

E-DEHEMS

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The DEHEMS Consortium (an acronym for 'Network for the Development of Higher Education Management Systems') addresses all key groups of higher education: students, researchers, policymakers, employers and primarily higher education management staff. It explores which factors in various professional domains determine a graduate's early career success. It studies how higher education management systems take employability data and surveys into account and how much higher education systems are and should be evidence-driven. In co-operation with experts from higher education & human resource management, the DEHEMS Consortium is announcing:

the International Conference
**Employability of Graduates &
Higher Education Management Systems**
Call for Abstracts

First conference: WU Vienna University of Economics and Business,
Vienna, Austria, 22 & 23 September 2011

Second conference: University of Ljubljana, Ljubljana, Slovenia, September 2012

Emerging Scientific Committee (Confirmed Members for the Vienna conference):

Buket Akkoyunlu, Hacettepe University
Polona Domadenik, University of Ljubljana
Gabriela Grotkowska, Warsaw University
Georg Horacek, OMV, Austria (HRM association President)
Wolfgang Mayrhofer, WU Vienna University of Economics and Business
Selda Onderoglu, Hacettepe University
Angelo Palleta, University of Bologna
Samo Pavlin, University of Ljubljana
Peter Robert, TARKI
Harald Schomburg, University of Kassel – International Centre for Higher Education Research
Ulrich Teichler, University of Kassel – International Centre for Higher Education Research
Kea Tijdens, University of Amsterdam
Jonathan Winterton, Toulouse Business School
Pavel Zgaga, University of Ljubljana

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Call for abstracts (250 words) of presentations of surveys, projects and papers is addressing the following topics:

A. Career Success and Employability of Young Professionals

The link between competencies and employability; Graduates' success and the current economic crisis; Job search methods; Impact of personal traits and socio-biographical characteristics on long-term success.

B. HE Management Systems, Quality Assurance and Career Centre Developments

HE management systems and graduates' careers; Quality assurance in HE; Career centre developments; Industry-academia partnerships and employability; Designing systems of the employability monitoring.

C. Supply of Competences: Higher Education Perspectives

The link between teaching modes and work of graduates; Professional domains and disciplinarity; Success and failure factors in the transfer of graduates to the labour market; Work placements after graduation; Equity and employment outcomes; Relationship between theoretical and work-based learning; Professional training at universities from a historical perspective; Higher education and emerging generation.

D. Demand for Professional Competences: Employers' Perspectives

Identification of required competences in current economic situation; New employment relationships between graduates and corporations (e.g. mobiflex workers); Recruitment methods; Monitoring the job content and skill requirements.

E. Skills and Education Match: Comparative Perspectives on Supply and Demand

F. Policy Development

Qualification frameworks; Higher education and 21st century competences in a globalised world; Countries' legislation as a context for transition from education to the labour market; Current issues of Bologna processes; Integration of the migrant workforce.

G. Permeability between Higher Education and Vocational Education and Training

The role of the vocational education and training in lifelong learning; Permeability between VET and HE; Recognition and validation of informal learning; Learning outcomes approach, crediting and qualifications; Progression routes; Vocational/academic division and stratification.

NOTE: Abstracts should be related to presentations in the parallel sessions. Papers are expected for the second conference in Ljubljana in September 2012. Further decision on papers' submissions will be announced after the first conference.

Abstracts should be submitted to dehems@fdv.uni-lj.si and with online registration: <http://www.dehems-project.eu/en/registration>.

Particular comparative aspects among the following professional domains may be considered: Business and Economics; Education and Teaching; Sociology and Political Studies; Engineering; Medicine and Life Sciences.

Preliminary Programme of the First Conference

Thursday, 22 September 2011

Opening	9.00-10.00	Welcoming address by the Rector of WU Vienna University of Economics and Business Christoph Badelt - Wolfgang Mayrhofer, WU Vienna University of Economics and Business - Ulrich Teichler, University of Kassel – INCHER - Harald Schomburg, University of Kassel – INCHER - Georg Horacek, OMV Austria, President Forum Personal HRM Association - Julie Fionda, European Commission		
Parallel Sessions	10.15-12.00	<i>Career Success and Employability of Young Professionals</i>	<i>Skills and Education Match</i>	
Parallel Sessions	13.30-15.15	Supply of Competencies: Higher Education Perspectives	Policy Development	Permeability between VET and HE
Parallel Sessions	15.45-17.30	HE Management Systems, Quality Assurance and Career Centre Developments	Demand for Professional Competencies: Employers' Perspective	

Friday, 23 September 2011

Workshop Session	9.30-11.30	Supply of Competencies: Higher Education Perspectives	Demand for Professional Competencies: Employers' Perspective	HE Management Systems, Quality Assurance and Career Centre Developments
Reporting Session	11.30-13.00	Conclusions & Elaboration of key premises and call for papers for the main conference event at the University of Ljubljana in September 2012		

Venue: WU Vienna University of Economics and Business, Augasse 2-6, 1090 Wien
 Key conference room: Festsaal, 1st floor, Area B (Blue)

Working language: English

Expected number of experts: 120

Registration: <http://www.dehems-project.eu/en/registration>; dehems@fdv.uni-lj.si

Proposed Conceptual Elaborations of DEHEMS Consortium to be Discussed at the Conference

Samo Pavlin, University of Ljubljana (SI)

Varieties of Higher Education Domains and Employability Determinants

This section discusses if the concept of early graduates' success and related determinants are best viewed from the perspective of the field of study, occupation/profession or economic sector. It explores the intersection of horizontal education-job matching in the way it develops relevant typologies leading towards the design of 'professional domains'.

Kerstin Janson, University of Kassel – INCHER Kassel (DE)

Content of a Graduate Survey Questionnaire

The section overviews typical contents of graduate survey questionnaires taking the questionnaire of the REFLEX project as an example of a possible selection of questions and their order. The author finds that it is recommended to include some questions in every graduate survey (core questions), whereas others could be defined as optional.

Wolfgang Mayrhofer and Paul Demeter, WU Vienna University of Economics and Business (AT)

Theoretical backgrounds of graduates' career success

The authors describe the concept of a career on different layers of influencing factors: person-related aspects, context of origin, context of work, context of society and culture, and global context. This section contributes to the theoretical background for the current conference in order to analyse the role of higher education in creating competencies and their impact on careers.

Gabriela Grotkowska and Leszek Wincenciak, University of Warsaw (PL)

Impact of education-related factors on young people's labour market success

The authors argue that many empirical studies have demonstrated that education-related factors are key determinants of labour market success. It is claimed that education plays an important role in acquiring human capital, improving labour productivity and hence determining one's future income path (human capital theory). On the other hand, education may be regarded as a signalling device which allows employers to acquire information about the productivity of potential workers: when the quality of workers cannot be directly observable, the higher education level and/or graduation with a better diploma may be thought of as a signal of a greater ability to learn or willingness to provide effort (signalling theory).

Bugay Turhan, Hacettepe University (TR)

The Role of Professional Bodies in Higher Education

The section defines professional bodies as organisations that act as an intellectual and legislative link between professional members and the jurisdiction of their work. It also argues that the co-operation of HE institutions with professional bodies is necessary if the HE is to maintain its public relevance, while on the other hand it is needed to persist with scientific coherence. In the end, the author stresses the importance of further research to monitor the interaction between professional bodies and HE and to suggest ways for this interaction to be properly directed to favourable outcomes for the student, the professions, the higher education sector and society.

Georg Spoettl, University of Bremen ITB (DE)

Permeability between Vocational Education and Training and Higher Education – from VET to HE

This section describes the obstacles hidden in the permeability between vocational and academic education and shows ways to shape permeability both horizontally and vertically with a focus on career paths.

Angelo Paletta, University of Bologna (IT)

What HE management should know about graduates' careers – conceptual/theoretical perspective

Section analyses the HE managerial development towards models of strategic management. Universities require a well-defined understanding of sustainable growth following their specific positions. More precisely, the introduction of new systems for the strategic management of HE institutions has been considered a priority among leaders. The question of how graduates' employability fits into this concept is crucially important for further HE development.

Contribution to EU Policies

The DEHEMS network is designed in such a way as to further generate, develop but also empirically test key policy directives in the HE area. In particular, it addresses several main issues stressed in European Communications such as the Strategic framework for European Co-operation in Education and Training ('ET 2020'), Youth on the Move and the latest agenda the 'New Skills for New Jobs'. In different ways these documents impact on developments of the Erasmus actions towards improving the quality and efficiency of education and training, including by addressing internal and external quality assurance elements. In this context, the project's key activities relate to the following policy challenges:

- mechanisms for educational and skill matching;
- skills needs in various professional domains as observed from the viewpoint of fields of studies, professional groups and occupations and employment sectors;
- development and improvement of graduates' employability potential taking various determinants and contexts into account, including the quality of jobs and work placements; and
- developments of country patterns, principles and legislations related to the transfer of graduates from education to the labour market.

The consortium has found these premises as central to improving the quality of Higher Education, understanding the equality and competencies of HE students and graduates. However, the consortium presumes that different countries, regulations, legislation and field of studies produce very distinguished mechanisms and premises for future developments relative to:

- organisation of HE curricula and teaching practices;
- co-operation with enterprises;
- co-operation with students' apprenticeships;
- integration of research activities into curricula;
- universities' career centres; and
- organisation of HE practicums.

Another main objective of the DEHEMS network is to encourage international co-operation between HE institutions in Europe through the establishment of a network of experts and the promotion of dialogue between various stakeholders. In this context, the main focus is on the promotion of sharing knowledge and experiences, disseminating good practices, and providing quality assurance tools for HE curricula.

In a period of economic crisis, these issues are still related to the three main reforms the Commission envisaged in 2006 (curricular, governance and funding), which in 2010 were described at the OECD conference in Paris as 'Doing More with Less'. This slogan might further challenge the current operational objectives of the Erasmus programme with regard to improvements in HE quality, the volume of student and teaching staff mobility, multilateral co-operation and co-operation between HE institutions and enterprises.
