Trends in higher education: employability, competencies, and global civic engagement

IASAS-NASPA'S Second Global Summit on Student Affairs and Services - Hosted by EucA
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Acknowledgements

Introduction

This work is a result of the second Global Summit on Student Affairs and Services, which occurred in Rome, Italy in October, 2014. The Summit was a partnership between the International Association of Student Affairs and Services Association (IASAS), NASPA: Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education, and the host partner, the European University College Association (EucA).

The 2014 Summit was designed to be an engaging conversation around a number of key themes. These themes revolve around the core concept of "soft skills" or "competencies." The Global Summit is an opportunity to:

- Identify common issues upon which to build and collaborate, capitalizing on strengths, both common and unique, to our international colleagues and student services around the globe.
- Discuss increasing visibility, credibility, and the level of impact of student affairs and services work in tertiary education.
- Identify critical research needs, synergizing around strategies for collection, analysis, and use of data.
- Explore drivers affecting higher education and student affairs and services work which in 2014 may include:
  - o Student employability after graduation; sharing and identifying best practices, competencies, and possible shared strategies
  - o Continued discussion from the first summit on whether there is a common philosophy for our work
  - o How technology and online student learning has changed our practices

The situation of university students all over the world is characterized by an increased uncertainty and by a lack of trust in the future. In order to provide evidence of this concern, it is meaningful to take into account the steady rise of youth unemployment. In 2014 in the European Union alone, youth unemployment reached 21% of people between the ages of fifteen to twenty-four. The effort undertaken by universities in the attempt to provide students with an excellent academic background is not enough for the job market. Employers are consistently challenging higher education institutions to provide more "employment ready graduates" and to rationalize course offerings to be more aligned with the labor market. These challenges from the private sector have also been echoed by a number of governments around the world, which constantly align and realign university funding to reflect the growing conversation regarding the responsiveness of universities to the labor market, and in essence, the social and economic prosperity of their respective countries.

There were 79 registered delegates for the 2014 Global Summit, representing 25 countries: Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Belgium, Canada, China, Finland, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Lebanon, Mexico, Netherlands, Poland, Qatar, South Africa, Turkey, Uganda, United Kingdom, United States, Wales, and Zimbabwe.

The Global Summit Planning Committee was comprised of:
- Kevin Kruger, President, NASPA
- Stephanie Gordon, Vice President for Professional Development, NASPA
- Brett Perozzi, Chair of International Advisory Board, NASPA
- Tiki Ayiku, Senior Director of Educational Programs, NASPA
- Rob Shea, President, IASAS
- Lisa Bardill Moscaritolo, Secretary, IASAS
- Gian Luca Giovannucci, President, EucA
- Fabio Monti, Secretary General, EucA
- Mirela Mazalu, Public Relations, EucA
- Simona Miano, Press Office and Events, EucA
- Maria Cinque, Researcher and Coach, Fondazione RUI - EucA

After the event, participants were encouraged to continue the discussion and provide written feedback and reflections that are included in this volume in edited format. The 2014 Global Summit constitutes a cornerstone in the process to ensure a real "holistic growth" to university students all over the world.

As a consequence, the work developed together by EucA, IASAS and NASPA is aimed at developing a complementary learning path for university students in the field of non-formal and informal education, focusing the role of soft skills, as they represent key competences to increase individual employability and to lower the percentage of the NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training).

While there were many outcomes of the Global Summit there was one overarching theme: the conversation has just begun and student affairs and services professionals around the world, in concert with our academic and administrative colleagues, must continue the conversation. Certainly, the best is still to come!

Theoretical Framework

The world of work is changing profoundly, at a time when the global economy is not creating a sufficient number of jobs. The International Labour Organization (ILO) (2015) estimates that global unemployment figures reached 201 million in 2014, more than 30 million higher than before the start of the global economic crisis in 2008. Moreover, providing jobs to more than 40 million additional people who enter the global labor market every year is proving to be a daunting challenge. In addition to widespread joblessness, the employment relationship itself is facing a major transformation that is bringing further challenges.

According to the ILO (2014), in 2013 employment grew to 202 million people globally, up 5 million from the previous year. Concurrently, many companies are unable to find qualified applicants. In China, 74 percent of employers have said they have positions they cannot fill. In Brazil, that number is 63 percent and in Russia it is 57 percent (Herzog, 2014). Youth unemployment in all of these countries is above 15 percent. The problem is not entirely one of job creation; it is also one of job preparedness.

Even once employed, graduates and employers alike have learned the hard way that a degree does not mean job preparedness. Only 42 percent of employers believe that new graduates are ready for work, whereas 72 percent of educational institutions felt their students were entering the workforce prepared (Mourshed et al., 2012). Technological advances have led to structural changes to the economy; workers must continue training to stay relevant (Bryniolfsson & McAfee, 2012). As the hiring specialist Thomas Friedman (2013) puts it, "in the new economy, 'you have to prove yourself. A degree document is no longer a proxy for the competency employers need.' Too many of the 'skills you need in the workplace today are not being taught by colleges'" (p. 23).

The changing nature of jobs

According to the ILO (2015), it is becoming popular in many countries of the world, especially those with emerging economies, to embrace "informal employment," which is any form of employment that differs from general employment models that utilize artifacts such as standard contracts and salary structures. Informal employment recognizes an employer/employee arrangement that breaks from a dependent employment relationship. (p. 11)

A global shift to more insecure jobs since the financial crisis is fueling growing inequality and higher rates of poverty, according to the ILO (2015) that estimates only a small part of the world's workers are on permanent contracts. The majority of workers are employed on temporary or short-term contracts, working informally often without contracts or labor agreements, are self-employed or are in unpaid family jobs.

> Fewer than 45 per cent of wage and salaried workers are employed on a full-time, permanent basis and even that share appears to be declining. This means that nearly six out of ten wage and salaried workers worldwide are in either part-time or temporary forms of wage and salaried employment." (ILO, 2015, p. 3)

The report explains the factors behind this trend, including continuing social inequalities, aging populations, shifts in employer-sought skills, and falling wage shares. The change in the employment relationship is producing important economic and social results, including a rising middle class in many developing countries of the world. Temporary and informal workers, part-time workers, and unpaid family workers,

many of whom are women, are also disproportionately affected by poverty and social exclusion. This can lead to widespread insecurities in the workplace and contribute to rising income inequality in many countries.

The report finds that many governments have responded to the changing patterns of work by adapting and extending the reach of employment regulations. Nonetheless, where out-of-date or insufficient legal frameworks do not reflect sufficiently the changing nature of jobs, large numbers of workers are still not covered by employment protection legislation.

Moreover, in recent years some countries, notably in Europe, have made changes that have reduced the level of protection for workers in both standard and non-standard employment, with a view to stimulating employment growth. Policy makers must be aware of the potential for social unrest and the impact of elevated youth unemployment. The ILO (2015) is urging policymakers to consider extending social protection such as pensions and unemployment benefit to workers in less secure forms of employment. Retraining and collaborative efforts among many organizations can drive improvement in the employment sector. "Active labor market policies, including up-skilling, training and education, are necessary to ensure that job losses deriving from technological advances and globalization of supply chains are offset by other employment opportunities" (p. 7).

The risk of a jobless recovery

A previous ILO report (2014), observed how the uneven economic recovery and successive downward revisions in economic growth projections had had an impact on the global employment situation. The data from the report are staggering when viewed at the global level:
"Overall, the crisis-related global jobs gap … continues to widen. In 2013, this gap reached 62 million jobs, including 32 million additional jobseekers, 23 million people that became discouraged and no longer look for jobs and 7 million economically inactive people that prefer not to participate in the labor market." (p. 11)

The risk of skills degradation and obsolescence is increasing due to long-term inactivity in the labor market, active labor market policies need to be implemented to address long-term inactivity and skills mismatch therefore. Less than 0.6 per cent of GDP was spent on such measures in 2011 in developed economies and in the European Union.

Structural labor market problems are becoming more prevalent in these countries and the strengthening of labor demand should be set as a primary policy objective. ILO simulations show that employment-friendly policies are likely to lead to improvements in the labor market, without harming fiscal sustainability disproportionally. The current state of global labor market necessitates a policy re-thinking, and the ILO is willing to draw the attention of policy makers to the importance of the right to work as well as to the fundamental principles and rights at work.

Talent Shortage Survey

The Manpower Group's ninth annual Talent Shortage Survey (2014) found that 36% of employers globally report talent shortages in 2014, the highest percentage in seven years. The survey involves 37,000 employers in 42 countries.

Employers worldwide report the most significant talent shortages in the skilled trades category. Engineers are second on the list for the third year in a row. Moving up to third, are technicians in production, operations, maintenance and other roles. The 54% of employers experiencing a talent shortage say it has a medium to high impact on their ability to meet client needs.

How companies are working to overcome talent shortages
- 47% of companies that are addressing talent shortages are adopting new people practices
- 25% of respondents are searching for new talent sources, typically by recruiting from untapped or under-tapped talent pools
- 23% of respondents with talent shortages are preparing to adopt new, alternative work models

The key to a company's success and ability to quickly and effectively adapt to change depends on human resource (HR) professionals. HR leaders can help their companies accelerate business performance by assessing their organizations' talent sources, people practices, and work models.
The role of human resources is changing:
- HR is now expected to be the de facto expert and advisor to drive the strategic workforce plan
- HR needs to use consumer marketing principles and expertise since talent is now a savvy and sophisticated consumer
- HR must design different work models to drive time to value.

Soft skills identification and definitions for better employability

The economic downturn that began in 2008 has led to a dramatic increase of youth unemployment. For example, 5.6 million young people are unemployed across Europe alone, and a total of 7.5 million are neither being educated nor are they working (Mourshed et al., 2014). Moreover, while young people are generally eager to work, more than half of those without jobs say they simply cannot find one at all, while businesses insist they struggle to find young people with the skills they need.

Unemployment data and fast changing environments necessitate several reflections about skills and attitudes required to face the increasing complexity (Bauman, 2003; Morin, 1999) brought about by the "glocal, liquid and networked" (Salvetti, La Rosa, Bertagni, 2015, p. 7) world in which workers operate. Given the economic environment, characterized by ever-increasing market pressures, internationalization, informatization, and leaner organizations, most jobs are subject to high-speed changes and increased expertise needs.

Literature about employability (Forrier & Sels, 2003; Sung et al., 2013) explores extensive changes of the job market environment (Fugate et al. 2004; Seibert et al., 2001) and the related competences required. Based on the definition of Van der Heijde and Van der Heijden (2006), we can define employability as: "the continuous fulfilling, acquiring or creating of work through the optimal use of competences" (p. 453).

The American survey Career Builder (2014), conducted over a sample of 2,138 human resource managers, indicate soft skills are just as important as hard skills, ranking at the first position the skill "candidate has a strong work ethic" with 73% of answers, second position "candidate is dependable" again with 73% of answers, and third "candidate has a positive attitude" with 72%.

Emotional intelligence studies also support the hypothesis that interpersonal skills are more likely to predict successful careers (Goleman, 1995; Goleman & Boyatzis, 2008) and that they are necessary for the increasing use of teams, the rapid pace of globalization, the capacity to dialogue in a cross-cultural environment, and the growing need to retain talent in organizations.

Many documents issued by the EU (European Commission, 2012; European Economic and Social Committee, 2010) and human resources experts (Deloitte, 2011; ISFOL, 2012; IUL, CRUI, & Centromarca, 2012; Manpower Group, 2014) point out that the so called "soft" skills are closely connected with employability, particularly for young people entering the labor market. According to those documents, companies need a more skilled workforce and opportunities should be given to young people to develop those soft skills, such as entrepreneurial skills, coping skills (i.e., the capacity to deal with a problem in a creative way), learning to learn, and other skills (such as the ability to work in teams, to communicate clearly and effectively, to adapt to different cultural contexts, to solve problems, to manage conflicts, and to show endurance in complicated or stressful situations) that will help university students make a successful transition from full-time education to entering the labor market.

Skill development is one of the four main areas of the flagship initiative, An Agenda for New Skills and New Jobs (EC, 2012a). This initiative is part of the EU's overall strategy Europe 2020, and the focus of EU document Rethinking Education Strategy: Investing in Skills for Better Socio-Economic Outcomes (EC, 2012b). The Agenda for New Skills and New Jobs (EC, 2012a) presents a set of concrete actions including reforms for "flexicurity" of jobs, improvement of working conditions and, especially, equipment of people with the right skills for the jobs of today and tomorrow.

Nevertheless, at present, different countries have different methodologies and approaches to the teaching and recognition of skills for employability. This has led to a mismatch between academic education and skills required in the labor market. The presence of such discrepancies requires that cooperation should be strengthened among the different stakeholders to find common solutions and educational models that provide a common set of skills and of training tools. Another obstacle is represented by the absence of a common language.

There are different ways of naming soft skills (sometimes called competences or learning outcomes), different definitions of them, and different ways of classifying and clustering them. Just to give a few examples: life skills (WHO, 1993); transversal skills (ISFOL, 1994, 1998); key competencies for a successful life and a well-functioning society (OECD, 2003); generic competences (Tuning project, 2004), key competences for lifelong learning (UE, 2006); transferable skills (EC, 2011), and skills for social progress (OECD, 2015).

The theme of soft skills intersects and sometimes overlaps with that of the so called 21st century skills (Ananiadou & Claro, 2009) or of future work skills 2020 (IFTF, 2011), that refer to all those skills which should be acquired by all citizens, in order to ensure their active participation in society and the economy, taking into account the major drivers of change. Quite obviously, many "future work skills" connect soft skills with digital skills. Research carried out by mobile operator O2 (2012) reveals that businesses are in vital need of the digital skills the generation that grew up with the Internet have. It is expected that by 2020, 90% of jobs will require digital skills.

Definitions

Life skills, social skills, interpersonal skills, leadership skills, transversal competences, social competences, and meta-competences, are commonly used to refer to the "emotional side" of human beings in opposition to the IQ (Intelligent Quotient) component related to hard skills (Shalini, 2013). According to Heckman & Kautz (2012, p. 452) "soft skills [are] personality traits, goals, motivations, and preferences that are valued in the labor market, in school, and in many other domains […]". They are "a mix of dispositions, understandings, attributes and practices" (Yorke, 2008, p. 26).

Knight and Page (2007) define soft skills as "wicked competences," as it is very difficult to define them, because they can assume different forms in different contexts and they keep developing along the entire lifetime (Ciappei & Cinque, 2014). A working definition we propose for this publication is taken from Haselberger and other authors within the ModEs project (Haselberger et al., 2012, p. 67): "Soft Skills represent a dynamic combination of cognitive and meta-cognitive skills, interpersonal, intellectual and practical skills. Soft skills help people to adapt and behave positively so that they can deal effectively with the challenges of their professional and everyday life."

We must also observe that the terms "skill," "competence" and "competency" are often used interchangeably, but they are not necessarily synonymous. Competencies may refer to sets of skills, but "competency" is more of an umbrella term that also includes behaviors and knowledge, whereas skills are specific learned activities that may be part of a broader context. In particular, "competence" is a combination of practical and theoretical knowledge, cognitive skills, behavior and values used to improve performance. "Competency" is also used as a more general description of the requirements of human beings in organizations and communities.

Example Projects

Many projects have focused on the soft skill gap of young people entering the labor market. Some examples can be found at the following links:
- http://www.gainingsoftskills.eu
- http://www.hisstoolbox.eu
- http://daiss-project.eu
- http://www.mass-project.org
- http:// www.modesproject.eu
- http://www.s-cubeproject.eu
- http://softskillsproject.com

Relevant studies toward a taxonomy of soft skills

Following the study of many different life skills programs, the World Health Organization (WHO) Department of Mental Health (1993) identified five basic areas of life skills that are relevant across cultures:
- decision-making and problem-solving
- creative thinking and critical thinking
- communication and interpersonal skills
- self-awareness and empathy
- coping with emotions and coping with stress

Life skills have been defined as the "abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life" (p. 7).

Transversal competences

The Istituto per lo Sviluppo della Formazione Professionale dei Lavoratori (ISFOL), an Italian institute for the development of vocational training of workers, stated that people, in order to be effective at work, must have different kinds of competences (ISFOL, 1994, 1998).

In the framework developed by ISFOL (1994, 1998) the concept of competence is articulated into three main categories:
- basic skills;
- transversal skills;
- technical and professional skills.

Transversal skills are a large set of skills that are involved in many types of tasks, from the most basic to the most complex, and that can be used in different situations. Consequently, they are widely generalizable and can help people: diagnose the nature of the environment and task; relate to people and issues of a specific context; address, that is to "face, cope, predispose to deal with the environment and the task, both mentally and emotionally…take action on a problem (a specific event, a criticality, an anomaly) with the best chance of solving it" (p. 11).

The skills included in the diagnostic group are mainly cognitive skills. The ability to relate includes interpersonal or social skills, which is the emotional skill set, cognitive and behavioral styles, but also communication skills. In order to address problems and situations, it is important to be able to set goals, to develop strategies, and to build and implement action plans.

Key competencies for a successful life and a well-functioning society

A 2003 publication from the OECD (Rychen & Salganik, 2003) identified "key competencies that are essential for the personal and social development of people in modern, complex societies, thereby shedding light on how investments in human capital can bring benefits to both individuals and societies" (para 1). The volume presents the conclusions of the interdisciplinary OECD Project Definition and Selection of Competencies: Theoretical and Conceptual Foundations, (DeSeCo), which was led by Switzerland and built on the collaboration of a wide range of scholars, experts, and institutions to identify a small set of key competencies that help individuals and whole societies meet their goals.

A conceptual framework was developed to help education systems evaluate efforts such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). According to this framework, key competencies are grouped into three main categories (Rychen & Salganik, 2003): "interacting in socially homogenous group," "using tools interactively," and "acting autonomously." Each category includes different competencies, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. OECD Key competencies

Category	Competencies
Using tools interactively	Using language, symbols and texts interactively Use knowledge and information interactively Use technology interactively
Interacting in heterogeneous groups	Relate will to others Co-operate, work in teams Manage and resolve conflicts
Acting autonomously	Act within the 'big picture' Form and conduct life plans and personal projects Defend and assert rights, interests, limits and needs

Key competences for lifelong learning

The European Union (EU, 2006) acknowledged that lifelong learning is a priority for its work force and provides for a framework that helps citizens to adapt more quickly to constant changes in an increasingly interconnected world. The framework borrowed from the Lifelong Learning Programme brochure (2007) defines eight key competences and describes the essential knowledge, skills and attitudes related to each of these:

- *communication in the mother tongue*, which is the ability to express and interpret concepts, thoughts, feelings, facts and opinions in both oral and written form (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and to interact linguistically in an appropriate and creative way in a full range of societal and cultural contexts;
- *communication in foreign languages*, which involves, in addition to the main skill dimensions of communication in the mother tongue, mediation and intercultural understanding […];
- *mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology*. Mathematical competence is the ability to develop and apply mathematical thinking in order to solve a range of problems in everyday situations […];
- *digital competence* involves the confident and critical use of information society technology (IST) and thus basic skills in information and communication technology (ICT);
- *learning to learn* is related to learning, the ability to pursue and organize one's own learning, either individually or in groups, in accordance with one's own needs, and awareness of methods and opportunities;
- *social and civic competences*. Social competence refers to personal, interpersonal and intercultural competence and all forms of behavior that equip individuals to participate in an effective and constructive way in social and working life […];
- *sense of initiative and entrepreneurship* is the ability to turn ideas into action. It involves creativity, innovation and risk-taking, as well as the ability to plan and manage projects in order to achieve objectives […];
- *cultural awareness and expression*, which involves appreciation of the importance of the creative expression of ideas, experiences and emotions in a range of media (music, performing arts, literature and the visual arts)

Building on these recommendations, it is crucial to develop those competencies and capacities that are relevant to guarantee employability aligned and fine-tuned with the labor's world (Seibert et al., 2001).

Generic competences

Tuning Educational Structures in Europe started in 2000 as a project to link the political objectives of the Bologna Process and at a later stage the Lisbon Strategy to the higher educational sector. The Tuning approach has assisted higher education institutions in accomplishing the goals of the Bologna process and finding common learning outcomes to facilitate student employability by promoting transparency in educational structures. Tuning emanates from a base of core competencies, defined in Tuning Educational Structures in Europe (non-dated, para 5) as:

> • "instrumental competences: cognitive abilities, methodological abilities, technological abilities and linguistic abilities;
> • interpersonal competences: individual abilities like social skills (social interaction and co-operation);
> • systemic competences: abilities and skills concerning whole systems (combination of understanding, sensibility and knowledge; prior acquisition of instrumental and interpersonal competences required)."

21st century skills framework

1) There are many different versions of the 21st century skills framework. One is elaborated by OECD (Ananiadou & Claro, 2009) that focuses on the three new dimensions: Information - Information as source (searching, selecting, evaluating and organizing) & Information as product (restructuring and modeling of information and the development of own ideas/knowledge);
2) Communication - Effective communication & Collaboration and virtual interaction;
3) Ethics - Social responsibility & Social impact.

Table 2. OECD framework for 21st century skills

Information	Information as a source	Searching Evaluating Organizing Information
	Information as a product	Restructuring and modeling information Development of own ideas (knowledge)
Communication	Effective communication	Sharing and transmitting the results or outputs of information
	Collaboration and virtual interaction	Reflecting on others' work Creation of communities
Ethics & Social Impact	Social responsibility	Applying criteria for a responsible use at personal and social levels

Soft skills for talent

The Manpower Group (2014) carried out a survey in collaboration with the Department of Education and Psychology of the University of Florence in order to create a basis for the development of a national "observatory" on soft skills recognized and required by the labor market.

The Manpower Group has identified a set of soft skills connected with the three levels of organizational roles: fundamental operational roles, managerial roles and executive roles.

Table 3. Results of the survey carried out by Manpower Group (2014)

	Operational roles	*Managerial roles*	*Executive roles*
Cognitive Area	Analysis	Problem solving	Strategic view
	Synthesis	Decision making	Critical thought
	Openness to new	Flexibility	Innovation
Achievement area	Initiative	Concreteness	Taking risk
	Accuracy	Overview	Control
	Energy	Perseverance	Resilience
	Result	Planning	Organization
Social area	Communication	Persuasion	Negotiation
	Support	Guidance	Talent development
	Collaboration	Involvement	Leadership
Emotional area	Self confidence	Self effectiveness	Entrepreneurship
	Steadiness	Proactivity	Tolerance to stress
	Self awareness	Empathy	Emotional intelligence

In order to test the effectiveness of the matrix identified, Manpower Group survey included a sample of companies for verify the relevance of the panel of competence in relation to the needs of the labor market.

According to a previous report issued by the Italian HR Community Academy (2011), the "top 5" qualities of a young talent are: curiosity and problem solving; ambition; creativity and open mind; adaptability to change; determination and result orientation.

The survey found out that for operational roles and entry-level team working and orientation to achieve a result (not pulling back in front of difficulties) are the most requested competences. At the individual level it is also required flexibility intended as the ability to show interest and curiosity about the new opportunities.

As concerned managerial roles, the need to provide concrete solutions and / or alternatives to daily problems, by bringing together and harmonizing the contributions of various collaborators is fundamental. The ability to schedule tasks by defining urgency and importance of each phase is also important.

Two skills emerge for the executive roles: leadership and strategic vision. Executive skills are related to cognitive and relational areas, such as being able to recognize the talents and cultivate them for the attainment of the standard of excellence. The survey also investigates which skills are important for the future and transversal to all the roles.

This data is more fragmented since there is no basis of common experience on which to base certain answers or imagine future needs. Being multi-tasking and capable to generate good and innovative ideas are certainly desirable features. But more than one third of the respondents indicate the need for professional ethics as the ability to assess the impact of their own actions, in respect of the law and ethics.

Finally, given the current and changeable working environment, adaptability and integration in the employment context become essential.

Skills for Social Progress

In 2015 OECD produced a report ("Skills for Social Progress: The power of social and emotional skills") that presents a synthesis of the OECD's analytical work on the role of socio-emotional skills and proposes strategies to raise them. It analyses the effects of skills on a variety of measures of individual well-being and social progress, which covers aspects of our lives that are as diverse as education, labor market outcomes, health, family life, civic engagement and life satisfaction. The report discusses how policy makers, schools and families facilitate the development of socio-emotional skills through intervention programs, teaching and parenting practices. Not only does it identify promising avenues to foster socio-emotional skills, it also shows that these skills can be measured meaningfully within cultural and linguistic boundaries.

This report is mainly focused on development at school and not at university because social and emotional skills are more malleable between early childhood and adolescence, however it's interesting because it gives inputs about the skills that foster lifetime success, learning context that drive skill formation, national approaches, policies and assessment methodologies.

Integrating soft skills in the university educational path: the impact of student affairs and services

A primary function of higher education is providing a holistic education to students (Sandeen, 2004). Student affairs and services has been helping provide this function for almost a century in the United States (Keeling, 2006), whereas, student affairs and services is at various stages of development in other parts of the world. Assisting students with their learning and development is an intentional process that involves the identification of learning outcomes (or soft skills), providing a delivery method for learning and practicing those outcomes, and then assessing the learning that students acquire. Soft skills, as discussed earlier, are variously referred to as learning outcomes, student learning outcomes, competencies, and other variations within colleges and universities as well. All of these terms are meant to imply the skills or knowledge that practitioners hope students will attain and master in order to fully participate in a global society.

These skills in a global context are often referred to as intercultural competencies (ICC) in a macro context (Deardorff, 2009). ICCs can be seen as a platform upon which students compete for international jobs, engage with those from other cultures, and value the richness of varied human experiences.

Educational definitions

Soft skills have already been described broadly, yet specifically from existing research. Here we look at how these concepts are variously described within higher education and student affairs and services. For example, Ewell, 2001 (in ACHA, Para 2) states that "A Student Learning Outcome (SLO) is defined as: particular levels of knowledge, skills, and abilities that a student has attained at the end (or as a result) of his/her engagement in a particular set of collegiate experiences."

Soft Skills

Soft skills represent a dynamic combination of cognitive and meta-cognitive skills, interpersonal, intellectual and practical skills, and ethical values. Soft Skills help people adapt and behave positively so that they can deal effectively with the challenges of their professional and everyday life.

Teaching method

According to OpenLearn Works (2015, Para 6) "A teaching method consists of a learning outcome oriented set of activities to be performed by learners and learning facilitators." Examples for teaching methods are the lecture method, problem-based learning, and the think-pair-share method. Typically, teaching methods are generic descriptions of activities, independent of specific content or an application context.

Assessment method

The assessment method describes the assessment methodology applied, completely specifying all the features that characterize the different dimensions of the assessment process.

Learning outcome

A learning outcome refers to statements of what a learner knows, understands, and is able to do on completion of a learning opportunity. The concept of learning outcome is core to the ModEs project and thus for the current "guidelines for the design of learning situations supporting soft skills achievement" (Haselberger et al., p. 68). It is therefore necessary to propose and to use consistently a learning outcome structure.
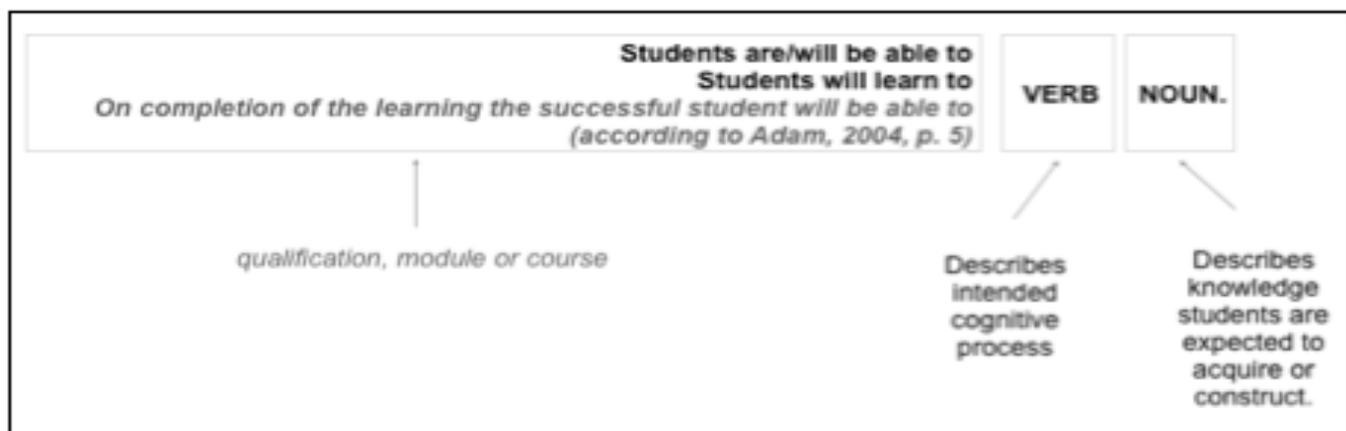
Figure 1 Learning Outcomes Sentence Structure; Haselberger et al. 2012, p. 68

Culturally appropriate identification of soft skills

The basic building blocks are the soft skills themselves, yet understanding how they apply to the particular environment in question is equally important. There is not yet any universally-accepted set of graduate competencies, although there is some level of agreement within the higher education and student affairs and services community around basic, broad-based, or overarching concepts such as verbal communication and critical thinking. The regional and cultural norms of an area or country will impact which set of soft skills are most context-appropriate. For example, teamwork in a Chinese context would look different than teamwork in a Mexican context. The agreement on these basic concepts were evident during both the 2012 and 2014 Global Summits on Student Affairs and Services.

Identifying appropriate learning outcomes that naturally match the setting and situation is the first step in assisting students with acquisition of the skills or abilities (Perozzi, Kappes & Santucci, 2009). There are a number of ways to go about identifying the skill sets; using already-accepted and/or published learning outcomes from the literature, borrowing or aligning soft skills with those espoused by a particular university (for example, http://www.nicholls.edu/general-education/general-education-goals-and-objectives/) or working with the students and staff in an area using a "grass roots" approach to define what the students are—or should be—learning through the program or activity in which they are engaged (http://www.weber.edu/SAAssessment/learningoutcomes.html). Additional examples of commonly used, core soft skills in higher education and student affairs and services are: written communication, problem solving, civic engagement, leadership development, personal development, self-awareness, and meaningful relationships.

Teaching soft skills

The second critical element is how the soft skills are taught to students; how, specifically, do staff provide information and training to complement the program or service so that students can readily be exposed to, and learn, the pre-identified soft skill(s)? The training can take place in a classroom setting, or on-the-job training that goes beyond the routine responsibilities of the position. Content can be embedded in retreats or special programs that complement the main program, and/or students can gain the required soft skills through engagement or team-related activities. Many creative methods are available; see the MODES project (http://www.modesproject.eu/) for unique approaches to integrating soft skills.

Measuring soft skills

The final and perhaps most critical element of soft skill integration is measuring what students have learned (Bresciani, Gardner & Hickmott, 2010). Have they acquired the soft skill(s) desired, and how do you know if they have? Oftentimes, creating a measurement methodology ahead of time can help direct the work, by focusing on the soft skills that will be implemented, and guiding the selection of the most appropriate methodology for teaching or implementing them. Oftentimes tools specifically designed to measure such outcomes can be used; for example, rubrics designed to measure oral communication (Bresciani, Zelna, & Anderson, 2004).

Methodologies for soft skills development

Learning methodologies continue to be shaped and impacted by changing societal and global trends; in particular, the new possibilities offered by technology. One way to understand this impact on the development of soft skills, is by outlining a map of the most appropriate methodologies in use. Several classifications can be retrieved in the literature considering different learning goals, different content, different

audiences, or different settings (Bloom, 1964; Hackathorn et al. 2011; Lonergan, 1990; Merril, 1994).

In 2009, EucA (European University College Association) launched the ModES (*Modernizing Higher Education Through Soft Skills Accreditation*) project, financed by the EU program "Lifelong Learning Erasmus" and involving 15 partners from 10 countries for three years. The project was aimed at integrating a common European program on soft skills into the academic curricula. The two main products of the ModEs project were a Handbook (Haselberger et al., 2012) containing a set of guidelines to teach soft skills at the undergraduate level, and a prototype of technologically rich educational games in multiple languages to develop soft skills. The main targets of these deliverables were university teachers, trainers, and student affairs and services educators.

Soft skills are developed through formal and informal activities as mentioned previously, and universities recognize formal skill development activities in the classroom and outside the classroom. The informal skill development activities are non-academic and while not officially recognized in terms of bearing credit for participation, the structure of the courses and training programs can be similar to those offered for credit. Soft skills development in the classroom can be performed using mini-curricula, programs, workshops, labs, training sessions, projects, company visits and study journey, and individual or group tasks. Similarly, these same or similar activities can take place in the cocurriculum to compliment the skills obtained in the classroom.

With the qualitative research on the best practices applied to soft skills (Cinque 2012; Cinque 2014), different kinds of teaching strategies were identified in the ModES project (2009-12). They can be divided into three groups: expository, guided, and active strategies (see Table 4). The strategies include both university teaching methods and company training techniques.

Table 4. Learning Methodologies to Develop Soft Skills

Expository	*Guided*	*Active*
Lecture	Discussion, debate	Brainstorming
Seminar	Workshop	Role play
Conference	Case study	Business game
Demonstration	Project work	Visits, Journeys
	Simulation	Outdoor training
	Mentoring	Coaching

Halls of residence promote different kinds of teaching methods and educational settings that can produce different kinds of learning (Cinque 2012; Cinque 2014), which are described here:
   • *Cooperative Learning:* students work in small groups on an assigned project or problem, under the guidance of the facilitator who monitors the groups.
   • *Problem-based/Project-based learning:* participants work in small groups to solve a problem and are guided by a tutor-facilitator.
   • *Action Learning:* it is a process that facilitates and enhances the learning of groups of people coming together to tackle real challenges and at the same time learning from experience through reflection and action.

- *Experiential learning:* it is the process of grasping meaning from the experience itself. The student must be able to reflect on the experience, must possess and use analytical skills to conceptualize the experience.
- *Reciprocal learning:* two students form a learning partnership committed to helping each other reach a particular learning goal.
- *Progressive mastery:* it is characterized by sequential micro-reinforcement in units of learning about a subject or training aimed at developing a competence.
- *Critical reflection:* students are required to carry out specific tasks that enhance their reflection and their metacognition about the activities performed:
- *Active seeking of meaning:* it consists in helping student to actively seek the personal and social meaning of whatever they are doing, of their activities and experiences, in order to overcome difficulties that arise during study.

It is important to bring students together in a collaborative/competitive environment and they can learn from each other and through the exposure to authentic, complex and real-life problems. Soft skill learning is 'meaningful,' since it is a willful, intentional, active, conscious, constructive, and socially mediated practice that includes reciprocal intention - action - reflection activities.

The importance of the "environmental factor" is also stressed in the recent Report published by the High Level Group on the Modernisation of Higher Education (EC, 2013):

> Universities and higher education institutions, as part of the education system, should not educate students only in narrow, knowledge-based specializations, but must go further, seeking the integral education of the person. […] Efforts need to be concentrated on developing transversal skills, or soft skills […]. In order to develop these skills, teaching is not enough: an appropriate environment is also required. For example, extra-curricular activities, whether organized in a university/college/ institute environment, ranging from volunteering, culture and the arts, to sports and leisure activities, help develop soft skills and nurture talents. (p. 36)

Influencing national and international government policies for young employability

Pushed by current socio-economic prospects, a rising number of governments and international institutions are trying to bring closer together the world of education and training and the world of work: graduates' employability, innovation and entrepreneurship, ICT use in tertiary education, are just some of the topics on this agenda. The levels of youth unemployment across the world, are one factor in the increasing pressure on universities to tailor their curricula on current labor market needs as well as anticipating competencies for future jobs. From gathering evidence on skills demand, experimentation with curricula design, research on the training and assessment of soft skills in academia, to university-business cooperation, universities can provide an important contribution both with research initiatives for evidence-based policies and actively working toward the development of national and international skills strategies.

Enhancing civil participation, global approach, social inclusion

Jacoby (1999) and Engstrom & Tinto (1997) share best practices on how academics and student affairs practitioners can work together to make an impact on student learning and development through service learning. Caruso, Bowen & Adams-Dunford (2006) provide a model student affairs practitioners can adopt for an effective service-learning program.

Dedmond & Kestler (2010) demonstrate how service learning for first year students provides a meaningful connection to the university and its surrounding community. Stavrianopoulos (2008) results indicated that first year students who were part of a learning community with a service learning component can be an important tool to assist in the social and academic adjustment to college.

Horgan & Scire (2007) share the partnerships developed in New Hampshire to develop stronger campus cultures dedicated to service learning and civic engagement. The consortia work is targeted to reaching diverse populations and invite them to their campuses in order to build a culture of service learning.

Service-learning projects can help connect students to their work in their classes but can also provide a link to surrounding communities and global communities (Garcia & Longo 2013; Battisoni, Longo & Jayanandhan, 2009; Liu & Lee, 2011).

Engberg & Fox (2011) studied the impact of service learning on development and intercultural competencies and provide ideas on how to implement and adopt service-learning models that will impact students' intercultural development.

Changing demographics of students

All around the world student mobility in higher education is becoming increasingly important (World Education News and Reviews, 2007). Over the past year, debates took place about the changing demographics of students enrolling at institutions both in Europe and in the United States.

The mobility of university students has created classrooms where there are students with diverse backgrounds. In these multicultural classrooms, it has become essential for university teachers and for student affairs professionals to understand the changing demographics of students. They must be competent enough to offer services to diverse groups. In a survey by Renn and Hodges (2007), respondents ranked six competencies highest in terms of areas they did not feel adequately prepared for in their first year; multicultural competency was listed among those areas.

The face of higher education is changing with the increased number of multiracial students entering college. The 2010 U.S. Census reported that more than 9 million people identified as multiracial, a 32% increase over the past 10 years. Because this population trend affects college enrollment, understanding multiracial student development will contribute to student affairs professionals' ability to assist students with identity development and integration into the campus community. Currently, some multiracial students face internal identity conflicts and are not finding support to navigate these issues.

Moreover, according to a report issued by Binghamton University (2010), "faculty may need to become more responsive to the learning needs of a nontraditional student population with more flexible programs and teaching styles" (p. 23).

Fostering an entrepreneurship mindset and creative thinking: the perspective of student affairs and services

The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Economic Affairs in the Netherlands has defined the stimulation of entrepreneurship and innovation as a priority (Harkema & Schout, 2008). Hague University of

Professional Education is sharing how they are preparing students to be more entrepreneurial and innovative through a different pedagogy. The pedagogy is student led.

Below are some examples of how student affairs practitioners in the United States are collaborating with academic affairs in developing students' entrepreneurship mindsets.

Rutgers University had developed a course titled: "The Business of Doing Good: Combining Business Practices with Social Activism," (Matsuda & Williams, 2010). This class was targeted to inspire students to be change-makers as well as to understand the social justice issues affecting society. This class was taught in a first year residence hall.

After the tragic loss of a student who drowned, and dealing with a stranded boat full of students and staff, Eckerd College (property on the Gulf of Mexico) students, under the leadership of student affairs staff, developed a program called: the Florida Presbyterian College Search, Rescue and Safety team (Covert & Murphy, 2010). Students who are part of this program learn how to fundraise as well as learn entrepreneurship and leadership skills. This program also serves the surrounding community.

At Pace University Westchester campuses there are three-student run businesses operating as part of the Center for Student Enterprise (http://www.pace.edu/lubin/students/cse) on campus. One of the businesses is a late night food service operation in a residence hall; another is a convenience store and coffee shop in the library. The last business is a student call center, operated in the evening out of a computer classroom. Students who are part of these experiences are able to practice the leadership skills and technical skills of starting and sustaining a business.

Use of ICT in teaching and learning and online/distance/e-learning environments

Over the last decades there have been many changes within the Higher Education System, that have transitioned instructional models from the more traditional to where instructors direct the educational content "to a new framework in which the student is at the center of the educational system and attaches great importance on autonomous learning. In order to adapt to this new scenario, students need to develop different types of competencies" (para 2). This innovative perspective incorporates social media, blogs, and other initiatives to improve learning. These ICT initiatives may also motivate students and lead to improved performance.

The impact of new technological practices in universities can be seen across a spectrum of different activities, from the digitizing of management information, to the use of virtual learning environments (VLEs) and social media in teaching and learning, to the development of digital scholarship in academic research. The nature and scale of this impact varies from institution to institution.

It is this broad context of technological and structural changes that some scholars are looking to encapsulate in the concept of "digital university," an emerging context in which "fundamentally different forms of social practice around learning and technologies jostle together and strain the boundaries of institutions and the professional communities who inhabit them" (Goodfellow & Lea, 2013, p. 2).

It has been often pointed out that new technologies and Open Educational Resources (OERs) allow for a more interactive learning experience and are valuable instruments in placing the learner at the center of the

educational process. We want to investigate how the innovative teaching methods facilitated through ICT and OERs contribute to the development of soft and transversal skills.

An example of MOOC on Student Affairs

https://www.class-central.com/mooc/1634/coursesites-exploring-the-student-affairs-in-higher-education-profession

The Campus experience: the 'impact' of living together

Some parts of this paragraph are drawn from the book "Soft skills in action" and are reprinted with the permission of EucA.

Living together as a community – in halls of residence or in a residential college – has a strong impact on student development. Although stronger evidence has still to be provided, the research and literature generally offer support in favor of the positive academic and social effects of living in college or university residence halls (e.g., Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991).

The halls of residence model is centered on the unique role that students themselves can play in enhancing their own and other fellow students' development and in creating an equally important learning environment outside the classroom. The model revolves around a cyclical process of introducing and integrating new students into the college and university community, providing them with ongoing guidance to succeed both personally and academically. The next step is the opportunity for students to participate and contribute using their own experiences to empathize and subsequently be better equipped to engage with their peers.

Benefits are consequently offered in two linked areas: student personal and professional development and the creation of a vibrant and diverse 'beyond the classroom' living and learning environment.

The halls of residence model provide outcomes in employability skills and career readiness. Through training and experiences that develop competencies in key areas, such as effective communication, teamwork, leadership and project management, participants acquire skills acknowledged to be essential in graduate entry roles.

The model also offers pathways to students towards personal growth. Volunteering, mentoring and peer support, global mobility programs, and student leadership opportunities contribute to transforming lives in ways that are lasting in almost any case. Definitely, a key benefit of the halls of residence model is the creation and ongoing facilitation of an undoubtedly vibrant and diverse all-round living and learning environment. Learning is not confined simply to coursework or to the tutorials and lectures attended by students, but rather extends beyond the classroom to involve a wide range of experiences: from moving away from home for the first time; to sharing a living space; to participating in the wide range of new and exciting activities and programs on offer as part of the university life. It is also the contribution of each individual student with their diverse background and experiences to add to the quality of the learning environment.

Research generally supports the notion that students living in campus-organized housing tend to be more socially involved and tend to participate more often in extracurricular and campus activities than students

living off-campus (Lundgren & Schwab, 1979). Living in dormitories maximizes opportunities for students to become involved in social and extracurricular activities. This involvement largely accounts for student growth and development, including a general increase in 'self-concept' (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991), simply by exposure to other students and opportunities. In fact, students often mention social opportunities and the opportunity to meet other students as reasons for re-applying to live in residence halls (Cleave, 1996). Of course, living in a residence hall does not automatically provide a community-like atmosphere for college students. Clark and Hirt (1998) show that living in a small residence hall does not provide a better community atmosphere than living in a large residence hall.

The literature on residence and social integration is more extensive than that on residence and academic integration and more consistent in its findings. Pascarella and Terenzini, (2005) summarized the literature in this area when they concluded that, 'living on-campus (versus living off-campus or commuting) was the single most consistent within-college determinant of the impact of college' (p. 603). Their synthesis suggested that living on-campus 'appears to foster change indirectly, by maximizing the opportunities for social, cultural, and extracurricular engagement' (ibidem). Their conclusions appear well-supported by research.

Analyzing data from 74 four-year colleges and universities, Pascarella (1985) found that living on-campus had a direct, positive, and significant effect on an index of social integration; these results are consistent with Lanasa, Olson, and Allemen (2007) and with a survey of liberal arts college students by Chickering and Kuper (1971), which found sharp differences between residents and students living at home in terms of extracurricular activities and peer relationships. "Commuters participated in extracurricular activities much less frequently, the range of activities was more limited, and commuters much less frequently occupied positions of leadership", the authors concluded (Chickering and Kuper 1971, p. 258).

"They were acquainted with a much smaller proportion of students." A broader survey of students from higher education institutions documented similar findings. Chickering reported that students who lived at home were less involved in extracurricular and social activities in comparison with students living in the dormitories, and that the gap grew in course of their college careers.

Proceedings

IASAS-NASPA Global Summit on Student Affairs and Services. Hosted by EucA (Rome, October, 2014) Executive Summary

How to deal with youth unemployment? What are the skills needed in today's global labor market? How is it possible that, despite almost 6 million young people unemployed in the European Union (EU) alone, 30% of companies declare that they cannot find the right profiles for the vacant positions? How is it possible that 74% of EU universities state that their students receive adequate training to find a suitable job? The Global Summit on Student Affairs and Services held in Rome, from 23-24 October, addressed these questions, which are so important for the future of young people. The Global Summit was organized by the International Association for Student Affairs and Services (IASAS) and NASPA - Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education (originally the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators). The program was hosted by the European University College Association (EucA), on the theme "Trends in

in Higher Education: Employability, Competences, and Global Civic Engagement." The aim of the conference was to initiate a high-profile debate on how student services, international mobility, and training on soft skills can contribute to youth employability, among other key issues identified before and during the Summit.

The program was opened by the keynote speaker 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 thorough research that involved more than 8,000 people (students, heads of universities and businesspeople) in 8 countries (France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom). The report shows that young people looking for work and companies, often move in parallel universes, with an incredible gap between job-demand and job-offer, while the universities strive to properly train students for the labor market. 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 claim to provide adequate preparation for the labor market. As far as young people are concerned, only 42% believe they have received adequate training for work, and only 30% finds temporary employment after graduation.

Two institutional speakers were then featured. First was Harald Hartung, Head of Unit "International Cooperation; Higher Education in the world; Erasmus+, EU initiatives and programs in international cooperation" from the European Commission. The second speaker was Silvia Costa, Chairman of the Cultural Committee of the European Parliament.

Hartung explained the concrete actions that have been implemented within the framework of the new European program Erasmus+ to meet the needs of mobile students (they will go from 4 million to 7 million by the end of the decade). Another new challenge will be the mobility from Europe to other countries: for example, China attracts the 7% of mobile students. Europe is investing primarily in the internationalization of curricula, in the development of language skills and in the so called 'digital learning.' Mobility, concluded Hartung, should be increasingly supported by measures affecting the quality of mobility programs and not only the 'quantity' of mobility students. Tutorial and guidance services, counseling, strong interaction with the business world through the actions of "knowledge alliances" and easy recognition of skills acquired abroad are concrete measures The European Commission is working about.

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 labor 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 second speaker, Silvia Costa, focused mainly on the issue of soft skills: the soft skills are still the central point in the mismatch between what enterprises need and the competences of graduates. The big challenge is the definition of knowledge as a key factor to increase personal growth, social inclusion, and empowerment, but also as a condition for a new development, a new economy and new employment. It's essential to ensure the strengthening of appropriate skills for the new jobs in the digital age, but also

creativity, active citizenship and entrepreneurship, and to encourage 'knowledge partnerships' between universities, research centers, and business.

Following the speakers were two panels, which completed the Global Summit; one dedicated to human resources managers (from ABB, Vodafone, and Consel), and one to students. The panels gave the direct perspective and expectations of who is searching for young employees and who is now in the educational pathway.

Specific sessions of the Global summit were dedicated to delegates' team working, guided by two facilitators/coaches Maria Cinque and Primiano Augelli. Topics explored by the delegates are listed below.
- Integrating soft skills in the university educational path: the role of student affairs and services
- Soft skills development for a better employability: student affairs and services as a facilitator for the dialogue with the labor market
- Fostering entrepreneurship mind-set and creative thinking in university campuses
- Enhancing civic participation, global approach, and social inclusion.

Retrospectives
Global Summit on Student Affairs and Services – History and Foundation

The inaugural Global Summit on Student Affairs and Services took place 20-21 September, 2012 in Washington, D.C., U.S.A. The program was born during a discussion among NASPA and IASAS leaders at an invitational meeting at the NASPA headquarters. The basic premise as established is to bring together leaders in student affairs and services who are capable of representing and reaching many others in their countries and regions. These individuals are typically staff and volunteers of professional associations, yet in many countries and regions associations representing student affairs and services staff do not exist. In those situations individuals working at prominent institutions have been invited.

The Global Summit concept is based on an "institute" model, where the delegates themselves generate the majority of the content within a prescribed methodology that taps into the expertise and knowledge base of those in attendance. The methodology has been extensively planned to allow for maximum emergence of the most critical issues, which are then categorized and sorted by the members themselves. A lead facilitator assists with the process and sorts the data in between sessions, during meals and breaks, and overnight, in order to keep the process moving forward and freeing the delegates to think critically, explore differences and commonalities, and interact in meaningful ways with one another. It is up to the delegates to determine the most meaningful information and to create pathways to pursue potential solutions and synergies.

The primary aims of the Global Summit are to:
- Identify common issues upon which to build and collaborate, capitalizing on strengths, both common and unique.
- Discuss increasing visibility, credibility, and the level of impact of student affairs and services work in tertiary education.
- Identify critical research needs, synergizing around strategies for collection, analysis, and use of data.
- Explore drivers affecting higher education and student affairs and services work, such as student tuition and fees, levels of funding, international students, access, and global economic factors.

The foundational outcomes of the Global Summit are to:
1. Share cutting edge research and practices
2. Discuss topics of mutual interest that enhance the college student experience
3. Talk about a future global agenda and/or what we can do together in the future
4. Conceptualize a tangible product that can be shared with all our members
5. Establish meaningful relationships among people.

During the 2012 inaugural Global Summit a number of key issues facing student affairs and services emerged. The most significant and overarching theme is the massification of higher education globally. In other words, the desire to educate all people, regardless of their ability to pay, and the related policy implications exacted by governments that seek to achieve those ends.

Categories that emerged from the 2012 Summit were around 1) fiscal issues, 2) concepts related to the profession of student affairs and services, 3) student issues, and 4) other miscellaneous items. Those issues were more specifically broken down into the following:

Fiscal
- Lack of sufficient funding
- Strain on financial aid
- Competition for limited resources
- Increasing government influence

Profession
- Lack of recognition as a profession
- Possible lack of professional associations
- General misunderstanding of the field by the academic community.
- Validate work through data collection, evaluation, and assessment.

Student
- Rising mental health issues
- Greater student diversity
- Decreasing student preparedness
- Increasing student mobility
- Persistence to graduation

Other
- Few opportunities for staff training and continuing education
- Proliferation of distance learning and technology

Another way the delegates categorized and/or conceptualized the issues was through a series of stages of engagement with students, and from a professional context of student affairs and services. Each of the stages had a number of sub-issues:

Inputs – Lack of preparation, lack of funding, implications of massification, diversity, increasing number of international students

During – Mental health, language, technology, student learning, health and wellbeing, diverse community, international student support

Outputs – Transition out to job or back to community, employability, citizenship, completion, graduating student competencies, co-curricular experiences relating to transferable skills

Professional Context
- Challenges building infrastructure of student affairs and services
- Western models are helpful but not always relevant worldwide
- How to engage with the academic side and find common ground between academics and student affairs/services
- Best practices based on context and talking about student learning
- Having data/research to back up student affairs and services (demonstrate impact)
- Professional vs. Practitioner – the difference between student services and administrators
- Set of skills and preparation of individuals
- Preparation encompasses direction and how we work with students across the board in every job we perform

The group agreed to follow up on a number of items, which could then be reported back to the group and further pursued during the 2014 Global Summit. Below are the agreed-upon follow up items.
- Maintain Network: Created, underutilized
- Academic Partnerships – send some items to the above listserve but received little engagement
- Learning Outcomes and Assessment – MODES2 grant, twice. IEKC current repository
- Proceedings – completed
- Technology – Similar to Academic Partnerships, sent items to listserve, but had little engagement
- Research Query – too ambitious? A repository of research done on students
- Philosophy Statement – presenting results of efforts

The attendees of the 2012 Global Summit completed an evaluation of the program. Some of the highlights from the results are included here.
- All of the respondents rated their experience with the program as either outstanding or good (61.9% Outstanding, 38.10% Good).
- All of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that ample opportunity was provided to express their opinions throughout the Summit (76.19% Strongly agree, 23.81% Agree).
- All of the respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied with the overall format of the Global Summit (66.67% Very satisfied, 33.33% Satisfied).
- Over 95 percent of the respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied with the overall content of the program (61.90% Very satisfied, 33.33% Satisfied, 4.76% Neutral).
- Overall, respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied with all aspects of the Global Summit.

For full discussion of the 2012 Global Summit see http://bit.ly/1fkxJAp.

Pre-summit work: the wiki
Four months before the Global Summit, a wiki was created with notes, questions, and sources that could form a good starting point for discussion on the topics during the Summit. Participants were invited to register to the wiki, provide a presentation of their professional profile, and select two areas of topics on which they might be interested in working. They were also asked to provide their inputs, that is, to contribute to the topics, but only a few provided feedback.

The main goals of implementing this tool were the following:
- develop the topics into something suitable for the discussion, summarizing the main issues for each topic, offering questions for the debate and "food for thought"
- provide resources and documents for further reading
- involve participants in the discussion before the summit
- get participants know each other before the starting of the event

Not all these purposes were achieved (as mentioned, few delegates participated in the online discussion), but the wiki was successful and, after a first version (that can include up to 50 registered members), the community was continuing to grow, so a new wiki needed to be created to accommodate all the participants.

The first wiki was available at this address: https://globalsummit2014rome.pbworks.com. The new one is located at the following url: http://globalsummit2014.pbworks.com.

Follow up to the "Global Conversations"

During the 2014 summit Lisa Bardill Moscaritolo shared the work of the Philosophy and Commitment subgroup since the 2012 inaugural Global Summit. At the 2012 Summit the work group could not agree on a global shared philosophy for our work. Denny Roberts, Khalid Al-Khanji, Mohammed Al-Kuwari, Ameena Hussain, and Greg Roberts agreed to continue the discussion. Denny led our efforts and Lisa Bardill Moscaritolo as IASAS Secretary agreed to help to collect purpose statements from different regions of the world.

A Wordle (can be found in appendix) of language across all six responses resulted in a useful visual that reflected a number of important values and goals for student affairs staff in these settings and it spurred interest to continue the process of exploring student affairs purposes.

The team decided to use the IASAS listserv, the subgroup and other professional associations' listserves to continue our interest in understanding the answer to the following question: "How do we view students and what do we seek to achieve in our work with them?" Along with the answers to this question in emails, we asked for written purpose and value statements from different regions of the world. There were representatives from Germany, Canada, Romania, the Caribbean, and England that shared their statements. The results of these mission statements were compiled into a wordle analysis that demonstrated values and goals for our work, which spurred interest with the team and IASAS board to expand our knowledge and get more participants.

We expanded our methods and decided to hold face-to-face meetings at conferences around the world and used web conferencing for virtual meetings and added two other questions: "What is the core of our work and how we do it?" and "What skills and competencies are required to complete our work with students?" Through these different modalities we were able to reach more staff from Antigua, Belgium, Canada, Cypress, Finland, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Romania, Spain, and Turkey.

A qualitative analysis revealed a number of themes that represent an emerging consensus on the purpose of student affairs and services work. The emerging view is that our purpose is "to attract, retain, and support

students in their learning and development in order to benefit the individual and the broader public good" (Roberts, 2014, p. 3).

Results of the other two questions are summarized below.

Core responsibilities on our work:
- Support students by informing them of policies, practices and services and advising them on how best to use them
- Build community among students that connects them to the faculty/staff and ethos of higher education
- Provide services that make living during university study manageable, comfortable, and safe
- Provide scholarship to those deserving of merit support and offer financial aid to those in need
- Conduct research on students' experiences to establish models and theories of student success in achieving their educational goals
- Articulate the importance of student engagement and development to others and advocate for students' needs within the university's internal and external constituents

Contested perspectives on our core work:
- Care and compassion for students' individual needs
- Students are customers whose preferences and wishes should be considered
- Higher education is fulfilled by addressing students' holistic educational and developmental needs

Competencies required of international student affairs educators:
- Effective communication - patience, listening, and a positive attitude
- Technical skills - understand higher education, risks effecting college students, law, legislative climate, market and job trends, technology
- Social justice lens
- Ability to apply theory to practice

Recommendations which were not fully fleshed out at the Summit were that the global conversations around philosophy continue since it is believed that at minimum, the results have raised awareness among the participants that considers one's purpose is important to improving practice regardless of the cultural or national context of higher education.

One outcome of these conversations that was not planned was the idea that we could use a similar process of having global conversations around topics of interest as we did for this study. Thus, IASAS considers this research project as a template for further research.

Keynote speaker
Education to Employment: Getting Europe's Youth to Work
Jigar Patel, from McKinsey & Company delivered the keynote address of the Global Summit. He used a European Union (EU) study as a platform to ameliorate global issues related to employability.

Introduction to the research

The EU has the highest unemployment rate of anywhere in the world apart from the Middle East and North Africa. In 2013, almost a quarter of young people in the EU labor market were unemployed. For one of the most developed regions of the world, this is truly startling—even more so when added to the fact that the youth unemployment rate has been 20 percent or above for 11 of the past 20 years. Youth unemployment has long been a smoldering crisis in Europe, but the economic downturn since 2008 has made it a burning issue. Change has been so fast and so drastic as to be unprecedented in the post-war era; Europe faces the very real possibility of a "lost generation."

In the report Education to Employment: Designing a System that Works (2012), the pathway from education to employment in Europe has been researched. How do people move into the workforce from the classroom? The following questions are relevant:

    1. Is the scale of the youth unemployment problem in Europe a result of lack of jobs, lack of skills, or lack of coordination?
    2. What are the obstacles that youth face on their journey from education to employment?
    3. Which groups of youth and employers in Europe are struggling the most?
    4. What can be done to address the problem?

Eight countries were the target of the research; France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and the UK. These countries represent 5.6 million of the youth that are unemployed in Europe. Demographics of those surveyed are:

    • 5,300 young people
    • 2,600 employers
    • 700 post-secondary providers

Skill gaps

Despite more people looking for work, employers cannot find the skills they need. In the EU, youth unemployment has been a serious issue for a long time, but has worsened with the recession. A quarter of young people under 25 in the EU labor market are unemployed, the highest level in any region except the Middle East/North Africa. Across most of the region, youth unemployment has risen significantly since the financial crisis of 2008. However, this is not to say that youth unemployment is a new issue for Europe—in 1995 it was at 21 percent.

In some contexts, the number of people employed has remained steady. Older people are working longer and more women with children are joining or remaining in the workforce, as a result of long-term social trends and tightening of rules around welfare and pension systems. More participation across all age groups means more competition for open positions. This particularly affects younger people, who are disadvantaged by lack of proven experience.

Employers everywhere report employment skills shortages. In the McKinsey (2012) survey of eight EU countries, one-third of employers said that lack of skills is causing major business problems in the form of cost, quality, or time. Furthermore skill gaps cause the most problems in countries with the highest youth unemployment (Fig. 1).
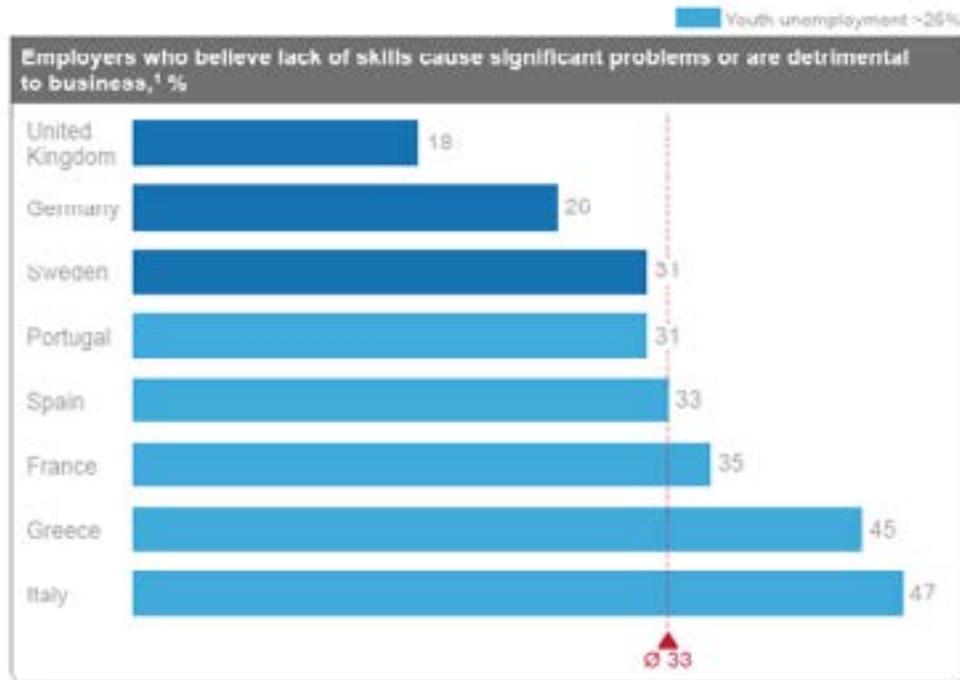
Fig. 1- Skill gaps cause the most problems in countries with the highest youth unemployment

Employers and education providers' different perspectives
A major reason that students do not gain skills employers are seeking is that all three constituents—students, employers, and educators—are not speaking the same figurative language (see Fig. 2).
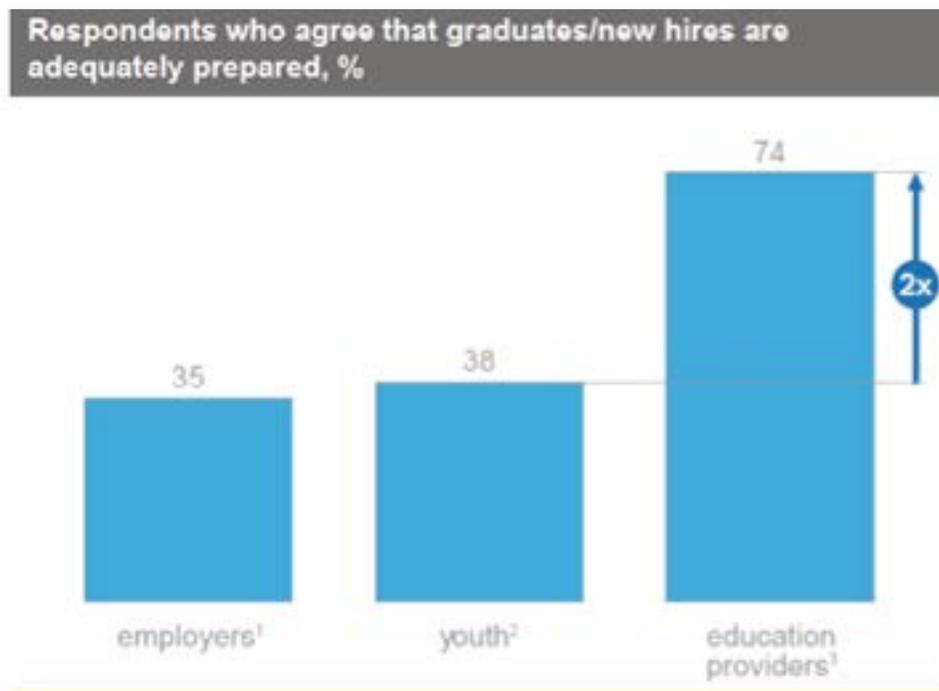
Fig 2 Providers are twice as likely as employers and youth to rate youth as prepared

In their global report, McKinsey (2012) concludes that providers, employers, and young people operated in "parallel universes." For example, in Europe 74 percent of education providers were confident that their graduates were prepared for work, yet only 38 percent of youth and 35 percent of employers agreed.

Why is there such a big difference between the three? The more pertinent question is, "How could they know any better?" Outside of UK and Germany, only 50 percent of European employers report interacting with education providers several times a year or more.

Youth face obstacles at every stage of the employment journey
Young people encounter challenges at three major steps in the employment process:
- enrolling in postsecondary education
- building the right skills
- finding a job

The most important barrier to enrolling in post-secondary education is cost. Even though university tuition fees are highly subsidized in many countries, students find that the cost of living compounds the challenge.
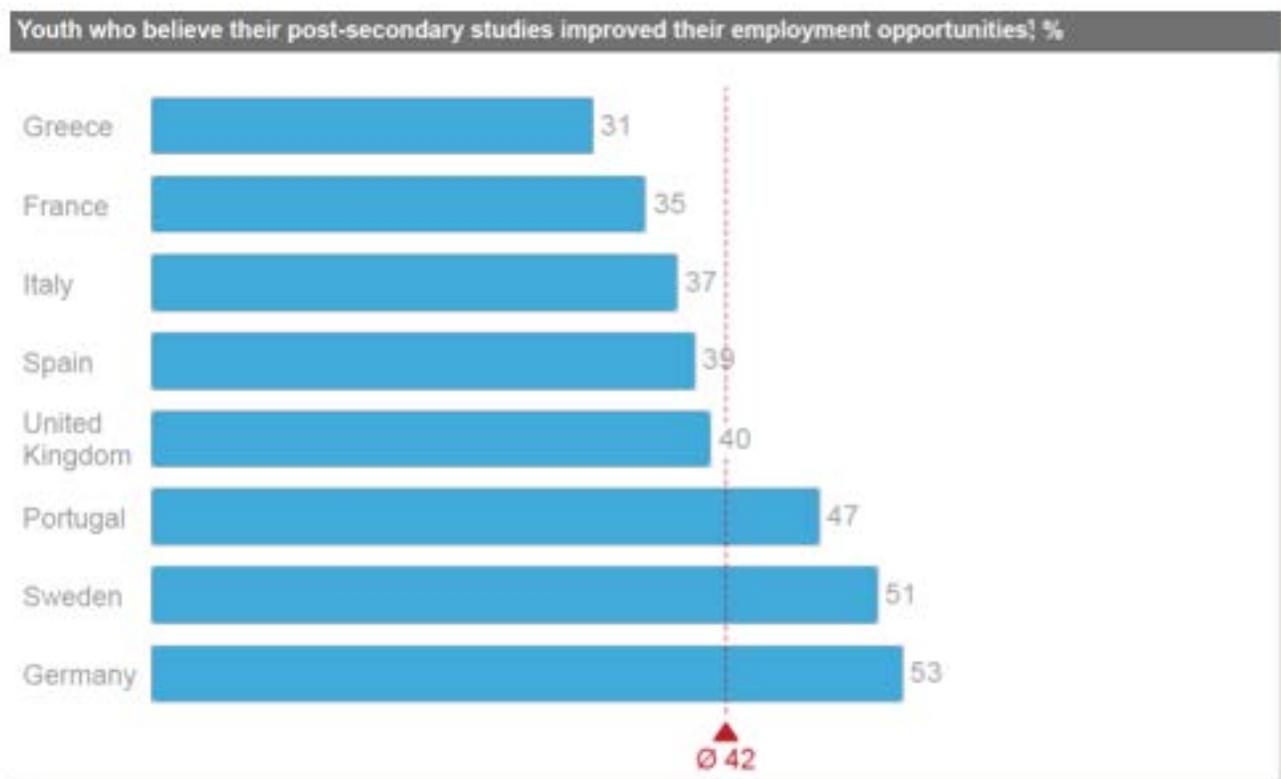
Fig. 3 – Less than half of youth believe their postsecondary studies improved their employment opportunities

Mechanisms to improve the education to employment journey
Government entities, employers, education providers, and families are operating in difficult circumstances, yet relief may be possible through affordability, focus, and scale.

Also in this realm are "Serious games," which simulate real world (and work) situations. These games can be inexpensive to implement and provide an engaging and safe methodology for students to practice skill development and acquisition.

Best practice suggestions
Some best practices show that effective collaboration can create excellent outcomes for everyone concerned. McKinsey (2012) highlights the Automotive Manufacturing Training and Education Collective (AMTEC) where during curriculum design employers listed every task they needed and the competencies required for each. Then ranked the competencies and then developed a list of common tasks. Employers and providers distilled the information into a curriculum composed of 60 three-to-eight-week study modules, spanning 110 core competencies, with each module focused on a specific skill set. Now, employers can choose to have their employees undertake training from providers in all or some of the 110 competencies.

Additional best practices were described in the McKinsey report (2012) from Australia, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, United States and several for-profit companies.

Institutional guests
EU Initiatives and Programs in International University Cooperation
By Harald Hartung – Head of Unit International cooperation and program, Directorate General for Education and Culture of the European Commission

The European policies for the internationalization of Higher Education face three main challenges: finding a way out for the economic crisis, tackle the skills mismatch and globalize the European Higher Education.

The global education landscape is changing because the demand for higher education is increasing; there is a need for different types of skills; technology and expectations are changing so students can decide what, how and when to learn; we have moved from an offer driven to a demand driven HE policy approach

EU Higher Education is given more focus for Europe 2020 strategy, with its emphasis on innovation and research, and governments are rethinking their models and role. The EU wishes to support them in their efforts, designing strategies and providing resources.

The comprehensive internationalization strategy of EU follows these guidelines:
- International mobility
- Internationalization of curricula & digital Learning
- Strategic cooperation and partnerships

As to international mobility, the aim is to increase student, researcher and staff mobility, supported by a quality framework including guidance and counseling services. An important aspect is the recognition for competences gained abroad and Visa procedures must be more supportive.

Less than 20% of EU students are mobile, so a plan for the 'internationalization at home' should be implemented to make the non-mobile students benefit from internationalization, through:
- Exposure to international staff & students
- International curricula for the benefit of all Language learning
- Digital learning & wider use of ICT technology

Concerning the internationalization of curricula for the benefit of both non-mobile and mobile learners, we should increase the opportunities for students, researchers and staff to develop language skills and develop opportunities for international collaboration via online learning and expand the use of ICTs and Open Education Resources.

In particular, the European Commission proposal on digital education "Opening up Education" (September 25th, 2013) has the aim to exploit the potential of ICT, OER and MOOCs:
- provide broadband access and upgraded digital equipment for schools
- foster new teaching and learning methods (teacher training, blended learning…)
- support the production of new teaching material (adapted to digital use)
- facilitate the creation of a repository of available on-line courses
- tackle copyright questions to facilitate free access to course material
- develop the assessment, validation & credits aspects for MOOCs

As concerned the Strategic cooperation and partnerships, we should
- develop joint and double degree programs, and improve provisions for quality assurance and cross-border recognition;
- provide entrepreneurial and innovative curricula, and create international training opportunities with employers from inside and outside the EU;
- ensure coherence between internationalization strategies and development cooperation policies through equity and partner country ownership;
- exploit the potential of students, researchers and staff from non-EU countries as vectors of cooperation

The EU contribution to Internalization is moving towards a single integrated system with the new programs 2014-2020. The new Program Erasmus + will support and give resources for:
- Learning mobility
- Cooperation
- Policy support

More than 63% of the total budget is on the learning mobility of individuals, with the aim of 2 million higher education students over 7 years, 135,000 student and staff exchanges with partner countries, and 25,000 scholarships for joint master's degrees.

Other important focuses are on:
Reforms and capacity building:
- testing and adaptation of curricula, courses, learning materials and tools, learning and teaching methodologies and pedagogical approaches, especially those delivering key competences and basic skills, language skills, entrepreneurship education, and focusing on the use of ICT

- new forms of practical training schemes and study of real life cases in business and industry, university-enterprise cooperation, including the creation of business start-ups
- new forms of learning and providing education and training, notably strategic use of open and flexible learning, virtual mobility, open educational resources and better exploitation of the ICT potential
- guidance, counseling, and coaching methods and tools.

Tackle the skills mismatch, to equip young people for adult life, and serve as a basis for further learning:
- developing transversal skills
- build world class VET (increase work based learning)
- improve recognition of qualifications (including informal and non-formal learning)
- reduce the share of low achievement in reading, maths and science to less than 15% by 2020, as measured by PISA

Promotion activities:
- campaign on enhancing the attractiveness of EHE in the world
- support to policy dialogue with Neighboring countries (Western Balkans, ENP), Industrialized countries, Strategic partner countries and regions

The results about employability of Erasmus students are encouraging: young people who study or train abroad are half as likely to face long term unemployment. 5 years after graduation the unemployment of Erasmus students is 23%.

The European Parliament perspective on employability and soft skills
By Silvia Costa, Chairman of the Culture Committee of the European Parliament

The soft skills are still the main issue of the mismatch between demand and supply of labor for young graduates. The big challenge we face is to redefine the contribution of knowledge as a key factor for personal growth, social inclusion and empowerment, but also for a new development, a new economy and new employment intelligence.

We are aware that where there are more educated people there is more welfare, innovation, enterprise, less crime rate and an increased participation of young people in public life.

Global economic and technological revolution have changed not only production and working processes, but also the social structure and cultural relations, so we need different answers from education systems, social and economic actors.

A sustainable and durable development needs investments in human resources, with an approach of long life learning, as a key factor of competitiveness and cohesion.

Strengthening of appropriate skills to new jobs in the digital age is essential as the development of creativity, active citizenship and entrepreneurship. We should encourage "knowledge partnerships" between universities, research and business sector.

It is also important to point out some needs and priorities to be considered for the next cycle 2015-2017 the "Education and Training 2020." Due to the economic crisis, many countries made budget cuts in education, training, culture, research and innovation: these areas should be considered in terms of investment, not in terms of costs.

It is therefore essential that governments invest more in these vital areas in order to contribute to a sustainable economic growth and to create more employability.

It is important to identify the virtuous models for education based on 'dual education systems and apprenticeship', as well as adequate funding to facilitate young people's access to the labor market, as shown in the research "Dual education to bridge over troubled water?" presented in the European Parliament (EP) Culture Commission.

The gap between education, training and the labor market is one of the main reasons of youth unemployment. This is a situation that needs to be addressed.

Education to entrepreneurship should become a priority: through the exchange of best practices we should discuss how to develop an "entrepreneurial mindset" in young people at school. We need therefore new teaching practices, new teaching models, new ways to enhance the knowledge, as well as we need to develop new relationships between students and teachers, school and society, formal learning, informal and non-formal.

One of the aims of the Erasmus+ program is to provide opportunities for young people, young workers and young policy makers to cooperate, gain skills and be active in a democratic society. This can be done through non-formal learning activities, such as European Voluntary Service, networks and youth exchanges.

In particular, the EP has made sure that the actions relating to young people, volunteering and Erasmus Mundus had their specific and separate role within Erasmus+. The EP Culture Committee will insist on policies of a new generation to prevent early school leaving, to promote the dual education, to increase active citizenship for young people and will also work for the certification of non-formal skills, which come from the experiences of volunteering and community service.

Panels

Employer Panel Discussion

Three panelists joined the delegates of the Global Summit on day two of the program to discuss employability concepts from the perspective of employers. The three companies represented were major and multinational organizations that hire hundreds of college graduates annually. They were represented by managers in their Human Resources areas, and two of the three presented in Italian. Those delegates who do not speak Italian were provided with headphones and access to the live translation into English. The companies represented were Vodafone, ABB, and ELIS.

Common Elements

There were a number of common elements among all three presentations. Primarily, these professionals expressed how rapidly the world is changing, and the impact globalization is having on their industries. That impacts the needs they have for college graduates to excel in a number of areas. In particular, they stressed the need for graduates to have the correct mindset, of being ambitious, willing to go the extra mile, and demonstrate an entrepreneurial spirit. Concepts around the passion and "gumption" of youth to "seize the opportunities" be committed, try hard to get ahead, etc. were expressed throughout the panel discussion.

All three panelists discussed their organizations' desire to hire college graduates that demonstrate competency in a variety of soft skills. The ability for applicants to have skills around teamwork and problem solving were essential, as well as some background verifying that the students had successfully implemented these skills through their classroom and/or out of class experiences. The ability to work with others, and in team environments is crucial for their success in both getting hired and remaining viable employees within their companies.

Developing key skill sets for use across a broad spectrum of roles and jobs was important to these panelists. Each stressed that employees must possess and nurture essential job-related skills, yet they emphasized that these skills must also be conceptualized in a broad sense, and must be transferable from job to job, or even company to company. They prefer to invest in employees to stay with them, but they recognize the broader context of helping the workforce overall, as well as helping individuals themselves be productive, contributing members of a globalized society.

The panelists also emphasized the importance to their companies that college graduates have a command of the English language. This was especially true in the more specialized areas such as engineering, but crossed many different aspects and areas of the corporation. It was deemed essential to a global perspective and to meaningfully contribute to the organizations.

All panelists mentioned the high rate of youth unemployment in Italy, and the representative from Vodafone pointed out that youth unemployment had reached 40% in 2013. Other European countries are facing a similar situation, particularly Spain and Greece (McKinsey cite; top of pg. 9).

All three panelists also discussed their company's investment in their people. While they hope that new employees will come to them with the requisite skills to be successful in their organizations, they are willing to invest in their people and assist with further and lifelong training and learning. For example, one of the organizations represented, ELIS, has as a primary mission the education of young people, and updating of skills and abilities for all workers. ELIS has multiple programs that support employability through on the job training, certifications, and other methods that assist future workers with both hard and soft skills development.

Specific Messages

While the value of internships was mentioned by all, the Vodafone representative, Laura Grasso, pointed out that 47% of business owners do not find enough competencies in graduating students, and that a possible cause for this is an underdeveloped internship system.

Each of the examples of young professionals presented by Grasso had lived and/or studied in multiple countries, underscoring the relevance and importance of these international experiences on both employability and upward mobility of these young people.

Grasso also pointed out the need for graduates to distinguish themselves so that they are noticed and marketable in three primary ways: Experience, Positioning, and Approach.
Experience:
- Learn English well
- Work Experience
- "Citizen of the world"
- Extra-curricular skills acquisition
- Blog
- App development
- Entrepreneurship
- Being digital

Positioning:
- Choose your industry / company in which you like to work
- Find out about the dynamics of the market
- Decide on the message you want to convey

Approach:
- Choose how to introduce yourself and find proper channels for:
- Online: Social media, LinkedIn
- Video applications, youtube
- Powerpoint presentation

Irena Sette spoke to the value of programs that specifically target soft skill development for lifespan benefit. Her organization has established relationships with several other organizations and established affiliates of her company, which directly impact employability and career continuity. They use unique and emerging methodologies to help people become marketable and attractive in the work force. For example, they sponsor a four week "boot camp" and also a series of 10, 2-day workshops designed to help employees develop knowledge and skills that meet the demands of the labor market.

The concepts of position and approach seem to work together so that graduates understand who they are, know the business in which they are most interested, and then how to best present themselves within that context. Within this context, Vodafone specifically looks for: good English, entrepreneurial mindset, citizen of the world, determination, professionalism, and passion.

Conclusion
It was clear from the panel that universities and companies can communicate more, and better. What these companies are seeking in terms of students' soft skills, and what they believe they are receiving from post-graduates, is not in synch. Most universities understand the needs of employers, yet are not focusing on the learning outside of the specific discipline, which is what these employers were expressing is so important. Students' ability to communicate clearly, to have a solid and demonstrated work ethic, to think creatively, etc. These skills are critical to these enterprising companies, and they seek graduate with these skills.

With better lines of communication, perhaps more formalized, institutions of higher learning and companies can learn from one another and help students and graduates be best prepared for competition in an ever-globalizing work environment. To help students be skilled in critical areas both employers and universities can work together to provide relevant content and knowledge for students. The seamlessness between higher education and employment can be increased through great understanding and cooperation among organizations. For these efforts to be successful, all parties must be open and willing to listen and change if appropriate, in order to provide the best education and training for students.

Student Panel Discussion

By Roberto Zambiase

Four university students joined the delegates of the Global Summit on day two of the program to discuss the role of soft skills in their academic and professional path. They came from Italy, Poland, Kazakhstan and Germany. Each of them delivered a five-minute speech in English. The presentations were followed by a question and answer session.

Common Elements

Every student talked about previous mobility or working experiences that took place abroad during their academic path, or at home with international students. All the panelists showed a deep satisfaction for these challenging opportunities, and each of them tried to list the soft skills found more useful during these experiences, and what other skills they learned in-between.

Mainly, the outcomes of a working/mobility experience for university students can be seen in the implementation of interpersonal skills and the acquisition of a more open mindset, adaptability to change, self-knowledge, time management, and communication skills.

All the students confirmed that the foreign countries in which they studied and worked were very different from their original ones, and even more enriching than what was expected. Thus, every presentation stressed the human as well as the professional point of view of their stay abroad, underlining the importance of thinking out of any stereotype, and raising awareness on the importance of cultural and academic differences. Interpersonal skills are one of the key elements to describe the outcomes of students' experiences abroad.

Moreover, students' satisfaction and high opinion of the experiences performed comes from the improvements they discovered after coming back home, in both academic and working situations. Thanks to the degree of adaptability acquired, they learned how to change their habits in order to effectively perform a huge variety of duties.

Furthermore, each student involved in the panel explained that during their international experience they had the opportunity to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of their preparation. As a matter of fact, a certain amount of self-knowledge helped them to become suitable to different types of working and studying environments after coming back home.

As another common element among the speakers, it is worth referring to time management, which comes from the need to adapt to work in a foreign language and in a new academic/professional context.

Finally, the focus has been put on the communication skills acquired in an international context, either merely linguistic and more generally including the possibility to fully interact with people from very different cultural and historical backgrounds.

Specific Messages

Michela Longari - Italy

The first student who took the flow, Michela Longari, is a Master's student in Political and Social Sciences Department of the University of Pavia, Italy. She talked about her Erasmus program in Belgium, at Gent University, which took place from February to July, 2014. During her stay there, Michela had even the opportunity to work as an intern for EucA, at Brussels Representative Office.

Through her speech, Michela underlined the challenges to be overcome and the achievements reached referring to both the contexts.

Alexey Gotovskij - Kazakstan

The second speaker of the Panel was Alexey Gotovskij, a communication bachelor's degree student at the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross, coming from Kazakstan. Alexey, apart from his international Higher Education studies, works at the Vatican "San Lorenzo International Youth Center" as communication officer, and he contributes to the activities of the "Dignitatis Humanae Institute" as a researcher and as a translator.

Manuel Hermann - Germany

The third panelist was Manuel Hermann, a Political Science Master's student from Germany who had the opportunity to start an internship in Adenauer Foundation in Rome (after a previous Erasmus experience in Italy a few years ago). As the student pointed out at the very beginning of his speech, the two experiences, combined in the same country, but at different points of his academic career, made it possible for him to gain a good operational control of the foreign language of the hosting country (Italian, in this case), exercising with both regard to oral and written abilities.

Piotrek Jeremicz - Poland

The last student to take part in the panel was Piotrek Jeremicz, an undergraduate student of Transportation Engineering at the Warsaw University of Technology (WUT). The subject of his speech concerned his experience as Chair of the Committee for International Affairs at the WUT Students' Union (which is known as "Samorzad Studentow Politechniki Warszawskiej" in Polish).

Conclusion

The results of the panel can be summarized in three points. First, the delegates attending the "Global Summit on Student Affairs and Services" had the opportunity to gain feedback from students about the strategies for informal and non-formal learning that were proposed or implemented during the event. Second, the students involved all stressed the importance of an exciting human as well as a professional context in order to take fully advantage of the international experience, either a mobility or a working one. Third, the importance of combining academic exchanges with internships in a foreign countries emerges as the leading and most effective model in order to better prepare students for the requests from the job market. Although their passion, commitment and curiosity about the professional activities they will start after university remains the most important factor to ensure students' success into the job market, it is worth taking into account even the role of soft skills training, international experience and a human growth as other key

elements of this process.

Group Works

The Global Summit was intentionally differentiated from a conference or a meeting. The program of the Summit was designed to limit the "conference" part (i.e., frontal presentations) and to give large "space" to group discussion, for which topics, questions and a specific methodology had been planned in advance. The topics are presented in the Theoretical framework of this volume.

Different members of the organizing committee from IASAS, NASPA and EucA, expert in specific fields connected to the topics of the Global Summit, were asked to write a short abstract for each topic and provide questions and sources that were included in a pre-summit wiki, an online tool, which allows collaborative writing of documents and that is also the tool used for Wikipedia.

In Table 1 are questions that were used as "starters" for the discussions and the group works during the Global Summit.

Topic 1. Soft skills identification and definitions for better employability	Which are the skills that are most required by the companies? How do they intend "soft skills" (what do they call them and their own definition of soft skills) How can these skills be acquired during the university period? Which are the main strategies to compensate their eventual "gap"? How can the level of these skills be assessed? What will the workplace of the future look like? Which digital skills will be necessary for the work of the future? Are young people aware of their soft and digital skills and of the importance of acquiring them for the development of their future careers?
Topic 2. Integrating soft skills in the university educational path: the impact of student affairs and services	How are you making an impact on educating students on soft skills? In what ways are you assessing and evaluating programs, services and learning? How are you defining soft skills? What programs or services are you offering students to gain these skills? How the soft skills are taught to the student; how, specifically, do staff provide information and training to complement the program or service so that students can readily be exposed to, and learn, the pre-identified soft skill(s)? What outside or external resources you are using that may help you define the outcomes students need to be successful? What kind of policies and initiatives has been developed in different countries to enhance young employability? What is the role of universities / student affairs / halls of residence? What are the "gaps" in the existing policies? How can we fill these gaps?

Topic 3. Enhancing civil participation, global approach, social inclusion	What approaches are we using to assist students in fostering a global approach, understanding of inequities in our societies, and civic-mindedness?
	How are you fostering student success through community service & service learning?
	How are we collaborating with organizations outside our universities?
	What are the main trends and impacts of internationalization & globalization in higher education?
	How are we preparing new professionals and graduate students to practice in the field of student affairs?
	How are we working to collaborate with the academic side of the house to foster an entrepreneur-mindset in our students?
	What are we doing to foster learning around innovation, creativity, and an entrepreneurship mindset?
	How does the use or availability of technology include the delivery of student affairs and services related to the following areas:
	    Ability to offer holistic student development?
	    Community development/campus engagement?
	    Online education/courses?
	    Delivery of services/transactions?
	    Interpersonal communication and collaboration?

Topic 4. The Campus experience: the 'impact' of living together	Which is the main impact of living together in halls of residence? How does living in a campus foster student development? What are the main benefits of living in halls of residence? What are the main disadvantages? What is the influence of "centers for life and learning" on student personal, intellectual and social development? What determines the extent and the nature of the students' involvement in the student role and in the institution where they live and study? What are the distinctive "subcultures" students can develop in different types of accommodation and in which ways are these sub-cultures in competition with the academic goals or complementary to them? How do the informal groups relate to the place where the students live and to the orientation towards fulfilling the student role? What are the different models of residential facilities in the world? Which are the main difference among them? How do the different learning environments foster and enhance student learning?

Group working methodology and timeline

The methodology employed during the group working sessions was carefully designed to alternate:
- small group discussions and plenary sessions;
- transversal group discussion (i.e., on all the topics, as happened in the first day) and vertical group discussion (each group worked on a specific topic during the second day);
- oral and written interactions (i.e., brainwriting and brainstorming, to actively involve each participant;
- oral interactions and written presentations of the results.

The methodology employed during the Summit was carefully selected to mix participants from various parts of the world. Small groups were pre-assigned for greatest diversity, and the questions available in the wiki were posed for delegates to discuss within their groups. The groups were different on the first and the second day. Delegates could find the group compositions of the first and the second day in their folder. Every group received the assistance of a young facilitator, that helped them keeping on track with the work method, and also assisted the group in practical issues (markers, post-its, etc.). The four group young facilitators were from the EucA staff: Maria D'Alessandro, Giulia Ferrero, Michela Longari and Elena Turci.

In each group the work was split in tasks carried out by subgroups and there was a final wrap-up. After each session of group work, there was a plenary for sharing and assessment of the outcomes of each group's work among the other teams.

For group discussion different brainstorming /brainwriting techniques were suggested. They will be described in the following paragraphs.

The afternoon of the first day was devoted to group working sessions, the morning of the second day and part of the afternoon of the second day were for the presentation of the results and final wrap-up. Here is what it looked like in greater detail:
- 23 October: Group working session 1: *Generating Ideas*
  - o Plenary   14.30-16.20
  - o Group working   16.30-18.00
  - o Plenary: group presentations   18.00-18.30
- 24 October: Group working session 2: *Evaluating Ideas*
  - o Morning plenary   09.00-09.30
  - o Group working   09.30-11.45
  - o Plenary: group presentations   15.00-16.30

The group working was based on Elliot Aronson's Jigsaw model (Aronson et al., 1978; Aronson, 2011). This jigsaw activity allows different ways of brainstorming. The main idea is to benefit both from expert knowledge and from transversal discussion that should produce more creative ideas.

The first day group working was devoted to transversal group discussion. The group composition was aimed at putting together people who had chosen (or who were assigned) different topics.
Based on participants' choices, assignments into groups were pre-determined when possible, to assure that they could be formed by people interested in different topics (covering all the range of topics), possibly with different backgrounds and roles, coming from different countries. Notice that during the Group works

of the Global Summit each participant was considered "expert" in one of the two topics they had selected. Some of them, who did not choose any topic, were assigned by default.

Each group nominated a leader (different from the group facilitators) who was in charge of presenting the results of the group works in the plenary sessions. The main aim was to generate ideas and to foster contamination of ideas concerning the different topics.

The second day was devoted to vertical group discussion, that is, homogenous groups of "experts" (people who had chosen a specific topic) were created, in order to get deep insights into topics and to generate solutions and guidelines for future work.
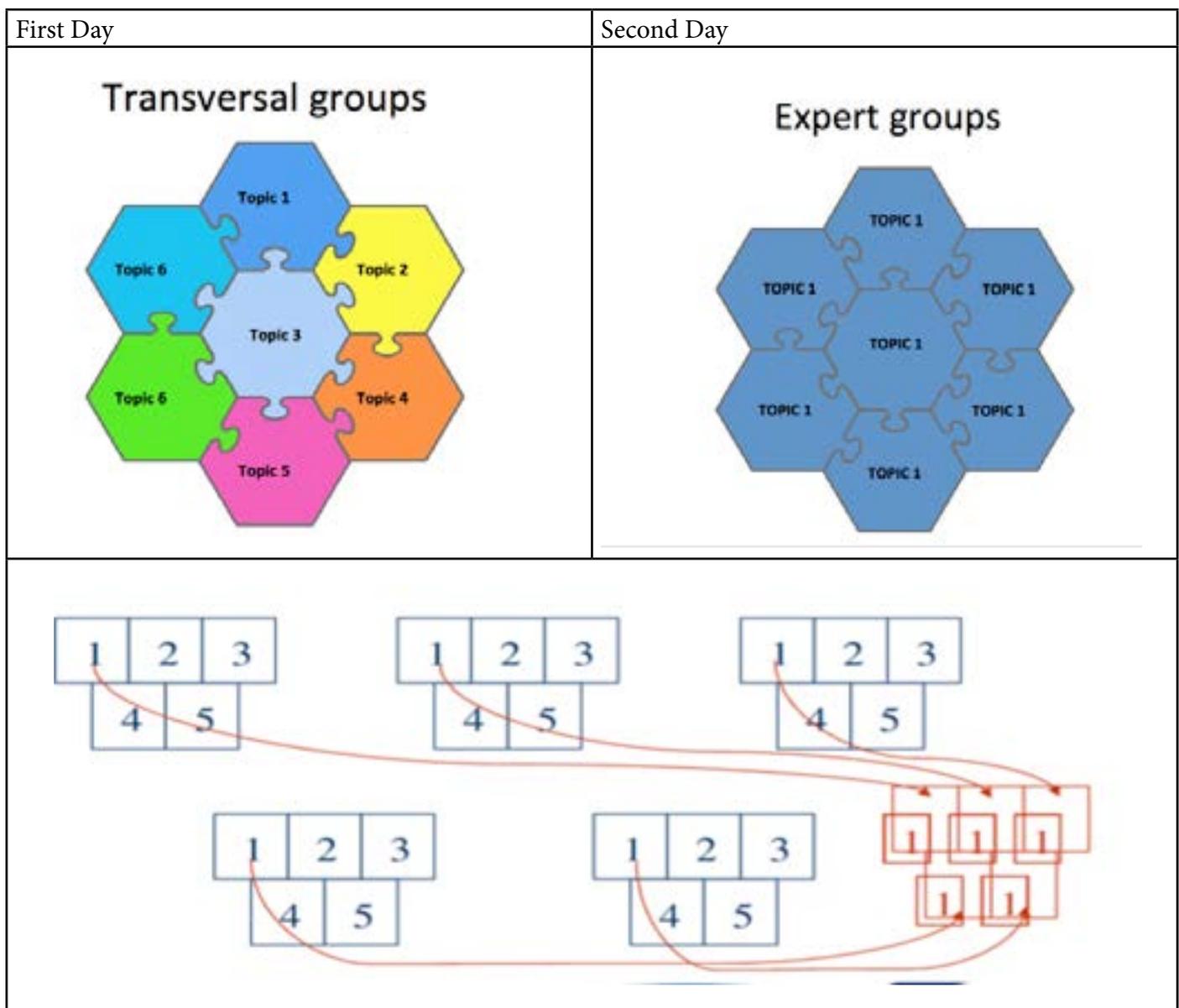

Fig. 1. The Jigsaw method and group composition

In Table 2, a timeline of the two days is represented, with the contents of each session.

23 October Group working session 1: Generating Ideas	**Plenary (14.30-16.20)** • Explaining the Methodology • Gathering Expectations (The 'Mouth of the Truth') • Brainwriting and tag cloud Creation
	Group working (16.30-18.00) • Individual reading of the questions for each Topic. • Answering the questions and or indicating case histories/ examples / best practices (Post It) • Discussing/answering the questions/ Drawing a map (one for each topic in group of 4-5) • Discussing all together (the whole group) on the General Outcomes and filling in the SWOT matrix
	Plenary (18.00-18.30) • Group outcomes presentations: 5 minutes for each group, presenting only the SWOT; final wrap-up.
24 October Group working session 2: Evaluating Ideas	**Plenary (09.00-09.30)** • Outcomes discussion • Methodology for Group-working sessions (2nd part) • 4 groups: 1 for each topic (the group of topic 1 will smaller): • Produce a few guidelines, recommendations and a roadmap (the future of SAS, Student Affairs Services) for each topic; • Use the materials on the wiki and the results of yesterday work.
	Group working (09.30-11.45) • Within each group: divide in 2-3 groups of discussion relating to the different subtopics and work using the metaphor of the Roman hills • 10.00-10.20 (each subgroup): the Capitolino hill (seeing things from a higher perspective): • 10.20-10.40 (each subgroup): the Aventino hill (seeing things from different perspectives): Use constraints: Time (short/medium/long); Budget/resources (limited/ average/a great amount). Use matrix. • 10.40-11.00 (each subgroup): the Palatino hill (seeing things from the institutional/policy perspective) prepare a list of strategic priorities, recommendations and guidelines • 11.00-11.45 Put together the work of the subgroups and prepare a presentation for the afternoon
	Plenary (15.00-16.30) • Group presentations • Final wrap-up and conclusions

Table 2. The schedule and the contents of group working

2.7 Group working session 1: Generating Ideas
The Mouth of Truth: Gathering Expectations (Mind map)

Before starting the group work, during the first plenary session participants' expectations were gathered making a brief exercise of Ice breaking/Speed meeting. We used the metaphor of the "Mouth of Truth," which is a popular monument/attraction in Rome.

It is an image, carved from marble, of a man-like face, located in the portico of the church of Santa Maria in Cosmedin, in the center of the city. The sculpture is thought to be part of a first-century ancient Roman fountain. The most famous characteristic of the Mouth, according to the legend, is its role as a "lie detector." Starting in the Middle Ages, it was believed that if one told a lie with one's hand in the mouth of the sculpture, it would be bitten off.

To do this exercise delegates were asked to stand up, find a person they had never met before, and in 3 minutes: introduce themselves and let the other introduce himself/herself. Then they would explain and write on a post it why they were attending the Global Summit. They were requested to state briefly and frankly—without lying—their expectations, their motivations, their real reasons for attending. They did the exercise three times, with three different people, so they could write down three different ideas concerning their motivations and expectations from the Summit. When finished (or between one meeting and another) participants could put the post-it on the posters with the Mouth of Truth.

Fig. 2. The Mouth of the Truth (S. Maria in Cosmedin, Rome)

Delegates wrote what they hope to get out of the Summit on post-it notes. There were running themes highlighting that delegates had similar goals and wishes for the Summit: understanding student affairs and services models, networking and learning from one another, and sharing best practices and ideas.

The results of this session were included in a Mindmap, where expectations and goals were clustered

under the following four areas:
- Meet (including three more clusters: professionals, people, share)
- Student Affairs Mission
- Global Summit Outcomes
- Glocal (including Global and different Local perspectives)
- Development (including professional development and the development of Student Services)
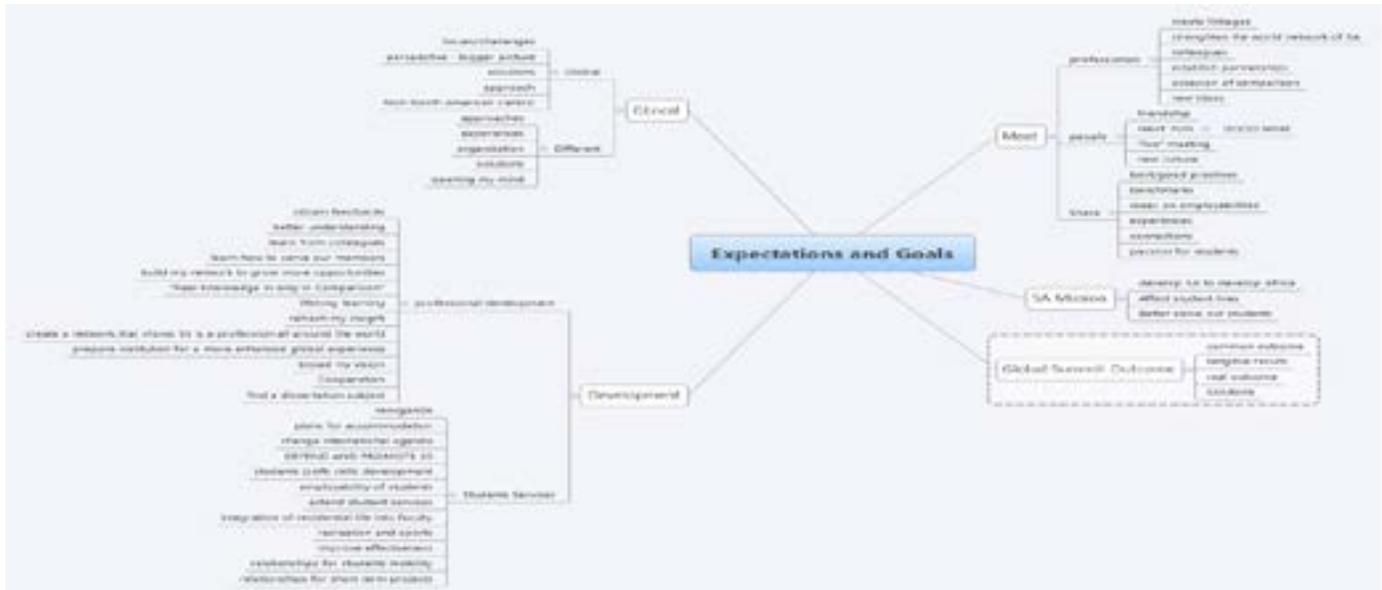
Brainwriting and "Tag clouds"

Originally, it was planned to include in the group works some brainstorming activities. Brainstorming is a popular tool that helps generate creative solutions to a problem. It is particularly useful when one wants to break out of stale, established patterns of thinking, so that one can develop new ways of looking at things. It also helps overcome many of the issues that can make group problem-solving a sterile and unsatisfactory process, a "waste of time" (Chamorro-Premuzic, 2015).

The original approach to brainstorming was developed by Madison Avenue advertising executive, Alex Osborn, in the 1950s. Since then, many researchers have explored the technique, and have identified issues with it.

For example, during brainstorming sessions there should be no criticism of ideas: the intent is to open up possibilities and break down faulty assumptions about the limits of the problem. Judgments and analysis at this stage stunt idea generation. Ideas should only be evaluated at the end of the brainstorming session – this is the time to explore solutions further using conventional approaches. Sometimes, sharing ideas in groups is not the problem, it is the "out-loud" part that, ironically, leads to groupthink, instead of unique ideas.

When preparing to moderate the brainstormings, an attempt was made to avoid one effect that sometimes

can occur in brainstormings, if they are not well structured; when one or more persons dominate the discussion. It can produce what some authors call "Doom Loop:" the people who are not (quite) as dominant do not speak, because they have given up and then the overly dominant people take over and it just becomes a self-perpetuating cycle.

This is an uneven communication effect. In the research, some studies found that in a typical 6-person group two people do more than 60% of the talking (Thompson, 2014). As the group gets bigger, this effect gets more and more magnified and can be frustrating for the rest of the participants.

This is a primary reason why a structured methodology was chosen. Participants were asked to do a lot of written brainstorming (but they also talked) and they were encouraged to build on each others' ideas, so that everybody could contribute.

Brainwriting uses a written approach to brainstorming to generate and develop ideas. This helps get ideas from all individuals, and develop these ideas in depth. A "varied" version of 6-3-5 Brainwriting was used, which is a group creativity technique used in marketing, advertising, design, writing, and product development originally developed by Professor Bernd Rohrbach (1968).

The technique was modified slightly, and produced a 6-4-5 solution. The aim of 6-4-5 brainwriting is to generate 144 new ideas in a very small amount of time. In this phase it is not the quality of ideas that matters but the quantity. The technique involves 6 participants who sit in a group (in this case, they were sitting in a row). Each participant thinks up four ideas every five minutes. The ideas are written down on a worksheet and passed on to the next participant. The participant reads the ideas and uses them as inspiration for more ideas.

After six rounds in 30 minutes the group has thought up a total of 144 ideas. Many of them might be similar. Nevertheless in a small amount of time, this technique allows the generation of many ideas that need to be evaluated.

During the Global Summit participants were given a hand-out with a table with four columns. They were asked to write something (just a keyword or a brief phrase) on the first row (one keyword or sentence for each topic). After five minutes (the time was marked with music), they were asked to stop and pass their sheet to the person next to them, in order to start a new round. In this second round they were asked to fill in again the four columns but building on the ideas they already found on the first row. The brainwriting continued in a similar way for six rounds.

After completing the first phase of the exercise, delegates were asked to create—in groups of 3-4—a tag cloud from the results of the brainwriting. A tag cloud (word cloud) is a visual representation of text data, typically used to depict keyword metadata (tags) on websites, or to visualize free form text. Tags are usually single words, and the importance of each tag is shown with font size or color. This format is useful for quickly perceiving the most prominent terms and for locating a term alphabetically to determine its relative prominence. Participants were asked to take the three pieces of paper they had and observe which words were the most frequent and write them bigger, then write also the other words, all of them (even the ones that were mentioned only once). At the end, all the tag clouds and the pieces of paper with the brainwriting results were collected.

Brainwriting results

The results of the brainwriting were analyzed after the Global Summit and clustered in meta-categories for each topic. In Table 2 the main categories are illustrated and in the following paragraphs the results of the analysis are presented.

TOPIC 1. Integrating soft skills in the university educational path	• certification/recognition • using and developing research • build and enhance partnerships • focus on learning outcomes • teaching tools and pedagogical approach
TOPIC 2. Soft skills identification and definitions for a better employability	• common definitions and different stakeholders • communication with the labor market • hear/understand the voice of students • holistic approach • specific courses, specific disciplines and/or experiences
TOPIC 3. Enhancing civil participation, global approach, social inclusion	• social justice / service learning • multicultural competence • raising awareness • tools
TOPIC 4. Global interdisciplinarity and learning environments for students	• International experiences and global perspective • technology to facilitate global conversations • Impact of residential models

Table 3. Clusterization of the results of brainwriting

TOPIC 1. Integrating soft skills in the university educational path

In Topic 1 delegates suggested that soft skills can be considered as "core business" of student affairs and services, and, perhaps, as one participant pointed out, as "the most important responsibility for student affairs and services."

A stronger synergy is required between academics and student affairs professionals: both faculty and student affairs and services administrators need to understand the importance of soft skills. This is why some participants suggested integrating soft skills in the student affairs and services pathway, in hopes that this would also influence key institutional decision makers about the importance of soft skills.

This strategy can be re-constructed through the different suggestions, and they were placed under five main clusters (meta-categories): certification/recognition; research; partnerships; focus on learning outcomes; teaching tools and pedagogical approach.

Certification/Recognition

Higher education needs to own "soft skills" and make it "core business" connected to academic curriculum. It is necessary to enlarge the concept of academic experience, including both academic knowledge, competences, and soft skills. Soft skills should be considered as a part of the curriculum and the training might include extracurricular/out of classroom activity as well as voluntary co-curricular activities that can be recorded on a co-curricular transcript (a transcript that is part of the academic qualification). The main idea is to create a certificate of excellence—extra/co-curricular portfolios—that goes with the diploma. Consequently, it might be convenient to redesign diplomas and transcripts to highlight skills as academic learning.

To achieve this goal, it is first important to persuade university government/policy makers about the importance of including soft skills in the curriculum, in order to add them to graduation requirements. Consistent learning outcomes could be established for each of the most important skills and completion of priority skills assessed and displayed in the diploma or credential. It is important to involve both academic and student affairs and services practitioners when designing the approach. Soft skill activities have to be aligned with curricular activities: for example, it could be possible to match curricular and cocurricular activities for the best success in student learning around leadership. As a practical tool, a database matching soft skills and academic programs could help identify and display the soft skills acquired during university courses and through cocurricular activities.

Soft skills should be integrated in all courses in university because graduate competencies are to be thought of in a life-long learning perspective, beyond disciplinary knowledge. Furthermore, specific courses and activities for soft skill development should be designed and made "compulsory" for students, as a requirement for graduation.

It is also suggested to create awards based on participation in co-curricular work and to give credits to students involved in campus life, for example, by helping and supporting other students.

Using and developing research

Delegates observed that it is necessary to use more research findings on soft skills to inform the new curriculum design. It is also considered useful to research and publish the results of employers' surveys and observations on the necessary soft skills as evidence for the creation of the new curriculum and a reminder to students.

Research is also necessary to standardize nomenclature, develop common definitions and learning outcomes for each competence. As one participant pointed out "language is important" and the adjective "soft" near skills is not appropriate (and not used in many cultures and contexts). It would be better to call them "generic" skills and/or "life" skills.

A literature review should also focus on specific assessment tools and methodologies for training. Using these tools would be useful in developing longitudinal research, tracking soft skill development in different cohorts of students. Research is also important to ensure that students understand the importance of soft skills and to help them learn how to explain/display the skills they have acquired during the university period and through different contexts and activities.

One possible tool to help students understand the skills they are learning and how to express them are

considered "unintentional conversation" and coaching conversations.

Research should also focus on the different culture needs (a cross-cultural approach) and on the different soft skill requirements of the diverse working sectors/fields. This research base—which is to be defined also in terms of time and financial resources—is necessary to build the vision and the strategy for soft skill development at university, demonstrating their value to the different stakeholders (faculty, students, parents, employers, etc.).

Build and enhance partnerships

Both for research goals and for the certification of soft skills, it is considered useful to build intentional partnerships among different stakeholders such as student affairs/services and academics, among universities and companies, among different universities, associations of students, alumni associations and professional networks, in order to set up cross-institutional cooperation and to create relationships with organizations that might be involved in soft skill development.

It is suggested to create faculty-student affairs/services partnerships to build a continuum of soft skills in the university (crossing faculties for extra-curricular activities) and to test this continuum with employers, developing services in partnership with employers or setting up employers' advisory groups in order to identify skill requirements and select activities for their development. Employers are also welcome as guest lecturers and lessons with employers might be beneficial for students and, generally speaking, for university education to "get closer" to the labor market.

Soft skill courses should first be addressed to staff and faculty: it is important to train the trainers and the teacher first. To achieve this goal, other possible tools are mentioned, for example, attending global learning opportunities for students, faculty, and staff, using creative approaches for sharing ideas/practices, and exchanging experiences through online platforms.

Focus on learning outcomes

Since soft skill development might be fostered throughout different activities (both curricular and extra/co-curricular activities), the establishment of outcome-based curricula is envisioned as necessary, that is, curricula based on learning goals that can form a "true integrated, academic-experiential, life skills strategy". This should also include the monitoring and evaluation of learning outcomes for different fields of education.

For this reason, it is important to design strategies to assess experiential learning and establish for each skill tangible outcomes based on employer needs. Assessment of soft skills can also help students be aware of them and of their importance. To raise students' interest it might be useful to create systems of incentives for participation in soft skill courses.

On the other hand, it is also suggested to come up with individualized development programs for each student to better prepare them for their careers. This would really "put the students at the center" and make them reflect about the results of their learning.

Teaching Tools and Pedagogical Approach

Most delegates observed that soft skills development is mainly based on a "student centered approach" and is connected with "hands on experiential learning. Some participants highlighted the importance of teaching

methods so that students can learn soft skills during the courses of any subject, adopting multiple-perspectives to look at one thing and an interdisciplinary mindset. The focus is also on engaging students with more practical than theoretical aspects of their education. This is why it is considered opportune to offer soft skills-based workshops for students starting from the early years, in collaboration with faculty and employers.

Among the specific tools suggested to develop soft skills:
- group working
- leadership programs / leadership classes
- mentorship programs
- apprenticeship strategies
- learning by doing / simulations
- compulsory internships
- work experiences / work simulations
- project works
- personalized tutoring
- personal tutorial for students based on soft skills
- soft skills weeks (for each course)

Many delegates underlined the importance of stressing experience and simulating real work experiences, or the integration of academic and working experiences. Specific activities suggested for soft skill development are the following:
- organize skills competition among students
- select senior students as buddies to bring positive influence to junior students/peers
- let alumni play an important role as tutors (coaching/mentoring opportunities between alumni and students)
- build mentoring programs alumni to students to high school (students)
- build mentorship programs involving employers, professors and senior students
- organize exams with public speaking session
- use debate to facilitate and improve communication and speaking skills
- create specific learning environments to practice soft skills

The main goal is to bridge the curricular and co-curricular activities and have students reflect on the competencies they gain in class and outside. This is why some participants stressed the importance of the presence of psychologists in the faculty to help students' self-reflection and enhance their self-esteem.

The "psychological approach" was also mentioned as fundamental for soft skill development, together with a wider, "holistic approach," that is described in Topic 2, since it was considered likewise useful for the identification and definition of soft skills.

TOPIC 2. Soft skills identification and definitions for better employability
Common definitions and different stakeholders
The delegates suggested finding—through an appropriate literature review—some common definitions for "soft skills," in order to foster the establishment of a "universal understanding" of needed skill sets. Soft skills are different in each school/discipline and when viewed from a cross cultural perspective. It is important to align with academic work on soft skills to get clear definitions across institutions and countries, while taking

into account the different cultural perspectives.

Participants recommended working in connection with academics in this area, to establish partnerships with different stakeholders, to share resources and best practices, and to possibly create a standardized competency guide. They also suggested involving and connecting the entire community, employers, academia, policy makers, and others, to build partnerships and start conversations on the soft skill topic with all the stakeholders.

Communication with the labor market
One common suggestion to identify the soft skills for employability is the connection with the labor market and the improvement of communication between education providers and employers. It is important to compare community and employer needs and wants with program delivery. Partnerships with training departments of employers might facilitate the delivery of tailored career training workshops to students. It would be a useful idea to involve these departments in the identification of learning outcomes to be included in syllabus creation.

Delegates recommended the development, enhancement, and continuation of relationships with employers, in order to stay up-to-date on the most advanced and relevant soft skills. They also advocated the idea of conducting periodic employer surveys and embedding messages in social media because students pay attention to these outlets.

Participants suggested working with companies both at national and multinational levels and with employers of different sectors and fields. They also suggested enhancing employer engagement with students and faculty, and involving them more in career education and mentorship programs. One possible way to enhance communications and relationships with the labor market is envisioned in this scenario: employers present problems (real work problems) and faculty work with students to solve them. Employers can also be involved in the evaluation process and assessment of student work. More opportunities for internships and work experiences can be offered to students at various points during their academic careers.

Hear/understand the voice of students
The delegates suggested working directly with students and involving student associations to help ensure that students are part of decision making. Student associations can play an important role in setting up activities aimed at soft skill training and scenarios, and in fostering peer-to-peer support on soft skills development.

It is considered useful to develop learning outcomes for each opportunity and to organize specific training sessions to support students in communicating their skills. In this respect, it would be a good idea to work with career centers and counseling centers, to help students put "job description into practice," and provide students with abilities to self-assess critical skills over time.

A main idea is to tie soft skill development to a formal reflection piece so that students can identify their own soft skills and articulate them to employers. Another important task is considered teaching students how to more effectively interview with potential employers. For this reason it is considered useful to create check-in advising and counseling times for students with staff. Furthermore, it is opportune to involve alumni, not only to get an overview of student employment after graduation, but also to cooperate with them to identify the soft skills required by the job market.

Holistic approach

Through dialogue with different stakeholders it is possible to adopt a holistic approach in student development and to gain a global perspective on the job market and on the different cultural perspectives connected with soft skill importance for employability.

It is important to build joint strategies between students, student affairs, and employers and to promote students' initiatives, taking into account that soft skill programs that are not just "serving employers", but could enhance citizenship and social responsibility in students. In this respect, different kind experiences, with particular regard to international experiences, should be encouraged and evaluated.

It is further recommended to create co-curricular transcripts for work done by students on campus and to explore technology to authenticate co-curricular transcripts as needed. It is suggested to create tailored career consultation services to freshmen and senior students.

Specific courses, specific disciplines and/or experiences
For soft skill identification and definition for a better employability addressed in Topics 1 and 2, many tools and methods are recommended. Some delegates focused on specific courses, competences, and activities:

- communication skills
- writing skills and interview abilities
- classes where you learn how to read body language
- micro mimic
- problem solving
- flexibility
- self-confidence
- leading competence
- social skills
- psychology

Other participants concentrated more on the different methodologies and tools that could be used for soft skill development:

- integrate learning materials across disciplines
- development of learning materials that break down shell-sets need (---) in various areas;
- work simulations
- group works
- seminars and trainings of group development
- specialized mentorship programs partnering students and industry members
- working in the international group
- peer to peer work trained by examples
- create reflection opportunities in out-of-class experiences
- work experiences
- encourage part-time working
- internships that may substitute some theoretical exams
- seminaries with employers
- video curriculum
- creating an essay of aspiration (creating my dream)

Experiential learning programs and integrating soft skills as key components of all learning, including co-curricular work is a key element. While the majority of delegates suggested using specific courses for soft skill development, some of them highlighted the possibility of a "segmentation of soft skills by academic program," that is to have soft skill development "embedded" in the academic program rather than developed through other tools/courses.

TOPIC 3. Enhancing civil participation, global approach, social inclusion
Soft skill development should go beyond employability goals and should be aimed at fostering student involvement in social issues and planning for inclusion. Service-learning programs are useful to prepare students to be engaged citizens committed to equity and justice. The delegates described practical tools and strategies to raise student awareness and explored the relationships between service-learning, social justice, multicultural and international competence, and civic engagement.

Global Citizenship / Service learning
Soft skill development should focus on social justice and the goals of this training/education should go beyond employability. During the university period, students should acquire knowledge, competencies and skills to become "global citizens". In order to foster these skills, they should be involved in different kind of activities (volunteerism, community service, work experience in non profit organizations, etc.).

Students – together with faculty and staff – should also be involved in appreciating the differences (through the diversity available in their own universities, or through experiences abroad) and in planning for inclusion.

Civil participation, according to some of the participants, might be added to the requirement for passing related courses. Service learning might be adopted as a common approach for university curriculum. Some delegates indicated that it even become a "compulsory component" in the curriculum.

Citizenship, solidarity, humanitarianism, volunteerism, social justice, civic education, care of the environment are among the most frequent keywords indicated for this topic. Compulsory – voluntary are the two poles of the discussion.

The majority of participants agree on the importance of enhancing the relationships between university and local communities, in order to understand the community issues and work together to solve a problem. In this way, students might have work experiences in different communities. It is fundamental to increase students' civic engagement to improve our society and, again, this is perceived as a "job" of student affairs: "our work goes beyond employability and includes citizenship, justice, human rights."

Multicultural competence
Soft skills also include multicultural competence or cultural adaptability, i.e. the ability of using "global" lens for cross-cultural understanding. This might include the integration of learning about different cultures with service learning. The internationalization of soft skill training can be achieved offering international service learning opportunities, outside one's country, through worldwide programs.

Students might develop or enhance their multicultural competences through cultural "sharing" programs, student exchange programs, global meetings, i.e. student meetings from different countries, activities promoted by halls of residence involving both international and local students. This would produce sharing of best

practices, contamination of creative ideas and opportunities for social engagement.

It is important to help student learn the value of all voices and perspectives, incorporating voices "not at the table", i.e. caring for those who are not as privileged. The globalization of social justice training might involve partnerships with national and international associations.

There might also be forms of "internationalization at home"; for example, inviting visiting faculty and/or staff from other countries to meet with students; arranging thematic exhibition or sharing session on campus or in the community involving students' participation; enabling students of one culture to learn from others on their campus.

Raising awareness
In order to enhance student participation and promote their self-awareness and responsibility, it is useful to encourage their initiatives and then try – through specific tools - make them reflect and profit from the experiences. One possible device for reflection is intentional conversations on outcomes. It is important to focus on students' point of view, creating an environment for open debate; ask students what are they interested in and match existing opportunities with students' desires.

Students should also be involved in designing programs and in planning outcomes of activities aimed at the application of theory to practice in real world problems. For example, they can "use" and solve a real world problem from another country to enhance their social entrepreneurial mindset.

Tools
Among the tools considered useful to increase civil participation, foster global approach and promote social inclusion, delegates suggested:
- specific classes (constitution, law, politics)
- competences (cultural competency, cultural adaptability)
- activities (sport ad social activities; science circles; abroad-schedule / mobility; international conferences)
- strategies (experiential learning strategy; diversity training)
- methods (need assessment; co-working)
- environments (hubs for interaction; "ecosystems")

Service learning includes various conceptions and tools to stimulate students' involvement in social responsibility projects. University might give credits for civil participation projects or, at least, create a reward structure for students who engage in the community. Alumni might contribute money to support these initiatives, offering financial aid and/or incentives for social responsibility projects.

It would be a good idea to create a civil participation database, i.e. a database of volunteer activities/opportunities and partnership with university for recognition. To do that it is fundamental to connect with academic research, in order to gain a wider perspective on the possible activities.

TOPIC 4. Global interdisciplinarity and learning environments for students
The keywords indicated for this topic repeat some concepts already explored throughout Topic 3, as for example the importance of mobility programs to foster students' soft skills and civic engagement, the importance of

building partnerships and networks among institutions from different countries, and the necessity of creating a link between faculty and student affairs.

New were the focus on the linguistic skills developed through international experiences as tools to foster inter-cultural understanding; the use of technology to facilitate global conversations; the importance of promoting inter-disciplinary learning; and the impact of halls of residence on students' growth.

International experiences and global perspective
The delegates stressed the opportunity to envision shared goals for co-curricular learning at global level, increasing the number of exchanges and mobility programs, the possibility of studying abroad through partnerships with institutions and networking activities that involve students. Of course, this includes also staff exchanges, besides student exchanges, and the possibility for both staff and students to participate in multi-level summits / meetings.

Another way of achieving same result is to identify ways to increase global awareness locally within the campus environment. "Internationalization at home" means to foster global perspective for local engagement.

One of the participants reported a famous sentence by the Austrian philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein: "The limits of my language mean the limits of my world". Mobility programs, but also language courses and training sessions to better understand cultural expectations and ideas, help extend ones' limits. The exposure to different cultures might help achieve shared understanding and respect for differences that are "strengths" rather than barriers.

It is important to train students to be more successful in mobility projects, i.e. to get the most out of them. International experiences can help students develop specific soft skills, like flexibility and capacity to adapt, and foster a positive growth by enhancing their sense of responsibility, opening up their mind (teaching them to be curious), letting them enjoy the happiness of discovery and appreciate different cultures.

Technology to facilitate global conversations
The use of technology might help develop "low cost" opportunities of exchange, i.e., it allows to create/expand opportunities by finding creative ways to reduce barriers (e.g. financial).

Online/distance education opportunities are well known and important, but to facilitate "global conversations" the existing social media platforms might be enough. It is important to involve students in creating environments that might help reach a wider "global" audience.

This does not mean to "avoid" contacts in "real life", as someone pointed out. Some forms that might foster 'global conversations' were suggested: For example, it is might be very useful for students to organize, on a regular base, video-conference conversations between residents of different countries and create international, cross-cultural, and cross-institutional communities.

Impact of residential models
Halls of residence are recognized as learning environment supporting the "whole student", i.e. the holistic development of skills. One difficult task is to demonstrate this assumption, i.e. to find evidence on the effectiveness of this kind of learning environments.

It might be useful to develop specific tools of assessment in order to understand how integrated living environments can create greater exposure to diversity and, consequently help students' growth.

More and more residences are becoming "global", i.e. inclusive living environments that support student development. Different tools are used to foster this approach, as for example specific training programs on soft skills, cultural activities, sport activities and so on (even cooking lessons were indicated!).

Halls of residence are multicultural and multidisciplinary environments in which diversity is celebrated. They are communities where difference are respected and student socialization and conviviality is promoted, as well as the capability of working together, sharing experiences, enhancing individual responsibilities and civic participation.

Tag clouds

As for the brainwritings, the tag clouds also were analyzed to detect the most prominent terms and for locating them in order to determine their relative prominence. The tag clouds were digitalized (produced pen and paper during the Summit) and some are highlighted below.
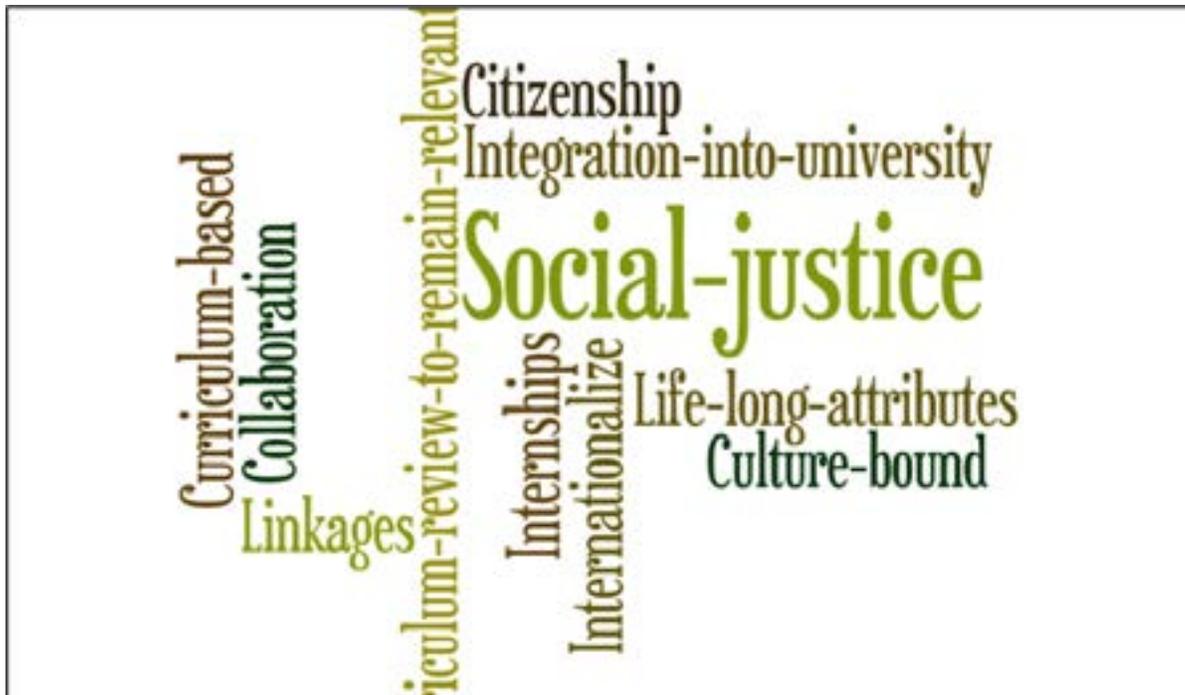

Fig. 5. Tag cloud – example 1.

In this example, one of the few in which the expression "soft skills" is included, the focus is on co-curricular (activities), community-services, interdisciplinary (learning), leadership and partnership. That means that when clustering the ideas produced, this group stressed the tools and the methods for soft skill development. Other important keywords are Association of students, Alumni, Internationalization and study abroad, that – in some way – develop and explain the meaning that this group attributes to the words partnership and leadership.
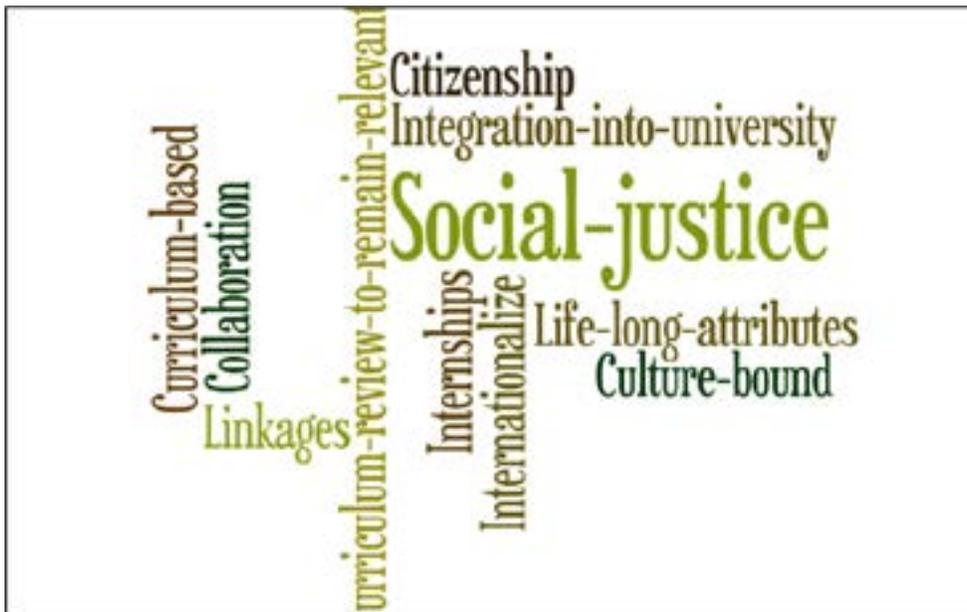
Fig. 6. Tag cloud - example 2

In Example 2 the emphasis is mainly on Topic 3, i.e. on all the ideas connected with soft skills as a tool to enhance citizenship, civil participation, global approach and inclusion. The focus is on social justice, stressing the importance of helping students developing skills ("life-long attributes") as "global citizens", a concept that goes beyond employability. At the same time, this tag cloud also highlights the importance of reviewing periodically the curriculum (since soft skill development is thought as "curriculum-based") in order to assure that it is "relevant", taking into account that very often soft skills are "culture-bound" and suggesting that students might get an overview of the different cultural and organizational needs through international experiences and internships.

Fig. 7. Tag cloud - example 3

In this example many different concepts are expressed. Central ideas are: 1) the focus both on students' and employers' needs ("Ask students and employers"); 2) the concept of Responsibility that had not previously emerged and is connected with Mobility, Solidarity, Exchange, Participation, and Politics. Another important cluster of concepts in this tag cloud is connected with the concepts of Sustainability and Citizenship, which put together specific targets (employers, teachers), specific tools (best practices, assessment), specific methodologies (peer-to-peer) and the ideas of Dialogue/Engagement/Initiative.

Many more tag clouds were produced, that synthesize the brainwriting results described in the previous paragraphs, but we just wanted to show some examples that illustrate how different groups processed the task.

SWOT Analysis

After the plenary (devoted to ice-breaking, gathering expectations, brainwriting and tag clouds), the first group working session started. The participants were split in transversal groups (that is group of "experts" in different topics) and were given precise instructions for each phase of group working:

- individual reading of the questions for each topic;
- individual answering the questions and or indicating case histories/ examples / best practices (post It);
- in 4-5 sharing the results and discussing/answering the questions/ drawing a map (one for each topic in group of 4-5);
- discussing together (each group was composed of about 15-16 people) on the general outcomes and creating a SWOT matrix.

Questions for the topics and subtopics were the same prepared for the discussion on the wiki and available at http://globalsummit2014.pbworks.com.

To help the participants fill the different areas, the following suggestions were also given.
STRENGTHS: Identify common issues upon which to build and collaborate, capitalizing on strengths, both common and unique.
OPPORTUNITIES: Discuss and find ways to enhance the visibility, credibility and impact of our work, react to global trends, and collaborate for the success of students.
WEAKNESSES/GROWTH: Identify critical research needs, synergizing around strategies for collection, analysis, and use of data.
THREATS: Explore drivers affecting higher education and student affairs and services work in particular on: Student Employability after Graduation; Competences and Global Civic Engagement.

The results of this working session were presented in the plenary by one or two spokespersons for each group.

In Table 3 the main ideas emerged and the common elements are represented. As one might observe, delegates concentrated more on Strengths and Opportunities rather than on Weaknesses and Threats and this is a sign of the very positive "climate" that characterized the debates, the exchanges and the group working sessions during the Global Summit.

STRENGTHS
- Best practices of leadership/ soft skill development evidence
- Assessment
- Best practice certificate
- Share understanding of employability
- Holistic learning / experience development
- Diversity of university community
- Open mindedness
- Thinking Glocally
- SAS enables access success
- SAS focus on meeting student needs
- SAS has direct knowledge on skills needed
- SAS collective voice (common goal) about extending work to increase skills, both for employability and to enhance student experience
- Appreciation of the importance of soft skills
- Holistic approach to support data collection
- Creative approaches to engage students
- Action orientation
- Good/positive work ethic
- Lifelong learning
- Navigating transition of students
- Self understanding /self development
- We know experiential learning has positive outcomes and could be expanded
- Residential experience: i.e. student activities measureable soft skills
- Connect alumni with students in order to provide mentorship programs, convey experiences and stress the importance of soft skills

OPPORTUNITIES
- Strong partnership within university for soft skill development
- Student readiness / engagement
- Staff to engage
- Engagement of student associations
- Employers engagement
- Employers seeking high quality students
- Capacity to link faculty with employers Mobility
- Ability to assess impact
- Ability to identify multiple methods to assess learning
- Common understanding of core skills
- Safe environment to challenge students
- University Population and Diversity
- Explore research from multi perspectives
- Information and communication technology
- Technology (Technology for collaboration)
- Soft skills transferable as work place changes
- Tools for lifelong learning
- Competency framework for students
- Mapping/measuring student experience

• Integration of the "out of the classrooms", i.e. life experience • Faculty don't see skill development as their role • SAS is "expert" on why engagement is important • Better morally informed decisions- allegiance to social justice value • Strong exchanges to share knowledge • Cross cultural education + experiences
WEAKNESSES (AREAS OF GROWTH) • Possibility for pre-planning • Professional development /skill attainment • Better use of data collection • Continual validation of profession • Lack of self esteem • Sense others don't understand • Gap not filled for various disciplines • Graduate follow up surveys • Hard to quantify our work
THREATS (DRIVERS AND TRENDS) • Lack of funding • Politics of SAS • Resources • Government Interference • Bureaucracy • No skill focus from pre-tertiary education • Unemployed graduates • Impact of different pedagogical processes • Homogenization of the field • Technology (constantly changing) • Language: agree on nomenclature and definitions (of soft skills – core competency)

Table 4. SWOT analysis

One of the groups produced a presentation that is available at: https://www.haikudeck.com/group-d-swot-education-presentation-NTaFDEyFwp#slide-2.
Four slides of this presentation are displayed in Figure 14.

Fig. 9 SWOT analysis produced by one of the groups

Group working session 2: Evaluating Ideas

In the second day, the working session was based on "expert" group discussions (taking into account the preference that participants had expressed) in order to get a deep insight into topics and to generate solutions and guidelines for future work.

After the morning plenary, devoted to outcomes discussion, the participants were split in four groups (one for each topic) with the "mandate" of producing a few guidelines, recommendations and a roadmap (the future of SAS) for each topic. For this task they used both the materials on the wiki and the results of work produced during the group working session of the previous day.

In order to be more efficient, participants were suggested (but not "obliged") to divide in subgroups relating to the different subtopics. Furthermore they were given hints and metaphors to help them in their reflection.

The four metaphors presented were the inspired to the Roman hills.
- The Capitolino hill (seeing things from a higher perspective): Use your imagination.
- The Aventino hill (seeing things from different perspectives): Use constraints: Time (short/medium/long); Budget/resources (limited/average/a great amount) – A template Matrix was provided for this part.
- The Palatino hill (seeing things from the institutional/policy perspective) prepare a list of strategic priorities, recommendations and guidelines

They were then asked to put together the work of the subgroups and prepare a presentation for the afternoon. The metaphors and the hints and tools provided are further illustrated in the following paragraphs.

Highlights from the final presentations

Defining Soft Skills
- Identify thought leaders
- who should come together to create/validate definitions:
- academics;
- higher education institutions;

- student affairs;
- students;
- alumni;
- industry;
- NGOs.

Soft skill definition
- Soft skills result in student success outcomes in:
  - retention;
  - educational attainment;
  - academic achievement;
  - employability
  - achieved through the development of a metacurricular education by holistically developing students:
  - intellectually;
  - emotionally;
  - socially;
  - ethically;
  - physically and
  - spiritually.

List of skills
  - communication: written and verbal;
  - teamwork;
  - problem solving;
  - critical thinking;
  - personal responsibility;
  - intercultural proficiency;
  - civic responsibility;
  - self-confidence/ self-reliance;
  - leadership;
  - empathy;
  - work ethics;
  - IT literacy;
  - numeracy skills;
  - self-awareness;
  - conflict management.

Measurement
  - Broad goals covered in Definition: Retention, Success, Employability.
  - Direct measures; those that students tell us made a difference.
  - Create or borrow existing measurement tools.
  - Repository of:
    - sample focus group questions;
    - questions for critical reflections;
    - survey question samples;
    - sample rubrics for evaluation of skills.

Create robust, valid, and valued assessment processes
- Address students, university, and industry.
- Find what is currently being done in assessment of soft skills (ex. Rowan University).
- Pilot several options.
- Consider different types of assessment:
  - co-curricular transcripts;
  - digital badging;
  - credentialing/certificates;
  - e-portfolio.
- Example: digital platform to provide both self and peer assessment of soft skills through a standardized process.
- who should come together to create assessment instrument:
  - academics;
  - higher education institutions;
  - student affairs;
  - students;
  - alumni;
  - industry.

Promote Importance of Infusing soft skill development into in and out of classroom experiences.
- Increase awareness of what is already happening that contributes to development
- Augment, "tweak" current curriculum to increase opportunities for soft skill development.
- Develop universal understanding and definition of "soft skills"
- Standardized Assessment of Soft Skills

Increase overall access to education and information
- Universities and Institutions of higher learning to move to a need blind process of financial support.
- Access needs to start at primary education level and inclusion of soft skill development in early developmental stages.

National/International & University Policies
- Explore alternative methods of financing internships and practicums.
- Invest in soft skills early (in primary and secondary education).
- Make study/employment outcomes transparent.
- Make professional skills courses mandatory and available for credit.
- Make continuing education programs widely available and simplify the credit transfer process.

Project idea: SSA (Soft Skill Advisor)
- Repository (interactive database) of best practices for soft skill development.
- Identify web-based tool (with an app version) to collect the world-wide best practices.
- Characteristics: searchable by category, soft skill, tools (including video, documents, assessments…); has a rating system by users who employ best practices.
- Incentives: recognized best-rated/most used.
- Free registration.

Next steps:
1. gather group of practitioners, stakeholders to design;
2. find an organization or more to host, support and promote;
3. potentially funded by employers and institutions;

4. could be fee-based;
5. summit with students to demonstrate success.

Enhancing civil participation, global approach, social inclusion
- Identify civil participation, creating the global citizen and diversity as strategic objectives in institution's strategic plan.
- Make community service a compulsory subject for all students:
    - build student map around specific outcomes to embed civil participation, diversity in student life.

Provide practical experience on an organized basis for students during the university period
- Internationalize the students' experience and curriculum
- Student exchanges
- Work/study opportunities in community
- Use of technology/collaborative teaching of existing subjects
- Embed cross-cultural activities in residency programs
- Hire consultant to develop competency model

Institute Staff Exchanges to increase cultural and civic awareness
- Provide cooperative education eg. Internships for students

Conduct survey to assess employers' needs:
- conduct survey to understand competency requirement of employers as well as base ideas for competency model
- connect students services, career centers and faculty in a deliberate manner to prepare students for employment
- seek grant funding for the development of competency model

Civil Participation. Global Approach, Social Inclusion: Potentials of Student Affairs
a) Practices: Service Learning Internship
How: Part of curriculum. Graduation Requirement
b) Internationalization to foster intercultural understanding and global mindedness
How: many service learning projects are cross border
c) Student Affairs Units to facilitate students to put theory into practice in the process
d) Approaches:
    1. whole Institute/Campus approach;
    2. multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary collaboration
    3. Leverage on resources from outside campus: e.g. NGO, UNESCO
e) Use of ICT in T&L (Teaching & Learning) has enhanced and empowered Student Affairs unitis to better facilitate student holistic development. e.g. Mahara, Moodle, e-portfolio, timely guidance

Living together
- Every spring: placement exchange
- Providing educational/personal development programs for students
- Reality: train every year again a large part of staff, which is new in the field
- Idea/Conclusion: to develop a core curriculum

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- Europe: low fluctuation rate
- Only a small share of students live in residences
- If, then only a few number of educational/personal development programs
- Special programs for international students

Similarities - Differences
  ⯈ Challenge/Observation: Living together quite different between the countries
- Increasing number of international students worldwide
- Suitable support in host countries needed
    – Residences
    – Counseling services
    – Etc.
- Staff has to be enabled to work with them
- Question: what can we learn from each other?

What is needed?
- Sharing practices and values
- widen International/intercultural competence in view of increasing diversity of students
- widen knowledge about students home country background: culture, education system,

What should be done?
- Sharing experiences
- Develop staff skills and competences in international experience and competence by
    – Staff exchanges
    – Staff Internships
    – Advanced trainee programs
    – Staff training, staff exchanges – resources only partly available
    – Web-based information - podcasts

Conclusions

This document presents a spectrum of issues related to student affairs and services resulting from the 2014 Global Summit on Student Affairs and Services. The introductory material was designed to provide readers with background on the program and introduce the material in the publication. The theoretical framework drives the Global Summit process and is outlined in some degree of detail to help frame the Summit content and provide context. The methodology employed for the creation and categorization of data emerging from the participants was similarly outlined and explained so that the process utilized is clear. The results from the program are many and exciting, and the issues raised and discussed must continue to be furthered in the future. This final section takes the results of the Summit presented earlier, and attempts to make meaning of those results within the international context of student affairs and services.

A number of overarching themes arose during the Global Summit, from participants and presenters. Now what is to be done with this information? How can this inform research and practice moving forward? What implications are derived from these results? Soft skill development should also focus on social justice and the goals of soft skill training should go beyond employability.

It is fundamental to increase students' civic engagement to improve society and this is perceived as a "job" of student affairs: "our work goes beyond employability and includes citizenship, justice, human rights" (see brainwriting results section Topic 3).

Employability

There is an acute need for college graduates to have skills that lead to solid employment. Ensuring that students are provided with opportunities while in college to practice and refine skills learned in the curriculum and the cocurriculum is critical to help them gain necessary knowledge and abilities that are paramount for both educational and employment organizations. Greater collaboration and communication among colleges and universities and employers would further the dialog about preparing students appropriately for a global marketplace.

More formalized mechanisms for sharing information and exploring mutual expectations could lead to more powerful relationships among employers and educators. Communication methods and systems already in place can be shared among colleagues, and countries/regions that are doing good work in this area can be featured and supported. The extent to which higher education institutions and employers do and can work together is dependent upon the country and culture, yet more attention to this connection and continuum is necessary to prepare students to succeed after college and in the workplace.

Soft skills

Soft skills are variously defined and referred to by numerous names, and individual skills will vary in importance and relevancy between countries and regions. It is important to understand that soft skills can go by multiple names, yet they remain the key building blocks for life-long learning and success.

Soft skills can be considered as "core business" of student affairs and services, and for this reason, a stronger synergy is required between academics and student affairs and services professionals in order to integrate soft skill development programs in the university curriculum.

One of the most original concepts emerged during the final discussion; the idea of creating an interactive database, the "Soft Skills Advisor" (SSA), to collect world-wide best practices on soft skill development. The dataset can be accessed by category, soft skill, tool (including video, documents, assessments, etc.). It might also have a rating system based on the feedback provided by users who have tested the best practices.

A database or repository, or listing/compilation of soft skills could be created to demonstrate their full spectrum of learning. Definitions and examples could be included, which could then be used as promising practices, ideas, and/or adapted among student affairs and services practitioners for deployment in their institutions.

Identifying and then adapting soft skills is just the beginning of the process for student affairs and services. How these skills are infused in the curriculum and cocurriculum is a critical consideration, and should be reviewed carefully within the local context. The most relevant outcomes or measures of these strategies will vary based on institutional and other constituency influences, such as state governments and accrediting organizations. Nevertheless, it is important to set realistic measures and use collected data to drive change in programs and services.

The Intersection of Employability and Soft Skills

The development and acquisition of soft skills, and the concepts related to employability, go hand in hand. Intentionality of the identification of essential learning outcomes, the training associated with them, and their ultimate measurement are critical to the success of college graduates, the higher education enterprise, and the competiveness and viability of those who employ college graduates. Extrapolated further, one can see the

significant impact this can have on entire countries, regions, and a global society. The ability to think critically, innovate, problem solve, and communicate effectively are the collective fuel that drives the engine of productivity and human capital.

The sense of agreement around these topics demonstrates the urgency for higher education to join with employers to create meaningful and reciprocal relationships that benefit students, which in turn propel the organizations forward successfully.

This document demonstrates various ways in which learning outcomes can be identified and how they can be taught in the academy. Measuring the outcomes of these efforts is a task of all involved, and students also have a critical role in their own success.

Cooperation and Collaboration

Key leaders in student affairs and services must continue to come together to discuss and ameliorate issues—both common and distinct—related to the work done with and for students in higher education. Synergy can be generated through the process of face-to-face interaction and intentional community building that was previously unattainable. Because not all budgets and circumstances allow for face-to-face communication, programs and opportunities should be as affordable as possible and integrate appropriate technologies that allow for meaningful interactions even if not everyone is in the same physical location.

Deep, meaningful partnerships between student affairs and services departments and personnel, and a number of other constituencies, are important foundations for lasting relationships that benefit everyone, and especially students. Employers, academic affairs, alumni, and other key internal and external entities working together can create synergy around issues such as leadership development, learning outcomes, and internationalization. Furthermore, participants shared how the global summit provided significant value by being able to network with others from different regions and share with them ideas that could be adapted to their work.

Student affairs and services staff desire to strategically partner with areas that make sense around specific topics, issues, or areas of mutual interest. A lack of resources is forcing student affairs and services to be more strategic with expenditures and use of resources. A way to address and identify impending issues is to work together as a coalition or affiliated group, share resources, and communicate broadly. Holding the Global Summit semi-annually has proven to help address this need to meet in person, yet other methods of collaboration should be brainstormed and implemented.

Research and Exchange

Cross-border, co-generated research would help demonstrate the value student affairs and services provide to students while maintaining an appropriate cultural context. Generating research will help share the perspective of student affairs and services, and help others understand the multiple and varied aspects of this work. Research on relevant topics must continue to be completed, and forums such as the Global Summit can be incubators for this type of activity.

Connections are made among colleagues on common areas of interest, and intentionality can be overlaid on these relationships so that research, writing, and collaborative efforts can progress along planned lines, and be explored within frameworks that help student affairs and services professionals support higher education

institutions, students, and ultimately greater societal goals.

Like research collaboration, exchange programs are highly valued experiences that enrich the professional lives of those who participate. Like "study abroad" programs on university campuses, exchange programs for student affairs and services staff should continue to expand, and build on the base established by professional associations and individual higher education institutions. Staff exchanges are essential at all levels of an organization, and efforts should be made to support staff who desire to take part in these types of international activities.

The Profession of Student Affairs and Services
The role of student affairs and services and those that work in the area are largely misunderstood or not understood by a significant cross section of the global higher education community and by those with whom student affairs and services practitioners interact regularly. The value of the work is often unrecognized and undervalued as a consequence. Demonstrating the value of student affairs and services in ways that others understand, for example, attainment of learning outcomes and impact on graduation rates, is important and challenging work.

Philosophy and delivery methods for student affairs and services are dramatically different across borders. Outside of ideology and approach, to what extent are student affairs and services practitioners professionalized? While not an aspiration, and potentially inappropriate in some cultures, are student affairs and services staff coming together within countries and regions in formal or informal ways? It is important that the role and mission of student affairs and services first be fully understood by those doing the work so that the message can be communicated to others in cogent ways.

Professionalization of student affairs and services is a significant consideration for many regions of the world. The thrust of internationalization buoyies student affairs and services within the context of globalization. Many countries and world regions seek to identify milestones and measures for establishing a student affairs and services framework. Professionalization means different things in different cultures, and has differing levels of import. Milestones of professionalization might include common training, an affinity group or association, agreed upon values, establishment of a publication, or other efforts that lead toward self-organizing.

Among the key elements of professional development are identification of core competencies, and a common philosophy undergirding the work of student affairs and services. Core competencies are necessary to guide the work, and provide the basis for educational content and a research agenda, and establish a baseline for staff training. Providing practical experiences for students is essential for their growth and development, as is an approach that is holistic in nature as it relates to students skills, development, and learning. Measuring these activities and using the assessment results establishes a knowledge base that informs input on critical issues and policy development.

A social justice lens, while conceptualized differently in different areas of the world, resonates across many regions in one form or another. Many educational organizations are providing opportunities for students to engage with their local community and the global community. This civic engagement is important to the development of students and the local community in particular, and the global community more broadly. As mentioned earlier, this simultaneous focus on global and local has become known as a "glocal" approach.

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http://www.eurostudent.eu. Report and data can be downloaded

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