



***UNICA Student
Conference
Rome 2010***

27 EUROPEAN UNION members (as 2010)

31 ERASMUS partners

47 BOLOGNA PROCESS members

NETWORK UNICA:

42 Universities from capital cities of Europe

28 Countries participating at UNICA ROMA 2010

35 Universities involved in UNICA ROMA 2010

UNICA Student Conference

The UNICA Student Conference is a biannual event that aims to gather students from member universities (approximately 300 students for 2010 event). Each conference proposes a different topic that is analysed by the students through 10 different themes/forum. Following the 3-day Conference, the reflections and suggestions of the students are gathered in a publication and sent to the EC authorities.

***UNICA Student
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Europe Through Students' Eyes

UNICA Student Conference

10 topics for the conference,
chosen by an internet poll open to all students,
administrative and teaching staff of the Universities of the UNICA network.

Rome 2010

Europe Through Students' Eyes

UNICA - Rome 2010

Europe Through Students' Eyes

1. Internationalisation at universities: challenges and problems.
2. The European mobility programmes (Erasmus, Erasmus placement, Erasmus Mundus, Leonardo da Vinci, Marie Curie, doctoral programmes, etc.): toward the 20% mobility by the year 2020?
3. What is the role of the university in contemporary society?
4. Unity and diversity in future of Europe: the challenge of multiculturalism.
5. Innovation, formal and informal education: can universities nurture the creativity of students?
6. The Bologna process and the development of the European higher education: quality, employability and social issues.
7. Student mobility and the enlargement and consolidation of the European Union.
8. High quality universities with low fees: is it possible? How to choose the best university to study at?
9. Sustainable development and greener universities.
10. Hard and soft skills: are the European universities helping the students to develop both?

HARD and SOFT SKILLS:
Are The European Universities
Helping The students
to Develop Both?

Giulia Chighini - Barbara Ventura

HARD and SOFT SKILLS:

What are we talking about?

HARD SKILLS

Specific, teachable abilities that may be required in a given context, such a job or University...

Easy to be measured and to quantify.

**Occupational requirements,
hard skills are part of a person's IQ.**

**Technical knowledge in any field.
Knowledge pertaining to processes and procedures.**

HARD SKILLS

some examples:

- ✓ Proficiency with software applications
- ✓ Facility with spreadsheets
- ✓ Typing
- ✓ Mathematical ability / Accounting
- ✓ Software development
- ✓ Speaking a foreign language
- ✓ Business communication / Writing
- ✓ Project Management / Strategic Planning
- ✓ ...

SOFT SKILLS

Soft skills is a sociological term relating to the cluster of personality traits, social graces, communication, language, personal habits, friendliness, and optimism that characterize relationships with other people.

Not easy to be measured or to quantify.

Personality descriptors and people skills.

They are Attributes that enhance an individual's interactions, job performance...

SOFT SKILLS

some examples:

- ✓ Work Ethic
- ✓ Ability to negotiate
- ✓ Empathy & Courtesy
- ✓ Ability to Teach, Ability to Coach
- ✓ Communication, Active Listening
- ✓ Teamwork, Teambuilding & Leadership
- ✓ Self-Discipline, Self-Confidence, Self-Awareness
- ✓ Ability to Provide Support & to Encourage
- ✓ Problem Solving & Decision Making
- ✓ ...

HARD and SOFT SKILLS:

Are The European Universities
Helping The students
to Develop Both?

Little or no data are available on the matter
at cross-country level.

The lack of studies on the subject reveal that
not much attention is given to the matter,
resulting in the inability to proceed with a
screening that would allow the monitoring of
the situation and the implementation of intervention.

Current Situation in Italy and in Europe

Curricula are often outdated and
not in line with the job market needs;

Education is still mainly technical and theoretical,
tightly closed in department.

Still, there are some positive examples across Europe...

Some Positive Examples in Rome, Italy

Sapienza University

Graduate training scheme

<http://www.uniroma1.it/studenti/corsi/formazione/default.php>

High graduate training scheme

<http://www.uniroma1.it/studenti/corsi/altaformazione/default.php>

Tor Vergata University

Lifelong Learning

http://web.uniroma2.it/modules.php?name=Content&navpath=TVI§ion_parent=3109

Formative intervention

http://web.uniroma2.it/modules.php?name=Content&navpath=INF§ion_parent=1167

Roma Tre University

Educational guidance

http://host.uniroma3.it/progetti/orientamento/index.php?page=I_Servizi

Some positive examples
across Europe...

Share with us your experience!

STUDENTS' ASSOCIATIONS

Dedicated to social and organizational activities of the student body, associations have the aim to represent students and are responsible for providing a variety of services to students.

Often they are run by the students themselves, there they may find a network of people concerned with their same issues and are challenged to improve themselves and to learn.

Through the associations' projects students find a way to develop their skills, taking an active part and most of the time challenging themselves in situations that will be in a real world/job setting.

STUDENT'S ASSOCIATIONS

Few examples (in alphabetical order):

AEGEE

<http://www.aegEE.org/>

BEST

<http://www.best.eu.org/index.jsp>

Bonding

http://bonding.de/web/web.nsf/web/studenten_home_de

International Exchange Erasmus Student Network

<http://www.esn.org/>

European Student's Union

<http://www.esib.org/>

HARD and SOFT SKILLS:

What Could Universities Do?



**Our Ideas,
some Suggestions,
Our Proposal:**

A benchmark and an extensive analysis of the general situation is desperately needed, especially at cross-country level.

...

Hard and soft skills could be braided
structuring working groups or projects.

This could give the opportunities to let soft
skill grow at the same time of hard skills.

...

Universities should pay attention to what the job market is looking for and tailor curricula accordingly.

Customization is key, as it is to have a clear vision of the market and of society's needs, so to prepare well-rounded professionals and experts who will also have the flexibility to adjust to diverse situations...

Keeps universities' sights
trained forward toward the workplace,
not backward to the classroom.

...

**Have job-simulation exercise
where all the elements of the programs
may come together.**

The importance of mastering the soft skills of cooperation, giving and taking supervision, conflict resolution, becomes manifest more quickly in a simulation than in a classroom setting. ..

...students not only learn how to act
in a given setting more quickly,
but it gets them to start thinking about what
they like and dislike about the specific field,
what they're good at and where they need to improve.

It makes them think about promotion and career tracks:
How can they keep improving themselves after they
pass a set of exams or get the degree?

Enhance & encourage Peer Education

Often the best learning is when we have to explain to someone else how to do something we have learnt ourselves.

The need to teach others force the students to master in depth knowledge of the subject.

The emphasis on management/teaching skills force students to see their performance through different eyes and by diverse point of view.



Our invitation is for
Universities to:

- Carry out a benchmark and an extensive analysis of the general situation, at both local and cross-country level.
- Give to students courses that gives them different types of strength –not only mere knowledge .
- Make programs who confronts all the ethics and motivation problems that affect real world settings.
- Give to students the strength -and the experience- that allows them to negotiate problems, to be pro-active and to be more involved in the society.



In Conclusion....

Let's get the discussion started
& find solutions together!

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Now ...

Let's keep our eyes open.

Let us keep track of our proposals, ideas, suggestions...

Let us make a difference!



Network of **U**niversities from the **C**apitals of Europe



References & Bibliography:

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