

A WORLD ALLIANCE FOR YOUTH EMPLOYABILITY

Over 100 international delegates from University colleges and University 'student affairs and services' meet in Rome

A recipe for employment, overcoming the gap between universities and companies

Rome, October 23, 2014 - How to deal with youth unemployment? What are the skills needed in today's global labour market? How is it possible that, despite almost 6 million young people unemployed in the European Union alone, 30% of companies declare that they can not find the right profiles for the vacant positions? How is it possible that 74% of universities state that their students receive adequate training to find a suitable job?

The International Global Summit held in Rome, from 23-24 October, will find answers to these questions so important for the future of young people. The Global Summit is organised by Euca - European University College Association, IASAS - International Association of Student Affairs and Services, and NASPA - Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education on the theme "Trends in Higher Education: Employability, Competences and Global Civic Engagement."

The Summit in Rome is the second edition of the Global Summit drawing those who work in universities, and organisations and associations that manage services to university students, such as residences/accommodation, counseling, leadership, and training on soft skills and learning outcomes required to be competitive in an increasingly global work place. The first edition was held in Washington D.C., USA in 2012. The aim of the conference is to initiate a high-profile debate on how student services, international mobility, and training on soft skills can contribute to youth employability.

The issue of soft skills for employability is the main topic of 'Rethinking Education', the initiative launched by the European Commission to encourage the Member States to take immediate measures to ensure that young people develop the skills and competences required by the labour market and to achieve its objectives for growth and employment. One of the strategic actions is the reform of university curricula because educational programs are still focused on the teaching of traditional skills, rather than paying attention to soft skills and complementary training (soft skills, non-formal and informal learning).

The Global Summit took place at one of the University Colleges of Rui Foundation in Rome, the 'RUI-Residence International University' in the EUR area (viale Africa 27), and consisted of a two-day conference including working sessions on the following topics:

1-Integrating soft skills in the university educational path: the role of student affairs and services.

2-Soft skills development for a better employability: student affairs and services as a facilitator for the dialogue with the labour market.

3-Fostering entrepreneurship mind-set and creative thinking in university campuses

4-Enhancing civic participation, global approach, and social inclusion

The event was opened by Jigar Patel, Principal of McKinsey & Co. In London, who presented the report "Education to Employment, Getting Europe's Youth Into Work".

The McKinsey report is one of the most important cross-national studies on employment: it is based on a thorough research that involved more than 8,000 people (students, heads of universities and business men) in 8 countries (France, Spain, Germany, Greece, Portugal, Sweden, United Kingdom and Italy). The report (available entirely in www.mckinsey.com/features/education_to_employment) shows that often young people looking for work and companies move in parallel universes, with an incredible gap between job-demand and job-offer, while the universities are convinced to properly train students for the labour market.

Jigar Patel pointed out that 27% of companies in the countries covered by the research last year failed to find professionals with the right skills, while 74% of the educational institutions are convinced to provide adequate preparation for the labour market.

As far as young people are concerned, only 42% believe they have received adequate training to work, and only 30% find temporary employment after graduation.

Beyond the academic education, we find the need of complementary and supplementary activities that integrate the academic courses: development of so-called soft skills, vocational guidance, job placement initiatives and recruiting, integration of theoretical training.

"The years of university - says Gianluca Giovannucci, President of Euca - are fundamental for academic training, but are also the moment when young people can best develop all the complementary activities needed to meet the challenges of a global labour market. Our vision is to promote educational excellence within the university colleges, develop the acquisition of soft skills, effectively build a bridge between university and enterprises and give it a chance to young graduates."

Institutional guest: Harald Hartung, Head of Unit International cooperation and programmes, Directorate General for Education and Culture of the European Commission.

Silvia Costa, Chairman of the Culture Committee of the European Parliament will close the Global Summit tomorrow, Friday 26.

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Organizing Committee

Euca, European University College Association, with headquarters in Brussels, brings together the University Colleges based in 10 European countries (Belgium, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Great Britain, Poland, Romania, Spain, Hungary). Founded with the aim of enriching the academic and professional development of students through activities which fall within the informal and non-formal education, Euca supports projects and initiatives that foster the promotion of merit, soft skills, international mobility and the development of a responsible European citizenship.

The Italian CCUM, Conferenza dei Collegi Universitari di Merito (the association representing 14 Italian institutions that manage 47 University Colleges of Merit Legally Recognized by the Italian Ministry of University all over the country), is a founding member.

www.euca.eu and www.collegiuniversitari.it

IASAS, International Association on Student Affairs and Services, is a worldwide association of University professionals working in the area of student services. IASAS has more than 1000 members in 25 countries on five continents. IASAS was born from the need to consolidate the knowledge and professionalism of the student affairs staff who work to provide students with residential services, study support, sport and cultural activities that create the optimal conditions for the university life and help develop the potential of each student. Since 2013 IASAS is based in Brussels, as a legally recognized entity under Belgian law.

www.iasasonline.org

NASPA, Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education (originally the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, hence the acronym) is the leading USA association for professionals in student affairs, which deals with career advancement, health and sustainability. The Association has many professionals who provide programs, services and experiences to promote learning and academic success of students, in concert with the mission of their universities and colleges. Founded in 1919, NASPA comprises more than 13,000 members, representing 1,400 Campus in US, but also abroad, in 29 countries (including Australia, Bermuda, Bulgaria, Canada, Egypt, France, Hong Kong, Ireland, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Spain, South Africa, United Arab Emirates).

www.naspa.org