



REPORT

on participation in the Annual HERE Conference “Higher Education Policy Reform for Impact”

Name of the event: Annual HERE Conference “Higher Education Policy Reform for Impact”.

Date: December 4-5, 2023.

Venue: University of Barcelona, Spain.

Participants from Ukraine:

BAKHRUSHYN Volodymyr, *HERE* Chairman; Professor, Chair of the Academic Council, National University “Zaporizhzhia Polytechnic”; Member of the Scientific and Methodical Council (Chairman of the Higher Education Unit), MESU of Ukraine;

KOZIEVSKA Olena, Head of the Secretariat, Committee on Education, Science and Innovations, Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine – Parliament;

RASHKEVYCH Yuriy, Member of the National Qualifications Agency; Professor of the Lviv Polytechnic National University; Deputy Minister of Education and Science of Ukraine (2018-2019).

Target Audience: The event is aimed at those involved in higher education policy making at all levels of experience and expertise, and the event was particularly relevant to HERE from national authorities/ministries, higher education management and student representatives.

In total, about 90 people took part in the event.

Objectives

The purpose of the conference: to acquaint the representatives of national HERE teams with the experience of different countries of the European Higher Education Area regarding reforming higher education at the institutional and national levels, understanding the role of higher education in changing the landscape of the labor market in the context of new competencies, and also to discuss the problems of related to the "greening" direction of higher education, presenting and discussing the preliminary results of the research that SPHERE received from the European Commission.

The conference created an opportunity to receive valuable recommendations and advice on practical solutions to specific problems in order to increase the capacity of higher education. The participants of the event also had the opportunity to demonstrate the results of the HERE teams, the role of students in promoting such reform.

Therefore, the conference became the final stage, which made it possible to assess the contribution of national HERE teams to the development and support of the national reforms of higher education, the relevance and usefulness of specific measures to strengthen the institutional capacity of national HERE teams, as well as to determine the goals and strategy of the SPHERE team for 2024.

Description

During the event, discussion panels were held, during which the experience of reforming national higher education systems was exchanged, the implementation of current priorities of reforms related to the annual work

plans of the HERE teams, and the participants discussed the need for EU projects related to these reforms, formation of SPHERE work plans for the next year, taking into account the needs of national HERE teams.

The agenda of the event included speeches on the problems of the impact of innovations and digitalization on the internationalization of higher education; changes that occurred in higher education in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic; problems of lifelong learning and professional development, flexibility of learning and the need to introduce microcredentials; experience of microcredentials recognition within the system of formal education, etc.

Also during the conference, Olena Kozievska gave a presentation on the problems and challenges in the higher education system that arose in connection with the full-scale invasion by the Russian Federation, the needs for reforming higher education, as well as the priorities for the development of higher education for 2024, in particular, those related to higher education quality and recognition, the social dimension of higher education, digitalization and internationalization. Determining these priorities and justifying their necessity and importance for Ukraine is the basis for further funding of international projects within the EU Erasmus+ Programme. Also, the HERE presented the organization of the National HERE team's activities and its impact on the development of higher education in Ukraine.

Outcomes

The information received during the event regarding current problems in the field of higher education, prospects for their development, practice of solving issues of recognition of learning outcomes obtained through non-formal and/or informal education, in the formal education system, is important from the point of view of understanding the necessary transformations in the higher education system and it can be used during the preparation of legislative amendments to the Law of Ukraine "On Higher Education" and finalization of the draft Law on Adult Education for the second Reading.

It is also important to convey to the educational community of European countries the problems and challenges in the field of education, including in the field of higher education, which arose in connection with military actions in Ukraine, and to highlight important actions for further international cooperation aimed at increasing the institutional capacity of Ukrainian higher education institutions.