

Fostering Social Dimension of Higher Education



Briefing Paper 5:

Developing a common vision of inclusion

The inclusion dimension in any strategic planning for HE can only be implemented through a shared involvement of all university stakeholders from different institutions. In order for this to be constructed, permanent communication and sharing of ideas is crucial. Therefore, meetings and workshop addressed to different stakeholders (HE managers, administrative staff, students and teachers) is an essential component of the Access4All project.



Through the workshop held at the University of Bucharest, participants were able to discuss and elaborate ideas regarding ways to strengthen the inclusive dimension in higher education. Since the start of the Access4All project the University of Bucharest tried to be more actively involved in developing the inclusion dimension of the strategic plan and enlarge it's understanding on different categories of vulnerable groups.

The main purpose of the workshop was to discuss among different stakeholders about aspects of the inclusion dimension that could be part of the university's strategic plan.

One component of the work-

shop was to discuss and analyze the good practices identified in the University of Bucharest and share them with participants from other Higher Education institutions. In this context, participants from other HEIs shared good practices implemented in their own institutions. This led to a debate about good and best practices and on how this practices could be adapted and used in different institutional contexts. Therefore, even though one practice could be considered "good" or "best" practice in one context, it might not be the same in another context, because it can depend of various factors: institutional development objectives, stakeholders involved, vulnerable groups etc.

Another focus of the workshop was to answer questions regarding the stakeholders, target groups definition, development objectives and key activities and try to define a common vision among stakeholders that participated.

Through focused discussions participants to the workshop, regardless of their institutional affiliation, identified some common ideas. In what development objectives are concerned one key aspect was permanent communication and idea sharing between all stakeholders - managers, administrative staff, counselors, students, teachers and also policy makers, local authorities and NGOs. Two of the vulnerable groups identified



Development objectives	Stakeholders	Target groups	Key activities
<p>What issues or problems need to be considered?</p> <p>What might the challenges of achieving these goals?</p>	<p>Who are these stakeholders and how can these stakeholders be involved?</p>	<p>What is the main target group or groups?</p> <p>Are we considering the needs of all students regardless of whether they are classified as being at a disadvantage currently?</p>	<p>What key activities for your development goals are required?</p> <p>How can these be aligned, embedded within current activities?</p> <p>What resources are needed for these activities?</p>

in all institution that were represented in the workshop were mature students and students with low income background.

The participation of all stakeholders is one of the key elements to achieve inclusion in Higher Education Institutions.

For these two types of groups the issue is attendance to courses because most of them need to work in order to support themselves and their family. Therefore, alternative paths to completing courses and give additional support services. Besides these groups partici-

pants agreed that the university should be flexible in adjusting its offers to any category or issue that may arise.

As an overall conclusion, participants agreed that not only the inclusion dimension should be more developed, but have more focus on the wider social dimension and a key action is to try to involve more the students in the change process at university level. ●

ACCESS4ALL enables the access and exchange of numerous policies and initiatives that seek to improve access to and continuation and success in Higher Education for under represented collectives and non-traditional learners. Higher Education Institutions interested in the inclusion of non-traditional learners and disadvantaged groups are invited to participate in the ACCESS4ALL open activities that each partner will hold in their campus.

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