*Highlights from EURASHE since the*

*latest meeting of the BFUG in Athens (Greece) on 9-10 April 2014*

## EURASHE 25th Annual Conference: Professional Higher Education as a Key Factor for the Future of Society

EURASHE will organise its celebratory 25th Annual Conference titled ‘Professional Higher Education as a Key Factor for the Future of Society’ in Lisbon (Portugal) on 16-17 April 2015. It will be organised by EURASHE and the Portuguese Polytechnics Coordinating Council (CCISP) and hosted at the Lisbon School of Health Technology (ESTeSL).

It will focus on the topics of institutional management, education, research, quality management and international cooperation and the involvement of the world of work, on different levels, in it. In order to bring an international dimension to the event, speakers from out of Europe will present their views on the topic, stimulating the international context of professional higher education.

Further information will be available soon, including registrations and programme.

See also: [www.eurashe.eu/lisbon](http://www.eurashe.eu/lisbon)

## Manual for Internal Quality Assurance and Seminar on How to Manage Quality in (Professional) Higher Education? – A Practical Approach

EURASHE has focused in the past years on providing hands-on support to its member institutions and other higher education institutions in implementing the priority areas of the Bologna reform process, this is especially true when considering the need for such support in the area of quality assurance and quality management. To achieve this, next to three hands-on seminars on internal quality assurance in 2012, 2013 and 2014, Lucien Bollaert, recognised expert in European quality assurance, has developed with the support of EURASHE’s working group on quality assurance *A Manual for Internal Quality Assurance in Higher Education – with a special focus on professional higher education*.

This publication is meant to be an inspirational guidebook with fundamental issues and clarifications next to good practices and also with warnings of possible pitfalls to explore internal quality assurance. It served as a basis for the discussions in the seminar on ‘How to Manage Quality in (Professional) Higher Education? – A Practical Approach‘, a 2-day event focusing on the management of quality (assurance) in higher education institutions in Vilnius (Lithuania) on 3-4 December 2014.

See also: [www.eurashe.eu/manual-iqa](http://www.eurashe.eu/manual-iqa) & [www.eurashe.eu/vilnius-qa](http://www.eurashe.eu/vilnius-qa)

## A Draft Quality Framework for Professional Higher Education Excellence

The overall objective of the PHExcel initiative[[1]](#footnote-1) is to support, develop, improve and enhance excellence in professional higher education in Europe. We aim to achieve this by designing and testing a *Quality Framework for Professional Higher Education Excellence* accompanied by a methodology to assess excellence in professional higher education. Following 3 meetings of the PHExcel expert group, the draft quality framework will be published for open consultations in the coming weeks. In parallel to we will conduct a practical evaluation and validation of the framework through 4 pilot reviews in higher education institutions in Europe. The final outcome of the project will be presented in the project conference in November 2015.

See also: <http://phexcel.eurashe.eu>

## Round Tables on Employability & Quality Assurance of Bridging HVET-HE

On 8 December 2014 EURASHE organised in Brussels (Belgium) a Round Table on Employability with representatives of higher education institutions, as well as researchers and representatives of chambers of commerce. Discussing the latest research by the Research Centre for Education and the Labour Market (ROA) of Maastricht University, participants debated the various issues at hand when considering the concept of employability. The Round Table came a follow-up of the ‘EURASHE Initial Study on Employability among Professional Higher Education Graduates in Europe’. This study, including recommendations which EURASHE is developing are leading to a policy paper on employability that will be presented at the 2015 Ministerial Conference.

On 12 December 2014 EURASHE organised in Warsaw (Poland) a Round Table on Quality Assurance of Bridging Higher Vocational Education and Training and Higher Education with the Conference of Rectors of State Schools of Higher Vocational Education in Poland (KRePSZ). The aim of the Round Table was to arrive at recommendations for actions from the side of professional higher education institutions through EURASHE to develop further initiatives in the future. We will use the conclusions to feed in our activities within our strategic plan for the coming years.

See also: [www.eurashe.eu/brussels-employability-2](http://www.eurashe.eu/brussels-employability-2) & [www.eurashe.eu/warsaw-qa](http://www.eurashe.eu/warsaw-qa)

## IDEAS project: Higher Education Equity Interventions That Work

The IDEAS project[[2]](#footnote-2) focuses on identifying effective approaches to enhancing the social dimension of higher education. Through IDEAS, we hope to provide practical guidance to higher education institutions in ‘what works’ in terms of initiatives to improve access, participation and completion. This will lead to the creation of a typology and selection of the most efficient, cost-effective case studies that brought the best results. This exercise will aid in the creation of an IDEAS Toolbox which will contain all effective equity approaches. Currently, best cases have been selected and the promotional campaign will start as from this spring. Project partners will visit several cities across Europe and present the Toolbox, stimulating institutions to commit themselves and implement similar projects.

See also: [www.equityideas.eu](http://www.equityideas.eu)

1. PHExcel is a project funded by the EU Lifelong Learning Programme [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. IDEAS is a project funded by the EU Lifelong Learning Programme [↑](#footnote-ref-2)