Peer Learning in the Social Dimension of European Higher Education
Introduction

• Leuven Communiqué (2009)

“The student body within higher education should reflect the diversity of Europe’s populations. We therefore emphasize the social characteristics of higher education and aim to provide equal opportunities to quality education. Access into higher education should be widened by fostering the potential of students from underrepresented groups and by providing adequate conditions for the completion of their studies.”

• Bucharest Communiqué (2012)

“The student body entering and graduating from higher education institutions should reflect the diversity of Europe’s populations. We will step up our efforts towards underrepresented groups to develop the social dimension of higher education, reduce inequalities and provide adequate student support services, counseling and guidance, flexible learning paths and alternative access routes, including recognition of prior learning. We encourage the use of peer learning on the social dimension and aim to monitor progress in this area.”
Introduction

Base for an EU funded project:

- Aim: Tackling the challenges in widening access and improving success rate of currently underrepresented groups in higher education
- Method: Peer learning
- Time: March 2012 – February 2014
- Funding: EU Lifelong Learning Programme / Policy cooperation and innovation
Project Partners

6 Higher Education Institutions
- Ghent University (BE)
- University of Essex (UK)
- Linköping University (SE)
- Vilnius University (LT)
- Technical University of Karadeniz (TR)
- University of Granada (ES)

2 Consultancy Firms
- Brussels Education Services (BE)
- CHE Consult GmbH (DE)
Project Partners

6 Higher Education Institution

- = 6 Bologna Experts
- = 6 countries/regions
- = 6 different economical, social and educational contexts

2 Consultancy firm

- Experience in EU project management
- Experience in HE policy management
- Experience in widening access policy and actions

2 External Experts

- Mr. Michael Cooper
- Mr. Frederik De Decker
3 Phases:

- Phase 1: Research and Analysis
- Phase 2: Peer Learning
- Phase 3: Validation
Project Overview

Phase 1: Research and Analysis

- 6 National/Regional Profiles on the social dimension of HE
- Identifying strengths and best practices
- Identifying national/regional/European stakeholders
Phase 2: Peer Learning

- Workshop on Peer Learning in Expanding Opportunities in HE
  - 21-22 November 2012
  - Ghent

- Exchange of best practices

- 6 National/Regional Action Plans

- National/Regional Events
Phase 3: Validation

• Conference on Peer Learning in Expanding Opportunities in HE
  • November 2013
  • Ghent

• General report on Expanding Opportunities

• Dissemination activities
Project Overview

National/Regional Actions

- Bologna Expert as national/regional coordinator
  - Flanders: Prof. Luc François, Ghent University
  - Turkey: Prof. Miğraç Açkay, Technical University of Karadeniz

- Active stakeholder involvement
  - Sharing best practices
  - Developing action plan
  - Input in ExpandO publications
  - Participation in ExpandO Events

- National events
Project Overview

Fields of peer learning

• From policy to person: How national/regional policies can create individual opportunities
• Beyond papers and projects: How to create a culture of openness within an institution
• Measuring the measures: How monitoring can expand the opportunities
• Access or chances for all: On access routes, admission procedures and tuition fees
• Part time student, full time opportunity: How promoting part time study creates opportunities
• Lifelong Peer Learning: Creating sustainable networks for knowledge exchange
• Leveling the Score: Equalizing the opportunities by the recognition of prior learning
• From Access to Success: The importance of appropriate student support in achieving success
• Best practices
Project Overview

Project output

- Website: www.expandingopportunities.eu
- Newsletter
- 6 National/Regional Profiles
- 6 National/Regional Action Plans
- Several national and international events
- “Guidelines & Recommendations for Widening Access in European Education Systems”
- Database with good practices in access and success
- ....
Sustainability

After 2014?

• ExpandO project = just the beginning

• 2012 – 2014: First phase in peer learning

• After 2014: Creation of open impact networks on expanding opportunities
  • Stakeholders
  • Policy makers
  • Higher Education Institutions
  • ...

• Goal: new project, new policies... through structural cooperation
What’s in it…

For you?

• Participation in discussions concerning hot political topic
• Becoming part of a European network
• Strengthen visibility of organization or projects
• Sharing experiences
• Gaining knowledge
• Participation in open impact network after 2014
• ....
What’s in it...

For all of us?

• Offer solutions through a comparative approach

• Guarantee involvement of all stakeholders

• Build networks beyond 2014

= the ExpandO project offers the opportunity to develop policies and practices that proofed to be successful
How to participate?

• Active national participation
  • Events
  • Discussions

• Active international participation
  • Events
  • Presentations

• Staying up-to-date
  • Newsletter
  • Twitter
  • Facebook

Go to our website: www.expandingopportunities.eu
Expanding Opportunities in Higher Education is a necessity:

- For economical reasons: Activating all talents for growth!
- For social reasons: Getting all groups involved!
- For educational reasons: Keeping our education relevant!

ExpandO Project = exchanging knowledge to ensure economical, social and educational growth
Contact

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