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Smart specialisation (RIS3): European workshop on universities as regional lead institutions

Organised by EUA in collaboration with Universities Austria (UNIKO) and the Conference of Italian University Rectors (CRUI)

Hosted by University of Graz, Austria

13 November 2018

Preliminary Programme

Background

Universities are more connected than ever before to the regional economy, having an important impact on competitiveness and performance of regions. However, their societal, cultural and long-term impacts are difficult to unambiguously identify and measure. It is important to fully capitalise on tangible and intangible assets that universities can offer for the benefit of culture, society and the economy of regions in order to maximise their contribution in developing regional innovation ecosystems. One of the main challenges that European universities are facing in this regard is the role which they are playing in the design, implementation and monitoring of Research and Innovation Smart Specialisation Strategies (RIS3). RIS3 is the basis for the allocation of the European Structural and Investment Funds to European regions. One of the main aims of RIS3 is to foster the innovation capabilities of regions by promoting university-business interactions and a research-based innovation model. Universities are expected to play a key role to achieve these aims.

Organised in the framework of the activities of the Austrian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, the goal of this workshop is to develop a series of recommendations to broaden and clarify the impact of universities on their regional innovation ecosystems, to discuss visions for universities in regional innovation ecosystems beyond 2020, and to collect good practice of universities as key actors in RIS3 strategies.

The workshop is addressed to university leaders (rectors, vice-rectors, heads of administration, etc.), municipal, regional and national policy-makers, and all other stakeholders interested in regional innovation. The workshop is the fourth in a series of workshops jointly organised by National Rectors' Conferences and the European University Association on RIS3.

09.00-09.15	Welcome Addresses
09.15-10.30	<p>Setting the scene</p> <p><i>This session will provide an introduction to the topic of impact of universities on regional innovation ecosystems and will address this issue from the regional, national and European perspectives. The presentations will be followed by a moderated discussion.</i></p>
10.30-11.00	Coffee break
11.00-12.15	<p>Economic, societal, cultural and long-term impacts of universities on their regional innovation ecosystems</p> <p><i>This session will focus on the topic of economic, societal, cultural and long-term impacts of universities on their regional innovation ecosystems, and in particular on the necessity of intra-regional stakeholder collaboration (i.e. university-business) to generate greater impact, and on possible ways of capturing impact beyond purely numerical measures. The presentations will be followed by a moderated discussion.</i></p>
12.15-13.15	Lunch
13.15-14.30	<p>Universities in their regional innovation ecosystems: designing, implementing and monitoring RIS3</p> <p><i>This session will showcase successful RIS3 strategies and the university's role in the designing, implementing and monitoring of RIS3, as well as present the benefits that universities bring to regional development across Europe and challenges that universities face when adapting their educational, research and innovation activities to RIS3 priorities. The presentations will be followed by a moderated discussion.</i></p>
14.30-15.00	Coffee break
15.00-16.15	<p>Entrepreneurial education and training for regional development</p> <p><i>This session will present the role of universities in developing an entrepreneurial mindset and providing entrepreneurial skills, which are essential for adapting regions to the new opportunities emerging from global trends. The presentations will be followed by a moderated discussion.</i></p>
16.15-16.45	Coffee break
16.45-18.00	<p>Roundtable discussion: Visions for Research and Innovation Smart Specialisation Strategies and the role of universities in regional innovation ecosystems beyond 2020</p> <p><i>The roundtable discussion will focus on the visions for RIS3 strategies and the role of European universities in regional innovation ecosystems beyond 2020, as well as on general outlines of post-2020 policies for regional research and innovation in Europe. The discussion will bring together views from the university sector and from regional, national and European policymakers.</i></p>
18.00-18.15	Conclusions and final remarks
18.15-18.45	Networking drinks