Working Group on Learning and Teaching

Meeting with WG Social Dimension

20 January 2022

Attendees: Terry Maguire and Philippe Lalle (WG L&T)

Martina Darmanin and Ninoslav Šćukanec Schmidt (WG SD).

WG on Social dimension

- **Martina Darmanin** : President of the European Students' Union

Her main focus is on the social dimension of higher education with an emphasis on policy development, advocacy, and project coordination on access to higher education, social mobility, and student participation in the governance of higher education.

- **Ninoslav Šćukanec Schmidt** : Founder of the Institute for the Development of Education in Zagreb, where he served as Executive Director since 1999.

He has dedicated his career to the development of higher education policies. His main expertise is in institutional governance and strategic management of higher education, financing of higher education, the social dimension and community engagement in higher education, quality assurance in higher education, and in the development of qualifications frameworks.

WG on Social dimension

- WG already existing in the previous period

- Annex II of the Rome Ministerial Communiqué

- Must produce measurable indicators

- Topic already present in the Bologna Process Implementation Report (BPIR) 2020

Roadmap: 10 principles

- 1. The social dimension should **be central** to higher education strategies at system and institutional level, as well as at the EHEA and the EU level.

- 2. **Legal regulations** or policy documents should allow and **enable higher education institutions to develop their own strategies** to fulfil their public responsibility towards widening access to, participation in and completion of higher education studies

- 3. The inclusiveness of the entire education system should be improved by developing coherent policies **from early childhood** education, through schooling to higher education and throughout **lifelong learning**.

- 4. **Reliable data** is a necessary precondition for an evidence-based improvement of the social dimension of higher education.
- 5. Public authorities should have policies that enable higher education institutions to ensure **effective counselling and guidance for potential and enrolled students** in order to widen their access to, participation in and **completion** of higher education studies.
- 6. Public authorities should provide **sufficient and sustainable funding** and financial autonomy to higher education institutions enabling them to build adequate capacity to embrace diversity and contribute to equity and inclusion in higher education.
- 7. Public authorities should help higher education institutions to strengthen their capacity to respond to the needs of a **more diverse student and staff body** and create **inclusive learning environments and inclusive institutional cultures**.

- 8. **International mobility programs** in higher education should be structured and implemented in a way that foster diversity, equity and inclusion and should particularly foster participation of students and staff from vulnerable, disadvantaged or underrepresented backgrounds.

- 9. Higher education institutions should ensure that **community engagement** in higher education promotes diversity, equity and inclusion.

- 10. Public authorities should engage in a **policy dialogue with higher education institutions** and other relevant stakeholders about how the above principles and guidelines can be translated and implemented both at national system and institutional level.

Some especially interesting principles

- 2. **Legal regulations** or policy documents should allow and **enable higher education institutions to develop their own strategies** to fulfil their public responsibility towards widening access to, participation in and completion of higher education studies

- Allow sufficient flexibility in the design, organisation and delivery of study programmes to reflect the diversity of students' needs (full-time and part-time studies, flexible study modes, blended and distance learning)

- Recognition of prior non-formal and informal learning in higher education (LLL, collaboration with employers…)

- Others…

Some especially interesting principles

- 7. Public authorities should help higher education institutions to strengthen their capacity to respond to the needs of a **more diverse student and staff body** and create **inclusive learning environments and inclusive institutional cultures**.

- Improve initial and continuing professional training for academic and administrative staff to enable them to work professionally and equitably with a diverse student body and staff.

- External quality assurance systems could address how the social dimension, diversity, accessibility, equity and inclusion are reflected within the institutional missions

- Others…

Some especially interesting principles

- 8. **International mobility programs** in higher education should be structured and implemented in a way that foster diversity, equity and inclusion and should particularly foster participation of students and staff from vulnerable, disadvantaged or underrepresented backgrounds

- Actively address obstacles to mobility for vulnerable, disadvantaged or underrepresented groups of students and staff

- Further support to physical mobility

- Remove specific barriers to physical mobility (of any)?

Some especially interesting principles

- **9.** Higher education institutions should ensure that **community engagement** in higher education promotes diversity, equity and inclusion

- Establish a dialogue with community stakeholders (e.g. local authorities, cultural organisations, non-governmental organisations, businesses, citizens). This will enable genuine university-community partnerships, which can effectively address social and democratic challenges.

How to collaborate with SD WG?

- The WG SD have had three meetings to date with their 4th meeting is scheduled for February 17. Meetings have also been scheduled for April and June.

- To date the WG SD do not have any vision/agreement on how they will produce indicators but hope to set up subgroups to work on them at the next meeting.

- They plan to organize on or more PLAs

- It was agreed that the co-chairs of both WGs would meet again in April and would share the development of a concept paper on what makes a good indicator at that time.