



Conference “Erasmus+:

An opportunity to modernise education, training, youth and sport systems for the 21st century”

# Transnational cooperation in Higher Education

Profiling new challenges in European Higher Education Area

Dr. Constantin Spyridonidis

Associate Professor, School of Architecture, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece

# Change and Speed of Change

We are experiencing an extremely fast changing world.

The mental and operational landscape of our life is everyday affected by unexpected modifications of possibilities, capacities and conditions influencing directly our social, financial, cultural and built environment.

The instability, the fluidity the interdependence of various, very often, unpredictable parameters and factors, rapidly transforms our world view.

# Responsiveness of Higher Education Institutions

Higher Education structures have a significant resistance to the fast changes occurring in the real world;

they appear rather passive or at least not very responsive to follow these changes occurring at a social, financial and cultural level.

This attitude of Universities threatens their credibility, reliability, authority and reputation.

Direct consequences on the respect, status and role of their graduates in the already unstable professional market

# The management of change

The management of change an imperative request for the academic leadership of HEI.

Erasmus as a diachronic tool designed to support the management of change towards the creation of the European Higher Education Area.

The different phases of the Erasmus program represent the way EU Policies conceive the dynamics of change in Higher Education environment.

Is Erasmus+ supportive to the contemporary conceptions of Higher Education in Europe?

Is Erasmus+ responsive to the main dilemmas that Higher Education in Europe is facing?

Is Erasmus+ adaptive to the international dynamics as well as to the local particularities?

Erasmus+ is compatible with the

New conceptions in Higher Education: A paradigm shift

- From a conception of HE as program to its conception as project.  
(Mobility project, capacity building, skills alliances)

Necessity to define the profile of the graduate through knowledge, skills and competences. Sectoral Qualification Frameworks

- From an understanding HE as a determinant educational framework to more fragile one.
- From a technical and standardized approach of HE to a more flexible and personalized one. (Capacity building)

Erasmus+ is compatible with the

New conceptions in pedagogy: A paradigm shift

- From a teacher oriented education to a student oriented education (capacity building, skill alliances).
- From an objectives oriented teaching to a project oriented learning (mobility project).
- From a input directed pedagogy to the learning outcomes oriented pedagogy.

Erasmus+ is responsive to the

## Main dilemmas in contemporary Higher Education

and the imperative necessity to develop a strategy for the future of each Higher Education Institution.

(Strategic partnerships, skills alliances, knowledge alliances)

- General education or specialisation?
- Academic education or vocational training?  
Necessity to cooperate with professional bodies.
- Focus on subject area or inter-cross-trans-disciplinarity?
- Rational thinking or critical thinking? Or even better creative thinking for innovation?
- 4, 3+1, 5, 3+2, 4+1, 4,5+05....

Erasmus+ is adaptive to the

International dynamics and local particularities

(Strategic partnerships, skills alliances, knowledge alliances)

- Competition with other continents, need for centers of excellence.
- The mobility of bachelor graduates towards the centers of excellence weakens the peripheral Institutions.
- Necessity to keep graduates in Europe.

If you want to walk fast walk alone,  
if you want to walk far, walk together

*African Proverb*

# Erasmus+ is a new invitation to walk together

If education is a project, then Erasmus+ invites us to develop this project in creative cooperation and alliances, using our knowledge, skills and critical thinking.

This is an invitation to enhance the strategic thinking in the management of change in higher education institutions in order to assure to the European Higher education Area a better position in international competition.

To create new transnational collectivities in order to better cope with the current academic problems of our institutions and to assure a promising professional life to our graduates.