

Development of the Social Dimension - Monday, July 11, 2011

Shaping the Social Dimension – Expectations, needs, and requirements for competitive higher education?

Prof. Rafael Bonete Perales

*Co-Chairman, BFUG Working Group on the Social
Dimension*



The Added Value of the Social Dimension Working Group

Rafael Bonete Perales

BOLOGNA CONFERENCE

*Development of the Social Dimension – Stocktaking and Future Perspectives of
Student Services/Student Affairs in the European Higher Education Area.*

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Outline

- 1) Why a Social Dimension WG?**
- 2) Specific tasks**
- 3) SWOT analysis**
- 4) Conclusions**

1) Why a Social Dimension WG?

- *In the Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué: **The Bologna Process 2020 - The European Higher Education Area in the new decade**, the Social Dimension has been singled out (paragraphs 9, 21, 26) as an important component of the EHEA.*
- *The Bologna Follow Up Group decided, after some discussions, to have a WG jointly with some other WGs (www.ehea.info).*

2) Specific tasks

- *To collect good practices on Social Dimension implementation in Higher Education at national and regional levels.*
- *To collect measures taken in other sectors of the educational system within the EHEA in order to increase the level of equity in Higher Education.*
- *To collect good practices and national experiences in defining core indicators used for measuring and monitoring the relevant aspects of the Social Dimension in Higher Education.*

- *To collect information about success stories on improving employability due to good practice in HEIs.*
- *To explore the possibility of creating a **European Observatory on the Social Dimension of Higher Education (EOSDHE)**.*

All these tasks are related with students' affairs and services.

3) SWOT analysis

A) Strengths

- *The composition of the WG: Andorra, Austria, Belgium/Flemish Community, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, UK/EWNI, UK/Scotland, the European Commission, BUSINESSEUROPE, ESU, EUA, EURASHE, Eurostat, Eurostudent.*
- *The influence on the Reporting WG and on the BFUG.*

B) Weaknesses

- *The effects of Fiscal consolidation on Higher Education.*
- *The specific nature of the BFUG and the Ministerial Conferences.*

C) Opportunities

- *The Social Dimension WG can try to influence the content of the next Communiqué (Bucharest, April 2012).*
- *We can open a debate about the necessity of establishing a European Observatory on the Social Dimension of Higher Education (EOSDHE).*
- *Learning from each other.*

D) Threats

- *The Bologna Process may be losing momentum.*
- *Market forces and Higher Education (market economy-market society-market democracy).*
- *The different meanings of the Social Dimension and what is considered students' affairs and services.*

4) Conclusions

- *Work in progress.*
- *We need to make an effort to keep the Social Dimension high on the agenda:*
 - *We need to convince our politicians that the Social Dimension will increase the human capital available and more talent will ensure a sustainable knowledge society.*
 - *The Social Dimension in Higher Education will also increase **Social Cohesion** in Europe.*
- *We still need more data to compare our different levels of support to our students.*
- *We need to share more good practice in order to improve student affairs and services.*

Thanks for your attention

rafael.bonete@educacion.es