



REPORT

on participation in the seminar “Universities’ third mission: Partnering for social and economic development”

Name of the event: Seminar “Universities’ third mission: Partnering for social and economic development”.

Date: May 13-14, 2024.

Venue: Silk Road" International University of Tourism and Cultural Heritage, Samarkand, Uzbekistan.

Participants from Ukraine: Kateryna ZHDANOVA, Manager, National Erasmus+ Office – Ukraine.

Target Audience: The event was specifically designed for higher education reform experts (HEREs), NEOs and focused on collaborative efforts between universities and external partners to drive social and economic development.

Experts from Europe and partner regions and countries have shared cases from their institutions and countries to: analyze the achievements and challenges presented; acquire a global understanding of the changing role of universities in their ecosystems; explore institutional and national strategies aimed at improving collaboration between academia, industry and civil society.

Through a combination of plenary discussions and workshops during 2 days in Samarkand, participants examined the contributions of universities in local society and general development, their adaptability to specific contexts, as well explored strategies to maximize the impact of universities through key issues such as innovation in teaching or digitization.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Gain a comprehensive understanding of the evolving role of universities in their ecosystems, including their contributions to innovation, collaboration, socio-economic development and citizenship.
2. Explore institutional and national strategies for enhancing university-industry-civil society collaboration, to address real-life challenges related to sustainable development.
3. Acquire knowledge of innovative approaches and best practices in digital education and lifelong learning/upskilling (including micro-credentialing), and their implications for higher education institutions’ broader engagement with society.

Development prospects for Ukraine:

- *Universities' role in socio-economic development and citizenship.*

Further development of Universities' role in socio-economic development and citizenship at various levels is significant for Ukraine, however, to facilitate these processes, we need a clear understanding of the actual:

1. New philosophy and approach to management as part of the implementation of the university's third mission.
2. Key interaction and mutual influence process between the university, community, and socio-economic sphere at different levels (internal, external: local, regional, national).
3. New instruments and approaches to strengthen cooperation between the university and the community to break barriers for mutual penetration on the way to improving the socio-economic sphere.

- *Institutional and national strategies for enhancing university-industry-civil society collaboration.*

The key steps within which the Ukrainian education system at the institutional level can develop or improve their university-industry-civil society collaboration even during the war are:

1. Analysis of Ukrainian Universities' existing mission, vision and strategy for cooperation with business and local government to serve the community in accordance with local requirements and needs.
2. Analysis of national strategies on university-industry-civil society collaboration enhancement and cooperation with leading and experienced in third mission Ukrainian HEIs (e.g. relocated due to the war against Ukraine).
3. Analysis and systematization of civil society representatives needs and analysis of HEIs approaches and services to build new system of strong and up-to-date cooperation.
4. Deepening of research work in the sphere of "Universities' third mission".
5. Internal analysis of the understanding of university students & staff on the importance of openness and cooperation with the community.

- *Innovative approaches and best practices on engagement with society*

The commitment of universities to society, known as the "third mission of Universities", has many dimensions that are constantly evolving. The environment in which these institutions operate is very changeable, particularly in Ukraine due the brutal aggression of russia.

Faced with this changing scenario, both universities and their members are looking for ways to offer solutions to these social and economic challenges. At the same time, they compete for relevance and to show their commitment to society. For this reason, many Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are establishing partnerships with companies and civil society.

Additionally, within EHEA the trends of trans disciplinarity, continuous learning and open access to research and education are gaining trends. Considering EHEA trends and Ukrainian reality, the relevant processes have also been launched in our country and are recommended to be followed with:

1. Analysis of European Universities' trends and "new" mission, vision and strategy for cooperation with business and local government to serve the community in accordance with local requirements and needs in order to revise the relevant institutional approaches in domestic HEIs.
2. Analysis of European strategies on university-industry-civil society collaboration enhancement to renew national policies in Ukraine.
3. Study the experience and innovative approaches of leading in third mission European HEIs and best practices on engagement with society for the improvement of domestic practices.
4. Study the experience of internal changes in European universities that have already successfully implemented new strategies for serving society in order to determine the impact of new approaches to the implementation of the third mission of universities.