# DASCHE project – methodology and outcomes overview

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„Social competences – the new dimession of the traditional mission of higher education"
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# Why social competences of students are important for higher education?

- Challenges of the future – how to face them?
- Sustainable Development Goals
- Knowledge, skills and social competences (autonomy and responsibility) and
    - Revolution 4.0 and its social consequences
    - Digitalization
    - Demography
    - Climate
    - Social inclusion
    - Migrations
    - Permanent change and uncertainty of the future.

DASCHE: *The challenges posed by social life, related to a continuous change, demographic processes and social exclusion, threats to democracy, expected drop in demand for labour and the ongoing digitalization, migrations and terrorism, and, last but not least, to climate change, require an adequate response from the systems of education; they should shape the competences enabling to face those challenges.*

How to do it? What is the role of shaping social competences in this context?

# "*Shaping our future together*" - ONZ



Source: UN: 2015

# Shift to „social competences": documents and debates - selected examples

- 20th anniversary of the Bologna Process publications and conferences
- Bologna Follow-up Group projects – the new strategy of the Bologna Process for 2020-2030
- Program documents of EUA and ESU
- Declaration of Global Forum on Academic Freedom, Institutional Autonomy and the Future of Democracy (June 2019)
- LERU report (2019) „Universities and the Future of Europe"
- Annual EAIR Forum (2019) „Responsibility of Higher Education systems: What? Why? How?"
- European Quality Assurance Forum (2019) pt. „Supporting societal engagement of universities"
- Meeting of HE Directors (2019): „Towards more socially inclusive higher education"
- Annual EUA conference (2020): „Universities building a better Europe"
- Responsible and Responsive University concepts
- ..........

+ project Erasmus+ DASCHE

At a moment when Europe is facing important societal challenges … higher education can and must play a decisive role in providing solutions to these issues. … By providing students and other learners with opportunities for lifelong personal development, higher education enhances their prospects of employment and stimulates them to be active citizens in democratic societies.

We therefore commit to developing policies that encourage and support higher education institutions to fulfil their social responsibility and contribute to a more cohesive and inclusive society through enhancing intercultural understanding, civic engagement and ethical awareness, …

EUA calls on the Bologna Process to address university values, such as autonomy, academic freedom, student and staff participation, as well as fostering civic values

Academic freedom and integrity, institutional autonomy, participation of students and staff in higher education governance, and public responsibility for and of higher education form the backbone of the EHEA.

EUA calls on countries and higher education institutions to address social inclusion and equity

We recognize that further effort is required to strengthen the social dimension of higher education.

## effect
EUROPEAN FORUM FOR ENHANCED COLLABORATION IN TEACHING

### Enhancing the education mission of European universities: A proactive response to change

Since their foundation, universities have led the discovery and development of new knowledge through research, and disseminated and applied that knowledge through education, teaching and other forms of knowledge transfer. But the world is changing, as knowledge is developed, transmitted and applied at an ever faster pace. Universities need to lead this process, and to ensure that an increasingly diverse range of students and learners are supported so they can access, understand and interpret this knowledge in new and creative ways.

Over the past two decades, European higher education has successfully undergone fundamental change at system and institutional levels, linked to national reforms, the Bologna Process, and European Union initiatives. As a result, student-centred learning, quality assurance (QA) and a learning outcomes approach are key elements of higher education in Europe today. There is also strong consensus on the need to further enhance accessibility and inclusion, and to provide a broader and more diversified educational experience. Enhancing the profile of teaching and innovative pedagogies, strengthening the link between education and research, promoting the use of new technologies for teaching and learning, and communicating the overall importance of higher education for individuals and society: these topics are all on the agenda and are discussed and explored actively at national and institutional levels across Europe.

### European Principles for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching

In order to support the enhancement of learning and teaching in European universities, and to inspire and facilitate ongoing exchange and cooperation in this field among universities and between national and European initiatives, the following set of ten Principles for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching is proposed.

These Principles underpin the need to re-emphasise the education mission of the university. They

## effect
EUROPEAN FORUM FOR ENHANCED COLLABORATION IN TEACHING

**3** Commitment to learning and teaching is integral to the purpose, mission and strategy of the university.
Enhancing learning and teaching requires that the mission reflects the educational purpose and values of the institution. Comprehensive, values-based institutional strategies are needed to guide the learning and teaching initiatives, and enhance their impact and sustainability.

**4** Institutional leadership actively promotes and enables the advancement of learning and teaching.
An institution-wide strategy requires the institutional leadership team to drive, support and maintain the focus on learning and teaching.

**5** Learning and teaching is a collaborative and collegial process involving collaboration across the university and with the wider community.
The entire institution, including students, administrative and technical staff are actively involved in learning and teaching. Opportunities in the private, public and voluntary sectors are essential to enable students and graduates to fulfil meaningful roles in an ever-changing society. Learning and teaching processes ultimately promote social responsibility.

**6** Learning, teaching and research are interconnected and mutually enriching.
Connection between research and education is essential to stimulate innovation and creativity in the learning experience and to advance knowledge. Learning and teaching in universities is informed by research and encourages students to engage in research and creation of new knowledge.

**7** Teaching is core to academic practice and is respected as scholarly and professional.
As a core function of higher education, teaching is recognised as a professional and skilled activity, which is actively promoted through recruitment, staff development (including

**1** The higher education learning experience nurtures and enables the development of learners as active and responsible citizens, critical thinkers, problem solvers, equipped for life-long learning.

Higher education equips people with the confidence and skills to live and learn in a changing world, able to proactively address their own and the world's grand challenges.

**1** The higher education learning experience nurtures and enables the development of learners as active and responsible citizens, critical thinkers, problem solvers, equipped for life-long learning.
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**2** Learning and teaching is learner-centred.
The university should provide learning opportunities tailored to the needs and capabilities of diverse learners. It should nurture a culture and an environment in which reciprocal learning between students and teachers can take place. Students are actively engaged as co-creators in all aspects of the learning experience, and share the responsibility for their own learning, in partnership with the staff of the institution.

There has to be appropriate and sustainable funding for developing and carrying out teaching. Resources are allocated and used to support a long-term strategic approach for enhancing learning and teaching. Learning and teaching is structured in a sustainable way, with distributed leadership and clearly articulated responsibilities, including at discipline and programme levels.

**10** Institutional QA for learning and teaching aims at enhancement, and is a shared responsibility of staff and students.
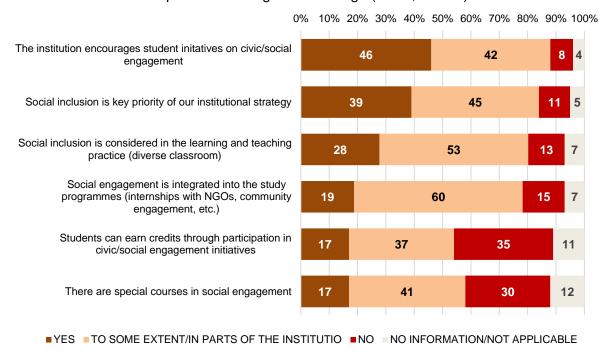In line with the ESG, institutional QA develops flexible, fit-for-purpose processes suited to evaluate and demonstrate the quality of the learning experience. It is geared toward continuous improvement and fostering a culture that engages everyone in the university community in assuring and enhancing the quality of learning and teaching.

**DASCHE** DEVELOPMENT, ASSESSMENT AND VALIDATION OF SOCIAL COMPETENCES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

At your "institution", does inclusiveness and social engagement have any impact on learning and teaching? (Q. 28; N=288)

| | YES | TO SOME EXTENT/IN PARTS OF THE INSTITUTIO | NO | NO INFORMATION/NOT APPLICABLE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| The institution encourages student initatives on civic/social engagement | 46 | 42 | 8 | 4 |
| Social inclusion is key priority of our institutional strategy | 39 | 45 | 11 | 5 |
| Social inclusion is considered in the learning and teaching practice (diverse classroom) | 28 | 53 | 13 | 7 |
| Social engagement is integrated into the study programmes (internships with NGOs, community engagement, etc.) | 19 | 60 | 15 | 7 |
| Students can earn credits through participation in civic/social engagement initiatives | 17 | 37 | 35 | 11 |
| There are special courses in social engagement | 17 | 41 | 30 | 12 |

Source: EUA 2018: 46.

The aim of the project DASCHE is:

**to provide assistance to Higher Education Institutions as well as  national and European policy makers in shaping social competences of students.**

**DASCHE** — DEVELOPMENT, ASSESSMENT AND VALIDATION OF SOCIAL COMPETENCES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Partnership:

University of Bremen (Germany), Academic Information Centre (Latvia), Centre for Higher Education Studies (Czech Republic), University of Durham (United Kingdom), University of Twente (the Netherlands), SGH Warsaw School of Economic (Poland, leader).

# Associated partners:

DASCHE — DEVELOPMENT, ASSESSMENT AND VALIDATION OF SOCIAL COMPETENCES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

esu — european students' union

Parlament Studentów Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej

eurodoc — The European Council of Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers

Krajowa Reprezentacja Doktorantów — KRD

CONFERENCE OF RECTORS OF ACADEMIC SCHOOLS IN POLAND — CRASP

ČKR CRC — ČESKÁ KONFERENCE REKTORŮ — CZECH RECTORS CONFERENCE

Polska Komisja Akredytacyjna

Fundacja Rektorów Polskich

Rada Główna Nauki i Szkolnictwa Wyższego

COUNCIL OF HIGHER EDUCATION

University of Cologne

# Case studies method of research

- Selecting the HE institutions and their units/programmes for case studies
- Desk research of strategic national and institutional documents
- Field research - individual in-depth interviews (IDI) with senior management staff at the HEIs
- Field research – focus group Interviews (FDI) with teachers and students
- Consultations of findings and recommendations with external stakeholders (seminars, IDIs) – associated partners
- Conclusions
- Recommendations on institutional, national and European levels

- Looking for examples of good practices: see the posters

**DASCHE** DEVELOPMENT, ASSESSMENT AND VALIDATION OF SOCIAL COMPETENCES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

| COUNTRY | INSTITUTIONS | |
|---|---|---|
| CZ | 1. | Charles University |
| | 1. | West Bohemia University |
| | 1. | University of Economy and Management, Prague |
| | 1. | Medical College of Nursing |
| | 1. | University of Ostrava |
| DE | 1. | University of Bremen |
| | 1. | University of Konstanz |
| | 1. | University of Cologne |
| | 1. | Technical University of Dresden |
| LV | 1. | Riga Stradiņš University |
| | 1. | School of Business and Finance |
| | 1. | University of Latvia |
| | 1. | Riga Technical University |
| | 1. | Transport and Telecommunication Institute |
| NL | 1. | ArtEZ Institute of the Arts |
| | 1. | Radboud University |
| | 1. | University of Twente |
| PL | 1. | PWSZ in Elbląg |
| | 1. | Collegium Medicum of the Jagiellonian University in Krakow |
| | 1. | Lodz University of Technology |
| | 1. | University of Social Sciences and Humanities |
| | 1. | SGH – Warsaw School of Economics |
| UK | 1. | University A |
| | 1. | University B |
| | 1. | University C |
| | 1. | University D |

**see** **the poster session during the lunch break**

## What are social competences?

- Variety of meanings
  - Impact of EQF, key competences, legislation, tradition, need of students and society in general, etc.
  - Valuable but difficult for discussion

- DASCHE definition:
  - ... a one-size-for all approach is not beneficial and not recommended... Despite this variety of social competences characteristics, .... we can notice one relevant feature of the above mentioned approaches. All of them recognize social competences as an overall meta-competence, built over knowledge and skills, enriched by axiological reflection, enabling an independent and responsible application of knowledge and skills, aimed at common social good...

## How do we shape social competences - „lessons learnt" Poland
## FGI with associated partners from Poland - selected opinions:

- It is necessary to indicate what would be an impact of decreasing of social competencies on the social change – what happens if social competences are not supported by education;
- From 2011 we have permanent problem with „teaching" social competences: we are obliged by legislation to shape them but we do not understand what are they and we do not know  how to shape them. It was presumed that they are shaped as an side-effect of regular teaching and learning process.. .
- Analysis of about 100 curricula confirms that teachers do not understand what to do and why ... social competences quite frequently are understood as an bureaucratic invention ... But examples of good practices (DASCHE) showed that HEIs can invent interesting and valuable methods of shaping of social competences
- Students opinion (more radical): the social competences are included into curricula and syllabi without any reflection  as a formal extension of the PQF descriptors ... We met cursorial examples of prescribing the social competences to one dedicated course ...

# How do we shape social competences - „lessons learnt"

All or the most of the DASCHE project respondents as well as representatives of the associated partners stated that:

- Shaping social competences of graduates is one of the crucial goals of higher education;
- There is too less attention paid to what the social competences are and by mean of what didactic methods they are to be shaped; it is important to analyze and present the social impact of this neglection.
- This situation should be changed starting with a debate on conceptualization of social competences on institutional and national levels; such debates were carried on in chosen countries only;
- Higher education institutions are getting too less support from legislation and from decision makers of different levels to implement effective process of designing and implementing the social competences into teaching and learning process;
- Only in chosen higher education institutions and countries the activities devoted directly and intentionally for shaping social competences were undertaken. More often it is understood as a side-effect of the teaching and learning process and left to the teachers' personal engagement;
- But teachers are not sufficiently prepared to integrate effectively social competences into study courses;
- Achievement of social competences is not well recognized and evaluated by quality assurance internal systems and external agencies;
- .......

# DASCHE – the main recommendation

- To create room to reflect on designing, developing and assessing social competences of students in higher education institutions.

- To run a continuous debate among HEIs, HEIs Associations, Quality Assurance Agencies, Students Associations, employers, NGOs, national and European policy makers about social competences in higher education.

And long lists of detailed recommendations – see the conference brochure.

# DASCHE question:

Next steps?

What to do now?

Looking for answers during the conference debates.

# Thank you for your attention!

## www. dasche.eu