Challenges and barriers to implementation of Lifelong learning strategies on the university level

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Findings of the *Trends 2010* report and SIRUS project

**Implementation of LLL strategies**

- LLL strategy in place
- A series of LLL activities in place
The European Universities’ Charter on Lifelong Learning (EUA, 2008)

- Providing education and learning to a diversified student population;
- Providing education and learning to a diversified student population:
- Adapting study programmes to ensure that they are designed to widen participation and attract returning adult learners;
- Providing appropriate guidance and counselling services;
- Recognising prior learning;
- Embracing lifelong learning in quality culture;
The European Universities’ Charter on Lifelong Learning (EUA, 2008)

• Strengthening the relationship between research, teaching and innovation in a perspective of lifelong learning;

• Consolidating reforms to promote a flexible and creative learning environment for all students;

• Developing partnerships at local, regional, national and international level to provide attractive and relevant programmes;

• Acting as role models of lifelong learning institutions;
The development of lifelong learning at institutional level

- Adaptation stage
- Organisational stage
- Cultural stage
Major projects in LLL
Challenges and barriers to implementation of Lifelong learning strategies on the university level

• Funding and legislation
• Attracting people towards learning activities
• Tackling the interests of relevant stakeholders
• Diversifying services to learners
• Recognition of prior learning
Funding and legislation
Funding and legislation

Figure 9: Government funding for the development of LLL in the 18 countries of the SIRUS Institutions

- Countries with funding for the development of lifelong learning: DK, FI, FR, NL
- Countries with no funding for the development of lifelong learning: AT, BE-FR, BE-NL, DE, ES, GE, GR, HU, IE, IT, LT, PL, RU, SK, UK (EWNI)

Source: SIRUS project
Attracting people towards learning activities
Attracting people towards learning activities

„People aren’t actually all that “rational” in their behaviours and decisions. … they are just as likely to do what they have always done, what impulse tells them to do or what their neighbours or friends generally do as to do what is most beneficial. And what’s more, they’re often well aware that their own actions aren’t in their best interests”

“Non-traditional” learners

- Full- and part-time students from non-traditional backgrounds
- Mature learners
- “Returners” (either drop-outs or professional up-skilling)
- Immigrants and ethnic minorities
- Learners with no formal qualifications
- Students with disabilities

* SIRUS PROJECT
Diversifying services to learners

• Access offices, access programmes and procedures: pre-entry preparatory courses, orientation programmes, entry routes, etc.

• Other services, for instance, those supporting the participation of students with children (day nursery, etc.).

• Providing appropriate guidance and counselling services (provided by professionals)

• Social, medical and psychological services

• Career guidance offices, placement offices.
Promoting adapted design of learning initiatives according to target groups

Adapting study programmes, teaching methods, assessment methods to ensure that they are designed to widen and attract returning adult learners
Promoting adapted design of learning initiatives according to target groups

Manuel Souto-Otero - Assessment and methods Seminar on the Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning  Mechelen, 9-10 April 2013.
Pedagogical delivery

• Attention for authentic examples: the more lectures or learning activities relate to experiences or real life exemples, the higher the involvement and the more effective learning tends to be.

• A learner-oriented educational model – capable to assess individual learning processes.

* University Strategies and Business Models for Lifelong Learning (USBM) Project
Pedagogical delivery

• Attention for involvement and interaction - making use of experience the participants have)
• Excellent tutorial support
• Accessibility of the materials
• A learner-oriented organizational structure.

* University Strategies and Business Models for Lifelong Learning (USBM) Project
Tackling the interests of relevant stakeholders
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- The range of stakeholders in lifelong learning is very broad and their interests will differ from one policy to another.
- The practice of stakeholders’ involvement needs should be implemented strategically and smartly in the institutional lifelong learning policies.
Recognition of prior learning

Figure 10: Recognition of prior learning in the 29 SIRUS Institutions

- 15: Mechanisms for the recognition of prior learning (RPL) in place
- 14: Mechanisms for the recognition of prior learning (RPL) not in place

Source: SIRUS project
Key factors to consider

The widening participation and lifelong learning strategies is not only about changing and developing the provision of education and research; it is also about the time-consuming process of changing minds or institutional self-perceptions.
Key factors to consider

Academic staff must be persuaded to develop new pedagogical approaches and to implement continuous development in partnership with external stakeholders in order to move LLL from the periphery to the centre of the institutional strategy, from the confinement of a continuing education centre to playing a central part at the core of the provision of teaching and learning to all students.
Thank you for your attention!
References

• *Martin Watkinson and Luis Tinoca* Showcases of University Strategies and Business Models for Lifelong Learning, University Strategies and Business Models for Lifelong Learning (USBM) Project

• *Hanne Smidt Andreé Surgosck* Engaging in Lifelong Learning: Shaping Inclusive and Responsive University Strategies, SIRUS PROJECT

• Daniela Ulicna, Odd Bjorn Ure, Patrick Werquin Lifelong Learning Strategies: Critical Factors and Good Practice for Implementation