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HERE
Erasmus+
NATIONAL ERASMUS+ OFFICE OF TUNISIA
HIGHER EDUCATION REFORM EXPERTS

INTERNATIONALIZATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM IN TUNISIA

 14&15.11.2024

 HÔTEL MÖVENPICK DU LAC, TUNIS



Funded by
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INSCRIPTION



BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Internationalization of higher education is a topic of intense interest for universities worldwide, as a key factor in guaranteeing full academic achievement and enhancing the competitiveness and innovation capacity of universities in a globalized world.

Internationalization has a positive impact on the higher education and research ecosystem giving rise to a “boomerang effect”: the system sees its quality improved by strengthening skills, promoting diversity, developing educational innovation. Therefore, the components of the system are opening to new international opportunities and further partnerships.

The internationalization of higher education is a dynamic process, influenced by both global trends and national policies. Central to this process is student mobility, which serves as a catalyst for enhancing the quality of education and research. Tunisia has developed a reputation as a viable destination for international students, supported by initiatives aimed at improving academic visibility and fostering international cooperation. Although Tunisia is an emerging destination for international students, the proportion of foreign students remains at just 2%, significantly below the international standard of 10%. This presents a challenge in terms of aligning with global benchmarks required for international diploma accreditation, and expanding support mechanisms, including funding and infrastructure, for international students.

While Tunisia's higher education system already enjoys a degree of international recognition, it faces challenges in aligning its student mobility and cooperation mechanisms with global standards. The main issues of HE internationalization that require further attention and investigation include, among others, “Internationalization of the Curriculum”, “mobility of students and recruitment of international students”, “quality assurance and recognition of degrees”, “Internationalization of Research”, “development of consortia and multilateral cooperation”, and more particularly “governance and policy”.

In this perspective, an upcoming Seminar on the internationalization of Higher Education, is scheduled for November 14-15, 2024, in Tunisia. This seminar is carried out as a Technical Assistance Mission (TAM) funded by the European Union as part of Tunisian HERE activities in the Framework of Erasmus + Program. The event is organized under the auspices of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific research, by National Erasmus+ Office of Tunisia in collaboration with the European Union Delegation in Tunisia (DUE) and the National Agency for the Promotion of Scientific Research.

The seminar is initiating a broad debate with the university community on how to wisely steer the internationalization of higher education. During this seminar, we focus on three core strategic axes: Internationalization of the Curriculum, student and staff mobility, and international partnerships, with the aim to reveal a global roadmap for internationalization in higher education.

GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

The seminar is organized to explore HE internationalization in a participative, comprehensive and multi-level framework. It will focus on defining strategic priorities and guidelines towards a comprehensive HE internationalization strategy. It will carry out a diagnosis, SWOT analysis and stakeholder expectations analysis to assess the current status of HE internationalization efforts at national and institutional levels. Additionally, the seminar will focus on setting up the key objectives and priorities for a national strategy for the internationalization of higher education. Furthermore, the seminar will provide tools and key organizational aspects for implementation and monitoring.

TARGET AUDIENCE

- Presidents and Vice-presidents of universities.
- Policymakers from the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research.
- Faculty, staff and other university professionals.
- Students, researchers and professionals engaged in HE international programs and mobility programs.

PROGRAM AND FORMAT

The seminar is structured over two days, designed to address both theoretical concepts and practical approaches for fostering Higher education internationalization in Tunisia.

The first day will focus on key concepts, current challenges. It will include three sessions. The first session will feature a keynote address exploring the definition, benefits, and strategies for internationalization, with insights into successful case studies from around the world.

The second session will focus on the current state of internationalization in Tunisia, providing a SWOT analysis and examining key factors such as student mobility, diploma recognition, and campus attractiveness. Quality assurance practices and benchmarking will also be highlighted as essential for measuring and improving the international standing of Tunisian universities.

This will be followed by a panel session on governance structures, where experts will explore key performance indicators, the role of technology, and strategies for integrating international perspectives into curricula, research, and university missions.

The second day will focus on drafting a road map for establishing a comprehensive strategy for the internationalization of Tunisian higher education through collaborative workshops. Four focus groups will be tasked with exploring core themes: curriculum internationalization, research collaborations, student and staff mobility, and enhancing international partnerships. Led by experts, these groups will work towards defining actionable steps and best practices for implementing a national internationalization strategy. The objective is not only to enhance Tunisia's academic visibility globally but also to ensure that its higher education institutions align with international standards, thereby increasing their competitiveness and appeal to international students and scholars.

The seminar will be led by Prof. Hans De Wit, who will share his experience in developing and implementing national HE internationalization strategies.



Expert Biography
PROF. HANS DE WIT

Hans de Wit is Professor Emeritus of the Practice, Distinguished Fellow and Former Director (2015-2020) of the Center for International Higher Education, Boston College, USA. Before joining CIHE, he was Director of the 'Centre for Higher Education Internationalisation' (CHEI) at the Università Cattolica Sacro Cuore in Milan, Italy, and Professor of Internationalization of Higher Education at the Amsterdam, University of Applied Sciences. He was Vice-President for International Affairs of the University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands, 1996-2003.

He is a globally recognized expert in the field of higher education internationalization. His work focuses on the global mobility of students, international partnerships, and the development of strategies for higher education internationalization.

The seminar will be a great opportunity to discuss and share current developments, experiences and best practices in higher education internationalization, and will allow us to collectively formulate the HE Internationalization priorities and set the direction/guidelines for establishing a national strategy for the internationalization of higher education.

PROGRAM

DAY 1: NOVEMBER 14, 2024

09:00 - 09:30	<p>Opening Session</p> <p>Mr. Malek KOCHLEF, General Director of International Cooperation, MESRS, Tunisia Mr. Rajeh KHEMIRI, International Cooperation Officer, Higher Education, European Union Delegation in Tunisia Mr. Chedly ABDELLY, General Director of National Agency for the Promotion of Scientific Research Mrs. Nesrine BAKLOUTI, National Erasmus+ Office Coordinator, Tunisia Mr. Giuseppe PERRONE, Ambassador of the European Union to Tunisia Mr. Mondher BELAID, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research in Tunisia</p>
	Session 1: Internationalization of the HE System: Key Concepts
09:30 - 09:45	The Internationalization of Higher Education in the Mediterranean, Current and Prospective Trends (focus on Tunisia), Mr. Marcello SCALISI, Director of UNIMED – Mediterranean. Universities Union
09:45 - 10:00	Overview of the internationalization of Tunisian Higher Education System Mr. Malek KOCHLEF, DGCI, Tunisia
10:00 - 10:40	<p>Key-note speech: Critical Reflections on strategies for internationalization of Higher Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is internationalization? - Why: Benefits and impact? - How we can internationalize the sector: approaches and processes - Examples and success stories. <p>Mr. Hans DE WIT, Expert UE.</p>
10:40 - 11:00	Questions & Answers
11:00 - 11:30	Coffee Break
	Session 2: Internationalization of National Higher Education System: Analysis of current situation and future challenges
11:30 - 11:45	HE internationalization: Situation Analysis (SWOT analysis), Mrs. Maha HAMMAMI and Mr. Anis ROUISSI, HERE Experts
11:45 - 11:50	Student testimony, Alumini Student
11:50 - 12:30	Panel session: Mobility, recognition of diplomas & attractiveness of university campuses Mr. Samir BECHA, DGES, Mrs. Ahlem DHAKLAOUI, DG DGAE, Mr. Lotfi BELKACEM, Sousse University President, Mrs. Nesrine BAKLOUTI, NEO Coordinator, Mrs. Kaouthar MAROUANI, HERE Expert
12:30 - 13:30	Benchmarking and Quality Assurance of internationalization: Introduction by Mr. Hans de Wit, followed by Question & Answers
13:30 - 14:30	Lunch Break
	Session 3: Internationalization governance
14:30 - 15:00	Joint programs and diplomas, Prof. Ahmed CHEIKH LARBI, DGRU Internationalization and scientific research, Prof. Mourad BELLASSOUED, DGRS Horizon Europe and Internationalization in Tunisia, Prof. Helmi MERDASSI, DG UGPO, Horizon Europe Tunisia
15:00 - 16:30	<p>Mr. Hans DE WIT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Towards an internationalization strategy: KPIs, assessment, 2. Opportunity of technology and impact on internationalization 3. Internationalization of curricula 4. Student and staff mobility 5. Internationalization of society and third mission of the university 6. Internationalization of Research <p>How a university can manage its cooperation projects? Best practices for a good national and institutional governance Introduction of each theme by Hans de Wit, followed by panel discussion</p>

CONCLUSION AND CLOSING DAY 1

PROGRAM

DAY 2: NOVEMBER 15, 2024

08:30 - 09:15	Opening & welcome coffee
09:15 - 09:30	1st day Wrap up: Mrs. Sonia ABDELHAK & Mrs. Kaouther MAROUENI, HERE Experts
09:30 - 10:00	Workshop: How we can draft a Tunisian strategy for internationalisation of the higher education system (focus groups), Mr. Malek KOCHLEF & Mr. Hans DE WIT Introduction of Focus groups Objectives: *exploring key components of a HE internationalization strategy and conceptualizing a successful implementation plan
10:00 - 11:15	Focus Group 1: Internationalization of the Curriculum
10:00 - 11:15	Focus Group 2: Internationalization of Research
Coffee Break	
11:30 - 12:30	Focus Group 3: Student and Staff Mobility
11:30 - 12:30	Focus Group 4: International partnerships and cooperation
12:30 - 14:00	Lunch Break
14:00 - 15:00	Feedback from the four Focus Groups: key indicators for a Tunisian Strategy
CONCLUSION AND CLOSING DAY 2	