



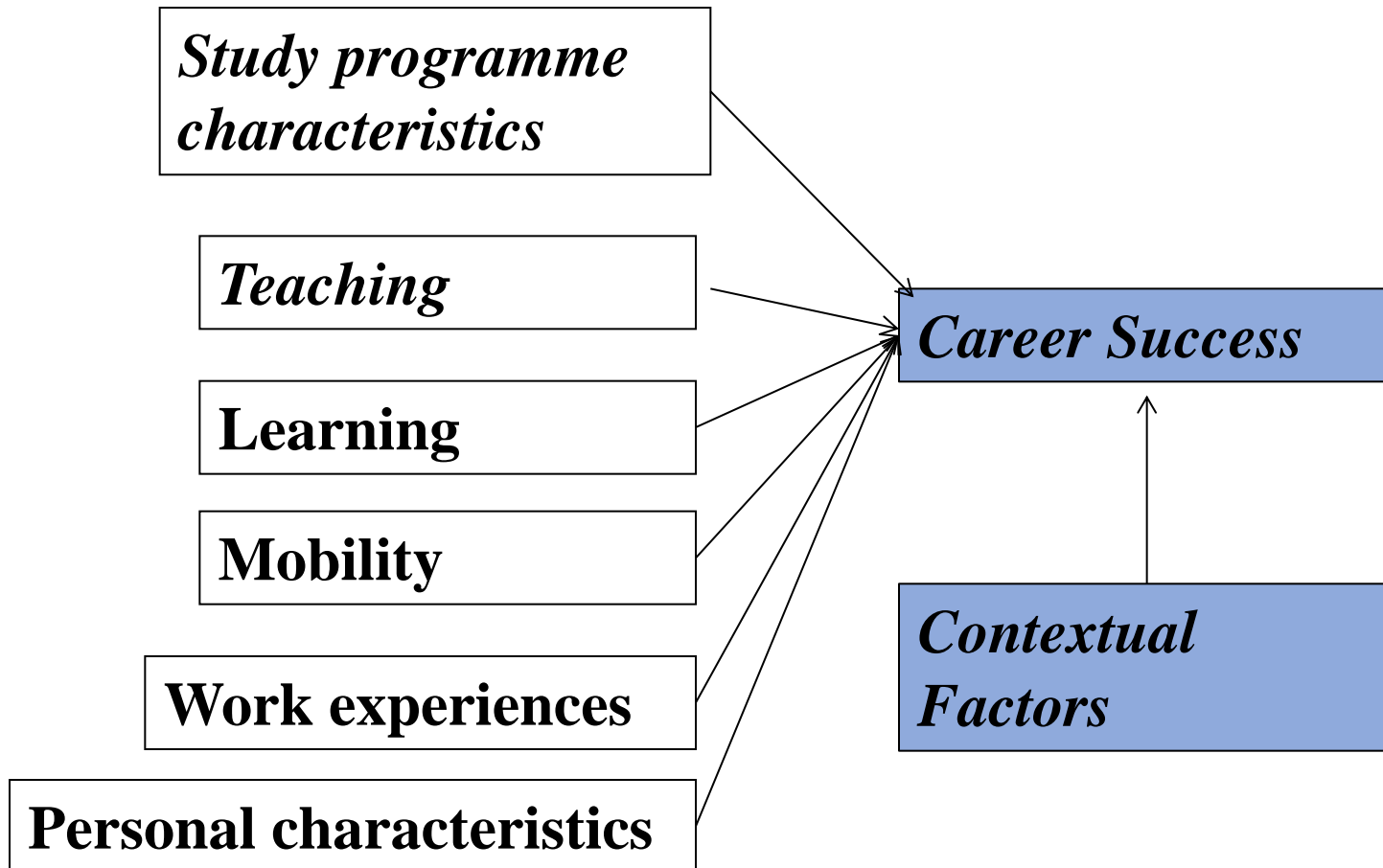
# Placing Development of Learners' Competencies to the Context of University-Business Cooperation: *Selected Findings from Three European Projects*

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# Developmental Framework



# The HEGESCO Project

- Short for Higher Education as a Generator of Strategic Competences
- Which competences are needed for successful entry into the labour market?
- Graduate survey based on methodology of earlier survey REFLEX and its predecessor CHEERS
- REFLEX: Transition from HE to work in 15 European countries + Japan; HEGESCO extension to Eastern Europe; PROFLEX extension to South America
- Gross frame 110.000 graduates 5 years after leaving HE
- Response rate around 33 %
- Information on career in HE and transition to labour market
- Erasmus LLP multilateral project
- Start November 2007 – finish December 2009

# Framework on results

- **Higher Education Experiences** (Program characteristics; Modes of teaching and learning; Study behavior; Experiences acquired during higher education)
- **The Transition and Early Career** (Transition; Current labour force status; Quality of employment; Evaluation of study program)
- **The Role of Higher Education in Producing Relevant Competences** (Required and acquired competences; Strong and weak points of study program; Determinants of competencies)
- **The World of Work and the Demand for Competences** (Characteristics of work organizations; Characteristics of jobs; The effect of organizational and job characteristics on the demand for competences)

## Competencies which are in high demand

- mastery in own field;
- the ability to use time efficiently,
- the ability to work productively with others
- Ability to perform well under pressure
- ability to use computer and internet

## How to foster development of key competencies? (Allen, Pavlin, Van der Velden, 2011), BY;

- Learning what competencies are important on the LM
- Strengthening co-operation between higher education and employers;
- Encouraging relevant work experiences;
- Fostering students' motives and talents;
- Making higher education more demanding;
- Alerting employers what they can expect from HE graduates;
- Consider well the assessment;
- Consider well combination of classical vs. new learning approaches

# DEHEMS project

- DEHEMS short for '*Network for Development of Higher Education Management Systems*'
- Key Research Questions: “What are determinants of graduates early career success? → How does HE management take into account employability data and surveys? → How HE management should/could them take into account / How much is and should be evidence driven?”
- 6 Countries : TR, IT, SI, AT, DE and PL
- Erasmus Network Project (LLL)
- Duration : October 2009 – September 2012

## Components of graduates career/employability success (DEHEMS, 2012)

- Employment stability (type of contract, job security);
- Payment;
- Promotion at work (long term careers);
- Utilization of knowledge and human capital at work – skill match;
- Professional status and prestige;
- Work autonomy;
- Satisfaction.



## Determinants of graduates career/employability success (DEHEMS, 2012)

- *General study programme characteristics* (type of study (BCs/Masters), reputation, study fields, short vs. long term focus, study demands, ...);
- *Teaching modes* (examinations, PBL, presentations, assignments, research, ...);
- *Learning attitudes and study success;*
- *International mobility;*
- *(Relevant) work experiences;*
- *Individual and Sociodemographic characteristics* (gender, children, parents education).

# What academics believe HE should do to help graduates in employment?

## *Academics:*

- Supporting graduates careers: developing general and field-specific competencies by strengthening **practical training, internationalisation** and improvements **teaching and learning modes**;
- the need to establish and improve the work of career centres and establish systems for tracking graduates has not been seen from the HE system perspective as a priority in all study domains and countries;
- HE managers and staff perceive graduates' career dimensions and their determinants in a surprisingly intuitive way – they are aware only of few dimension.

## *Employers, trade unions and students:*

- want any improvements in HE to be based on hard facts, such as the results of graduates' tracer surveys;
- they want these results to become broadly available, and integrated into HE systems in a transparent way;
- they want to have a formal role in processes related to transition from education to work.

# The EMCOSU Project

- LLP Project
- Duration: 9/2012–3/2015
- Coordinator: University of Ljubljana
- Project partners:
  - Slovenia – University of Ljubljana
  - Spain – University of Deusto
  - Netherlands – University of Groningen
  - Slovenia – Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia
  - Hungary – Chamber of Commerce and Industry of County Zala
  - Bulgaria – Business Foundation for Education
  - Poland – Polish Chamber of Commerce
  - Spain – High Council of Official Chambers of Commerce, Industry
- Associated partners: EURASHE, Petrozavodsk State University (Russia), TUNING Association
- *Key question: Which are the most relevant modes of cooperation between universities and enterprises and what determines them?*

# Key UBC modes

- Research and development
- Mobility of students
- Mobility of academic staff
- Curriculum development
- Adult education

Instrument has been developed in relation to: a) “Study on the cooperation between Higher Education Institutions and public and private organisations in Europe (2011)” implemented by Münster University of Applied Sciences and funded by the European Commission; b) the HEGESCO project (short for Higher Education as a Generator of Strategic Competencies) coordinated by the University of Ljubljana and funded by the Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Commission; and c) conceptual work of Professor Alice Lam (Royal Holloway, University of London).

# Areas of Interest in the Large Scale Survey among Employers

- Recruitment practices
- Assessment of acquired graduates competencies
- Modes and activities of university business cooperation
- Attitude towards university business cooperation
- Beliefs about the future changes of higher education institutions
- Drivers and barriers of university business cooperation
- Outcomes of university business cooperation

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# Concluding considerations

- *Views of HEI and employers on UBC developments are in many ways very similar*
- *There are highly diverse forms of university-business cooperation and its determinants*
- *Bureaucratic obstacles should be removed because enterprises regard them as the biggest barrier to cooperation with universities*
- *The development of competencies is perceived as the key outcome of UBC, and the performance of business as the least important*
- *Enterprises believe higher education should increase the practical orientation of teaching and enhance traineeships and internships – both processes have been identified as the main strategic developmental path*
- *Companies do not agree with the idea that university-business cooperation should be limited to basic research or even remain separate from industry*
- *Employers' associations have the potential to become stronger promoters of UBC*

# Integrative view on UBC and EMPLOYABILITY

- The need for greater integration of both research perspectives
- Consider particularities of professional domains
- Consider triangulation principles in further research
- Be aware of precarious employment and deprofessionalisation of professional work
- Do not underestimate hard facts and data on employability of graduates
- Consider how UBC can be applied to domains with low commercial potential

Thank you for your attention!

More info on:

[www.hegesco.org](http://www.hegesco.org)

[www.dehems-project.eu](http://www.dehems-project.eu)

[www.emcosu.eu](http://www.emcosu.eu)