



INTEGRATING ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND WORK EXPERIENCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION



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DIRECTORS MESSAGE

Greetings from Groningen



Prof. Robert Wagenaar

Will I be able to find a job after graduation which is according to my interests, capabilities and level of education? This is a question most students will raise when they are in the final stage of their higher education studies.

In particular since the global financial crisis of 2008 which resulted in high youth unemployment all over Europe, the issue of being best prepared for the workplace has become vital. This should be a prime concern of both students and educators. It also is very much the interest of potential employers

who express concern in surveys about the skills gap graduates have when they enter the labour market. An appropriate response to bridging this gap is work-based learning (WBL). Building-up work experience during and just after one's studies as interns or trainees, or – a rather new development – including entrepreneurship in the curriculum to prepare graduates for starting their own business, are the modes of WBL that are addressed by WEXHE.

Experience shows that both HE institutions and employers, in particular small and medium sized

enterprises (SMEs), are in need of replicable modules to facilitate WBL. Delivering these modules is the task taken up by the WEXHE consortium, a cooperation of HE institutions and employer organizations based in 7 different European countries.

This brochure offers insight into the background of and programmes to establish these modules, which we expect will make a real difference in making WBL an integral part of educational programmes, and thus preparing graduates better for the labour market.

WHY WEXHE PROJECT?

Our Goals and Objectives

WEXHE aims to support the development of work-based learning relating to HE internships/work placements, apprenticeships and entrepreneurship in European higher education institutions (HEIs). This will enhance the value of HE and support the transition of graduates into employment and career success.

More specifically, the WEXHE projects aims to find sustainable solutions to:

- shortcomings in the labour market orientation of Higher Education
- imbalance between practical and theoretical learning in HE
- mismatches between skills sets of graduates and skills required during their early careers

The project will address these challenges by:



Building on past research and existing practice



Engaging stakeholders and practitioners



Developing tools and capacity



Informing policy and piloting ways forward



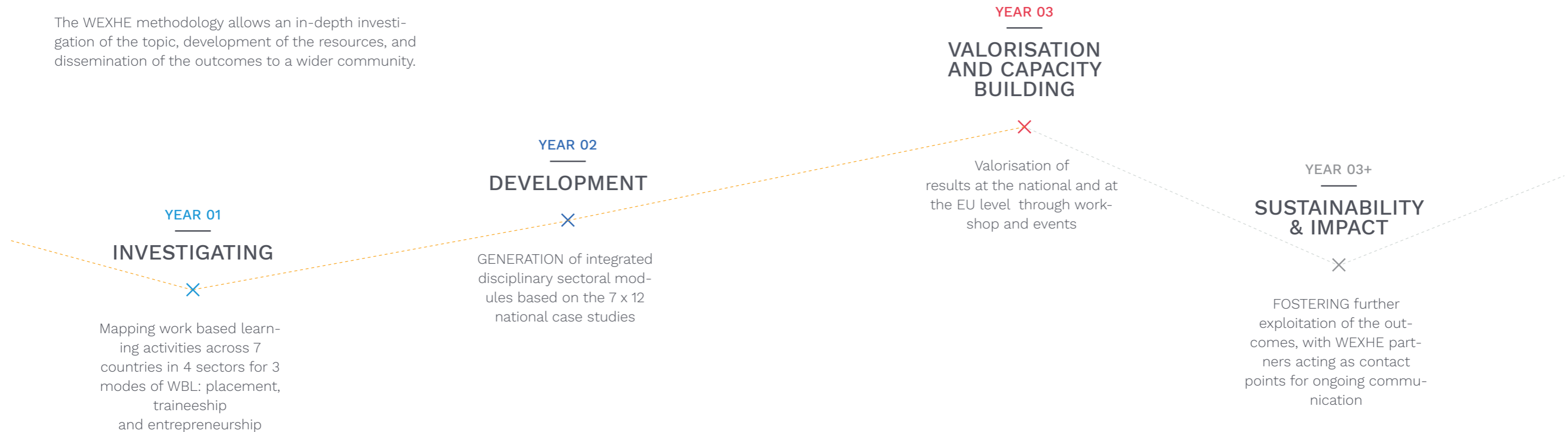
Our objectives are to

- 01.** increase capacity of HE staff and enterprises to provide high quality work experience and entrepreneurship
- 02.** identify what kind of Work Based Learning (WBL) leads to high quality job
- 03.** support the accreditation of WBL through ECTS and effective Quality Assurance
- 04.** ensure that skills needs of employers are understood
- 05.** review existing and support further policy development in the field covered

MILESTONES & KEY OUTPUTS

Our Goals and Objectives

The WEXHE methodology allows an in-depth investigation of the topic, development of the resources, and dissemination of the outcomes to a wider community.



1: Cyprus, Germany, Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Slovenia and the UK

2: Hard-Pure: Biology, Environmental Science, Soft-Pure: History, Literary and Cultural Studies, Hard-Applied: Electrical and Mechanical Engineering, Soft-Applied: Management and Business Studies

3: National and International workshops “Training trainers and teachers from companies and HE” targeted to Work placements, Traineeships and Entrepreneurships & policy workshop events

4: Via channels and multipliers, e.g. WEXHE project website, national networks, WEXHE Journal, Tuning Journal for Higher Education, further European Networks

IMPACT

Stakeholder Benefits

The WEXHE project aims to create an impact on a wide range of different stakeholder groups in the educational and business ecosystem



HIGHER EDUCATION LEADERSHIP



HEIs will benefit from better aligning their curriculum to the demands of practice, from opportunities to improve accreditation of informal learning, better positioning with student recruitment and improved relationships with industry.

HIGHER EDUCATION STAFF



HEI lecturers will benefit from getting access to validated work experience models which can be adapted to their HEI environments. Staff will enhance their professional capability, gain recognition and obtain formal accreditation.

STUDENTS



Students will benefit from greater access to high quality work experience that will be better integrated with their studies, better accredited and better supported and organised.

GRADUATES



Graduates will benefit through greater access to high quality internships that will support their careers, deliver appropriate specialised and generic competences and facilitate employment

INDUSTRY



Staff from enterprises will be involved in training to improve the quality of internships. Enterprises will gain guidance and quality tools designed to support their role in providing work experience for students and graduates.

POLICY-MAKERS



Policymakers will benefit from a better understanding how work experience can contribute to the modernisation of HE, to enhancing the value of HE and its contribution to employment, economic growth and social goals.

CONSORTIUM

WEXHE Project Partners

WEXHE Project brings together ten partners from enterprises, associations and HEIs based in eight countries in Europe.

Extensive knowledge and expertise of each partner ensures achievement of the project goals regarding WBL policy and practice development in a dedicated manner.



University of Groningen
(Coordinating organisation)
The Netherlands



University of Warwick
The UK



ENQA
Belgium



EURASHE
Belgium



Spanish Chamber of Commerce
Spain



UIIN
The Netherlands



Polish Chamber of Commerce
Poland



Münster University of Applied Sciences
Germany



University of Ljubljana
Slovenia



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Integrating Entrepreneurship and
Work Experience in Higher Education



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