



Education and Culture

Conference on

Models for successful collaboration and partnerships
of purpose between universities, businesses and
NGOs

- in education, research and innovation

Peter Baur

Leuven, 11 June 2009

European Commission, DG EAC



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Background and Context

Challenges

Education and Training

Higher Education

Employability

Innovation

→ Need for modernising HE

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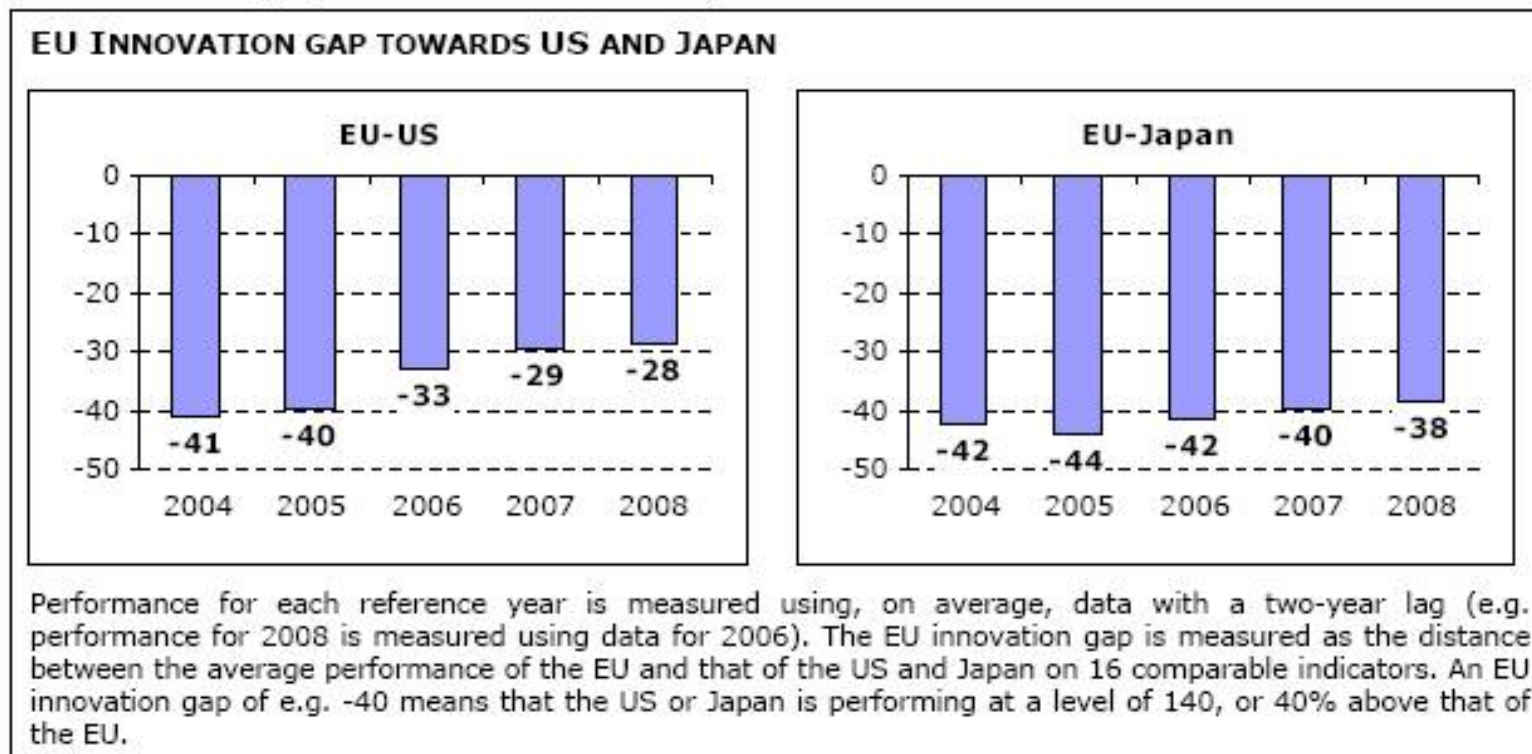
Employability

Research by the CBI (Employer organisation, UK) shows that almost a third of employers (30%) have problems with graduates' generic employability skills such as team working, communication and problem solving. Employers are also disappointed with graduates' attitudes to work (25%), self-management (33%), business awareness (44%) and knowledge of foreign languages (49%).

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Innovation



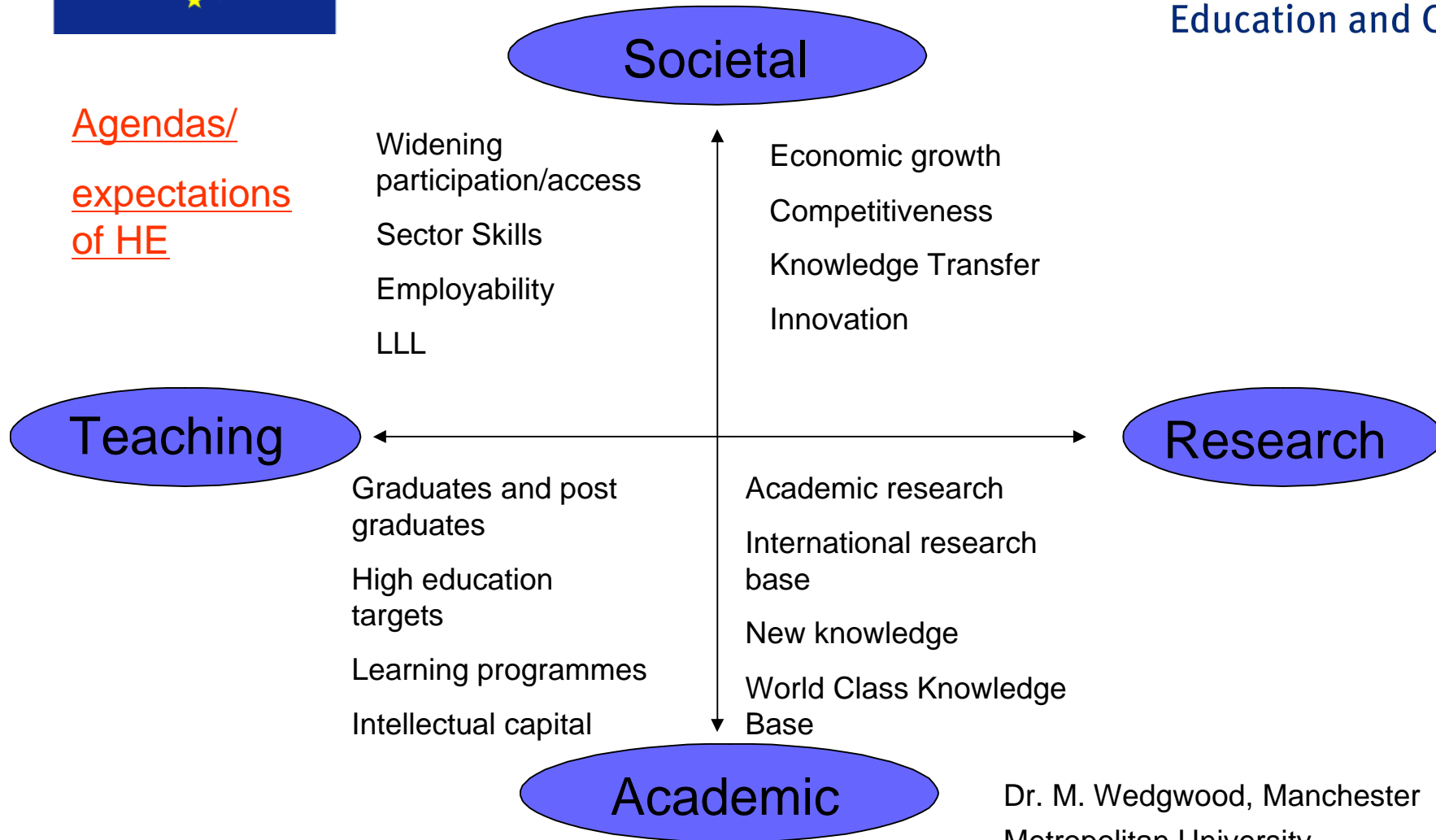


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Agendas/
expectations
of HE



Dr. M. Wedgwood, Manchester Metropolitan University

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Modernisation agenda for Universities (Commission Communication 2006)

- 1. Break down the barriers around universities in Europe**
2. Ensure real autonomy and accountability for universities
- 3. Provide incentives for structured partnerships with the business community**
- 4. Provide the right mix of skills and competencies for the labour market**
5. Reduce the funding gap and make funding work more effectively in Education and Research
- 6. Enhance Interdisciplinarity and Transdisciplinarity**
- 7. Activate Knowledge through interaction with society**
8. Reward excellence at the highest level
9. Make the European Higher Education Area and the European Research Area more visible and attractive in the world.

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Modernisation agenda for Universities (Council Resolution
2007)

**invited the Commission to support the Member States
with regard to the modernisation agenda, including
through encouraging partnerships between universities
and industry/private sector.**

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Bologna Process (Ministerial Meeting in Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve, 28-29 April 2009)

- *« all students and staff of higher education institutions should be equipped to respond to the changing demands of the fast evolving society »*
- *« HE should equip students with the advanced knowledge, skills and competences they need throughout their professional life »*
- *« ... each country to increase mobility ... In 2020, at least 20% of those graduating in the European Higher Education Area should have had a study or training period abroad »*

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New Partnership between HE and Business:

University-Business Forum

- provide a platform for a structured dialogue between the stakeholders
- allow for exchange, discussion, sharing of good practice and mutual learning



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University – Business Forum (28-29 February 2008)

Thematic Forum « Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning » - 30 June 2008, Brussels

Thematic Forum « Curriculum Development and Entrepreneurship » - 30-31 October 2008, Tenerife

Thematic Forum « Knowledge Transfer; Intellectual Property Rights » - 7 November 2008, Brussels

University – Business Forum (5-6 February 2009)

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Recurrent message

It is not about “**If**” universities and business should cooperate; it is the “**How**” that matters

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Communication of the Commission

A new partnership for the modernisation of universities: the EU Forum for University-Business Dialogue (Communication of the Commission; 2 April 2009)

Governance

Curriculum Development

Entrepreneurship

Mobility

Knowledge Transfer

Lifelong Learning

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Governance

Importance of appropriate governance models at national, regional and institutional level is a core condition for the development of effective cooperation between higher education and business. Without an appropriate governance model, the cooperation would not work.



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Curriculum Development

Involvement of Business in curriculum development will ensure closer linkage to the needs of the labour market. It will help to ensure that graduates have the knowledge, skills and competences they need to be successful on the labour market. Student learning is enriched and prepares them for future employment as they gain exposure to live problems and solutions through the curriculum and placements.

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Entrepreneurship

Professors, researchers and students have a poorly developed entrepreneurial mindset in Europe that results in few spinouts and new businesses. The challenge for higher education is to provide learning environments that stimulate independence, creativity and an entrepreneurial approach to harnessing knowledge. Universities have to get more entrepreneurial

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Mobility

Mobility between the two worlds should get a normal feature. We should see many more HE students undertaking internships in companies, working on real problems of companies and working in cooperation with companies on common projects. We should also see many more researchers and professors "on the move" – and on the other side company staff should get more frequently involved in the delivery of study programmes.

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Knowledge Transfer

A particular important aspect in higher education concerns the area of knowledge transfer. Better and more intense cooperation is beneficial for Academia and Business. It is mutually reinforcing and moves knowledge forward in both the ‘business’ context and the academic context. It stimulates innovation, a key feature for Europe.

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Lifelong Learning

Cooperation with companies can contribute to the development of HEIs as actors of lifelong learning. Companies have to identify their needs and to communicate them to the HEIs. They have to clearly express what they expect and what they need. HEIs can then develop strategies to address this demand.



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Conclusion

Bringing the worlds of education and work closer together, working in partnership, is not an option. It is a must.

The University-Business Forum provides a platform on European level for dialogue between the different stakeholders.

Cooperation has to be based on mutual respect and has to acknowledge the different roles and responsibilities.

Your commitment and support is required to make it happen!

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Thank you for your attention!

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