RPL-practices. The expected impact is that HEIs provide for a quality assured process for recognising competences for access to further studies and for credits.

More about the project: https://www.eurashe.eu/projects/rplip/

Staff's research and innovation capacity

RECAPHE – Enhancing Staff Research and Innovation Capacity in Professional Higher Education

Despite the wide benefits that PHE institutions' activities have on society and within their region, their full potential is still to be revealed. The wide range of activities falling within applied research, innovation and regional engagement and their relatively small scale make it relatively difficult to address them as a whole when it comes to support, assessment and recognition. Due to its practice-oriented approach and specific characters, the applied RDI and regional activities do not fit the same metric as the research and activities done at the more traditional universities.

The RECAPHE project addresses the need to support the further development and enhancement of the PHE institutions' staff capacity to engage into applied research activities, linking these to teaching and developing relevant ways for engagement of students in these activities.

The main objective of the project is to strengthen the profile of applied RDI in PHE in Europe – both within the institutions, as well as towards the regions they operate within.

If you want to know more about EURASHE activities please subscribe to EURASHE Insights or follow our news on the website or social media channels such as Twitter, Facebook or LinkedIn.