

Are we teaching for employability?

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Outline

1. Employability
2. Graduates unemployment in Portugal
3. What can we do? Best practices.

Employability?

Employability definition

Employability as curricular process [1]

It is a mistake to assume that provision of experience is a sufficient condition for enhanced employability.

To have work experience, say, does not, of itself, ensure that the student develops (further) the various prerequisites (cognitive, social, practical, etc.) for success in employment.

The same argument applies to whole curricula. The curricular process may facilitate the development of prerequisites appropriate to employment, but does not guarantee it.

Hence it is inappropriate to assume that students are highly employable on the basis of curricular provision alone

Employability as achievement and potential

The student exhibits employability in respect of a job if he or she can demonstrate a set of achievements relevant to that job.

Employability is a (multi-faceted) characteristic of the individual.

Employability definition

Employability is about three abilities [2]:

- gaining initial employment
- maintaining employment
- obtaining new employment if required

Employability is not a set of skills but a range of experiences and attributes developed through higher-level learning, thus employability is not a ‘product’ but a process of learning [3]

A set of achievements - skills, understandings and personal attributes - that makes graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy [1]

Set of skills/competences allowing a person to find and keep a job in a certain area.

Employability

Set of skills/competences in a certain area

Intellectual capital

What I know,
Factual knowledge,
Procedural
knowledge,
Technical / Hard
skills

in a

Emotional intelligence
Social capital
Ethical assets

Academic qualifications are the first tick in the box and then we move on. Today we simply take them for granted [2]

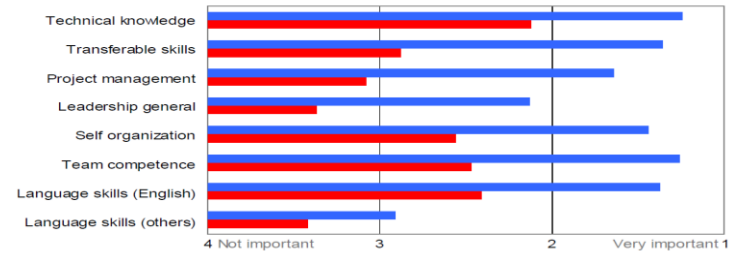
Behaviours, Soft skills

Competences, Germany



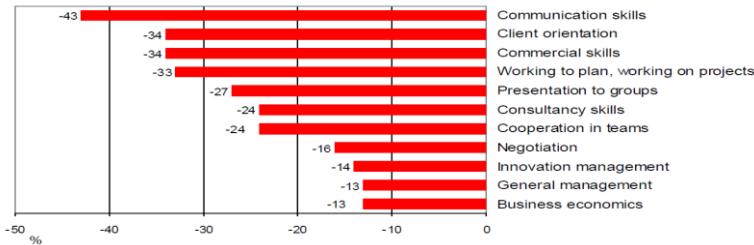
Source: Universum Communications and access KellyOCG for Wirtschaftswoche, 18 April 2011

Competences, Germany
Employers relevance and satisfaction



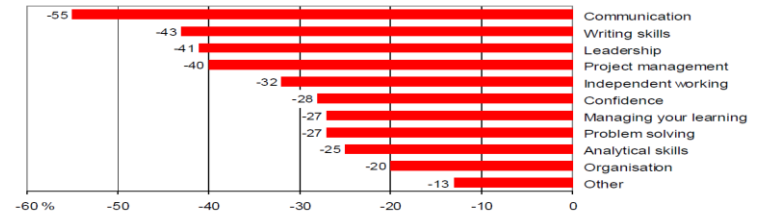
Source: A. Bunz et al., in Innovations, World innovations in Engineering education and research, International Network for Engineering Education and Research., W. Aung, et al. (eds), iNEER, Arlington, VA, 2012

Competences, The Netherlands
Young employees deficiencies (Technology)



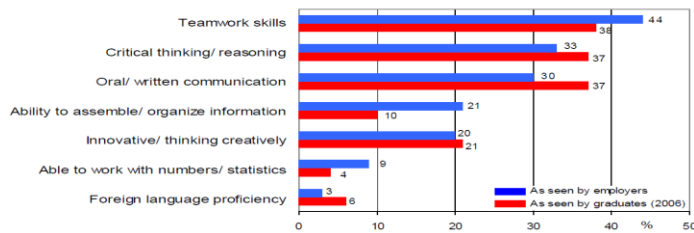
Source: Careers for Science Alumni, Radboud University Nijmegen, OECD presentation, Amsterdam, 11- 2005
<http://www.eair.nl/forum/valencia/authors.asp?achternaam=9410&wat=achternaam>

Competencies, Ireland
Young employees deficiencies (higher education)



Source: P. Twomey, University of Limerick, presentation at the 2011 University Business Forum, <http://ec.europa.eu/education/higher-education/doc/business/forum2011/presentations/twomey.pdf>

Most important competences, USA



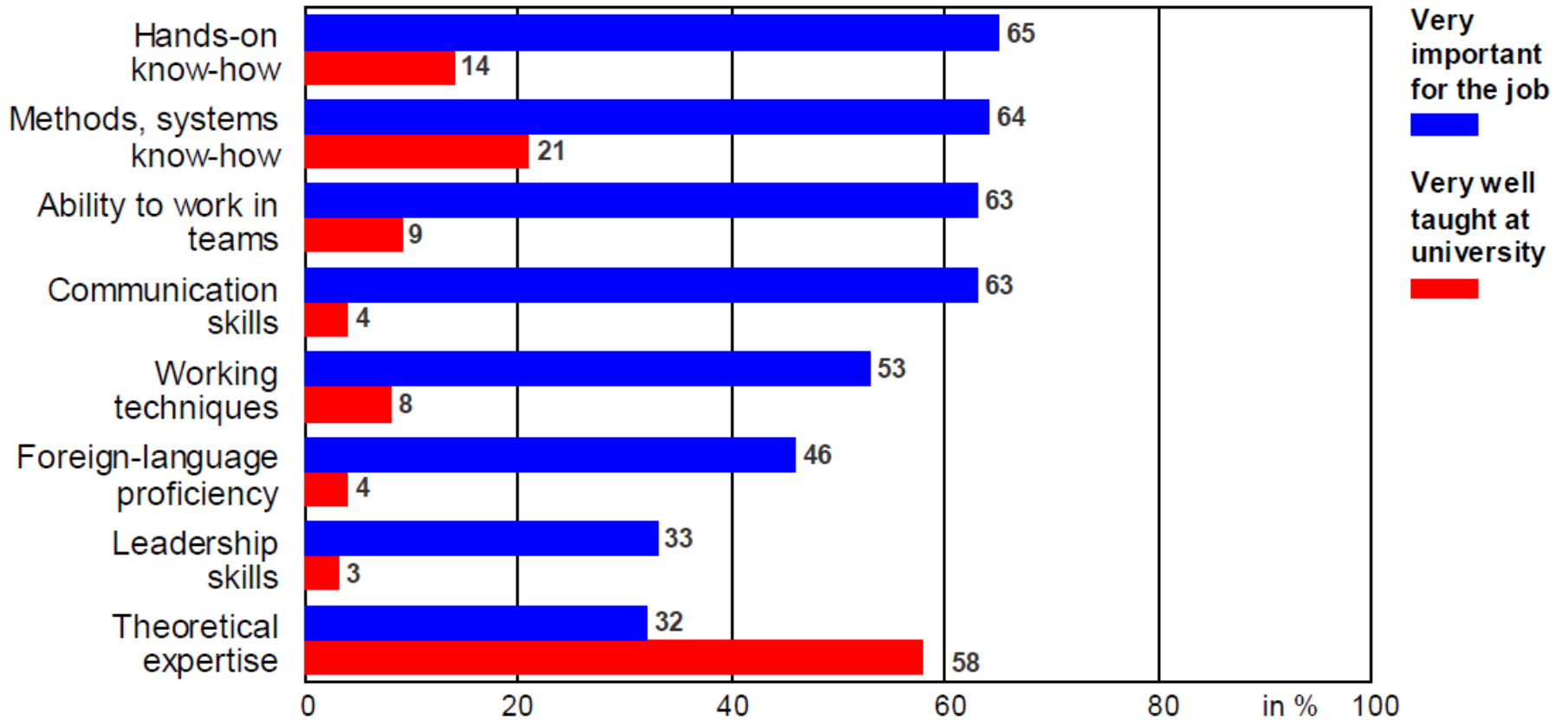
Source: P.D. Hart, (2006); <http://www.aacu.org/advocacy/leap/documents/Re8097abcombined.pdf>

Competences, Australia
Employers relevance and satisfaction



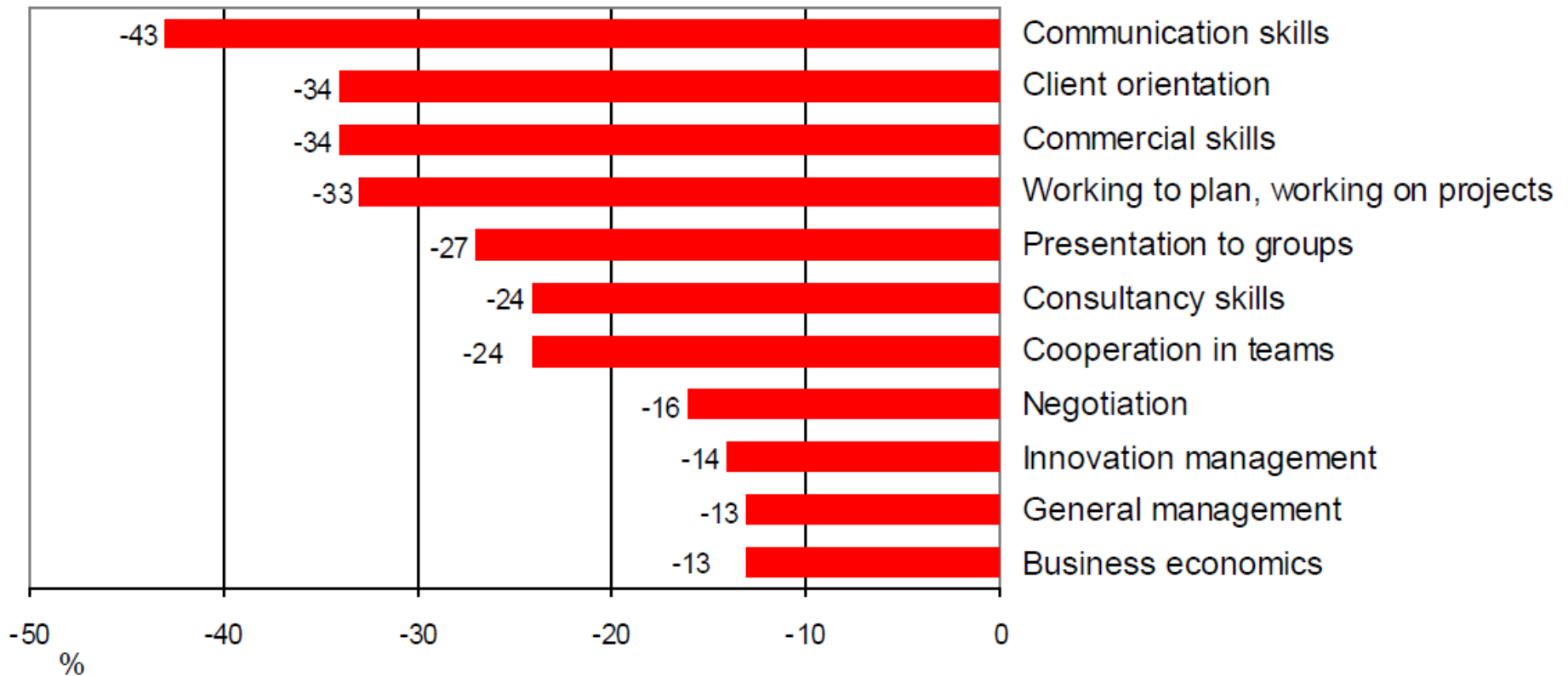
Source: Nair et al, EJEE 34-2, p. 136

Competences, Germany Labour needs (mis)alignment



Source: VDE survey "Young Professionals 2009"

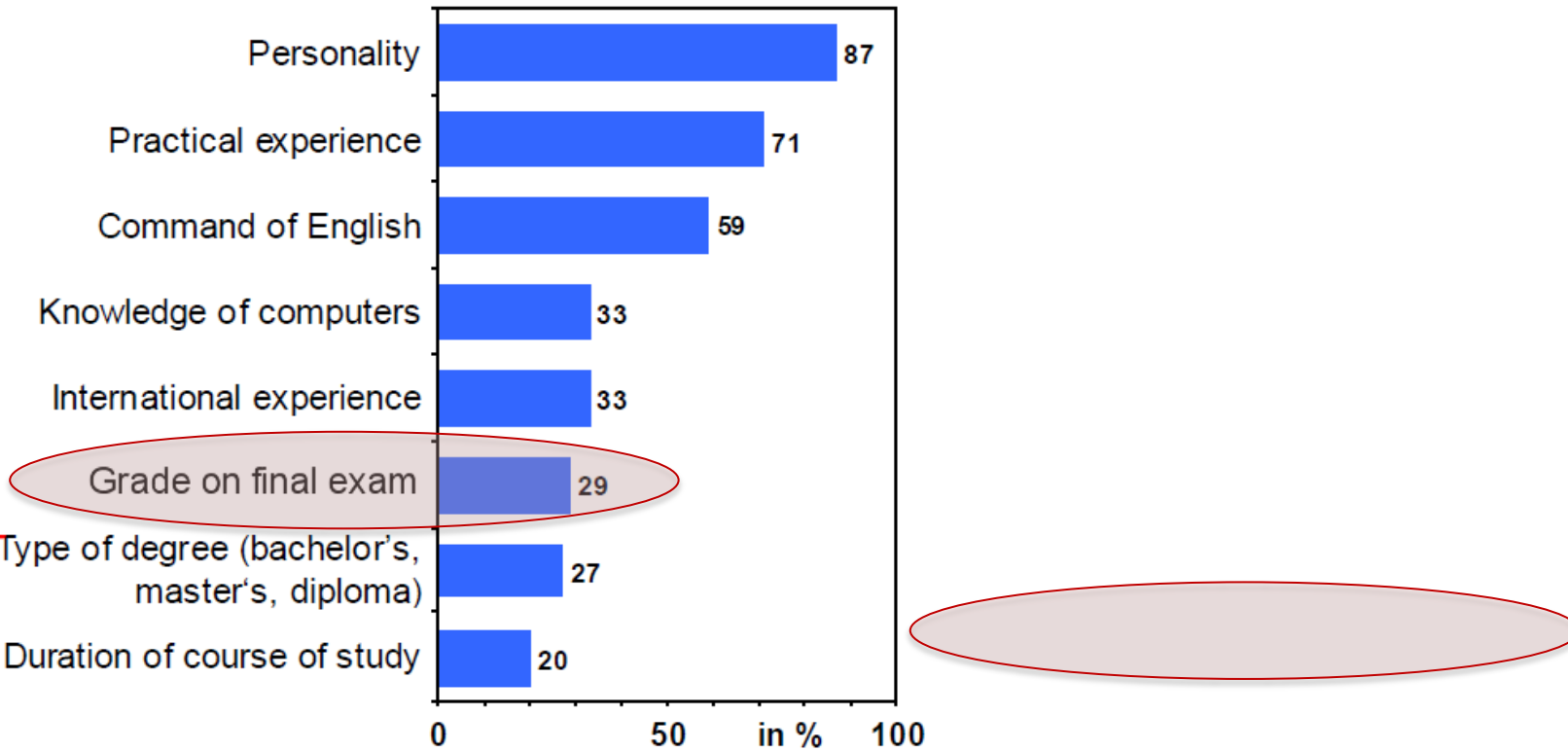
Competences, The Netherlands Science&Technology fresh graduates defficiencies



Source: Careers for Science Alumni, Radboud University Nijmegen, OECD presentation, Amsterdam, 11- 2005
<http://www.eair.nl/forum/valencia/authors.asp?achternaam=9410&wat=achternaam>

Competences, Germany

What employers are looking for in job applicants



Source: Universum Communications and access KellyOCG for Wirtschaftswoche, 18 April 2011

Employability!

Set of skills/competences in a certain area

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What I am, Behaviours, Soft skills

Employability in curricula

Embedding employability in curricula [4]

• Employability through the whole curriculum

Each student is required to demonstrate eight broad abilities at progressively more complex levels in both general education and the specialist subject(s):

- Communication (reading, writing, speaking, listening, visual, quantitative, and technological literacy)
- Analysis
- Problem solving
- Valuing in decision-making
- Social interaction
- Global perspectives
- Effective citizenship
- Aesthetic responsiveness

• Employability in the core curriculum

Designate existing core modules as vehicles for the formal development of the transferable skills (LAPR).

Embedding employability in curricula [4]

- **Work-based or work-related learning incorporated as one or more components within the curriculum**

Work-based learning has for some time been promoted as a contributor to employability, initially in terms of **sandwich degrees**. The ‘thick sandwich’ typically involves a one-year placement, though there are other models that distribute the placement experience in ‘thinner’ slices. The experience is widely held to benefit the student (anecdotal evidence attests to greater self-confidence and awareness of the challenges faced in the world of work) (PESTI)

- **Employability-related module(s) within the curriculum**

There seems to be a growing emphasis on the **development of students’ skills at the beginning of their programmes of study**, centring on freestanding ‘skills’ modules of varying kinds

- **Work-based or work-related learning in parallel with the curriculum**

In academy, there is a tendency to regard the **part-time employment** that students undertake in parallel with their studies as a necessary, but undesirable, commitment.

What if we miss it?

Then employers do it for us!

On-the-job training requires generic competencies to adjust vocational competencies to the requirement of the job [5]

Generic competencies: combination of competencies providing a strong basis for further learning; learning abilities, problem-solving, analytical competencies, ...

What if students don't exhibit generic competences?

Then we have a problem!.

Graduates unemployment in Portugal

Graduates unemployment 2012, Portugal

	Unemployed 2012 (first job)		Unemployed 2012 (new job)	
	< 12 months	≥ 12 months	< 12 months	≥ 12 months
University	6.197	1.735 (22%)	25.411	12.011 (32%)
Polytechnic	6.331	1.768 (22%)	17.695	7.160 (29%)
Total	12.528	3.503 (22%)	43.106	19.171 (31%)

What can we do? Best practices in HE

To start

Coping with today's knowledge-based economy requires education paradigms that are grounded on critical thinking, problem solving and internationalization of education

In most study areas, education cannot be grounded/based on information transfer that does not favors questioning, exploration and autonomous learning.

Create your own job

Support to start-ups, innovative ideas.

Cooperation Education/Labour

Barriers and Drivers in European University-Business Cooperation, DG Education and Culture of the European Commission, 2012

Barriers and drivers of university-business cooperation that have been found to exist in Europe:

- Business lack awareness of HEI research activities / offerings
- Differing motivation / values between HEI and business
- HEIs lack awareness of opportunities arising from University-Business cooperation
- Difficulty in finding the appropriate collaboration partner
- No appropriate initial contact person within either the HEI or business.

Intel eLite program

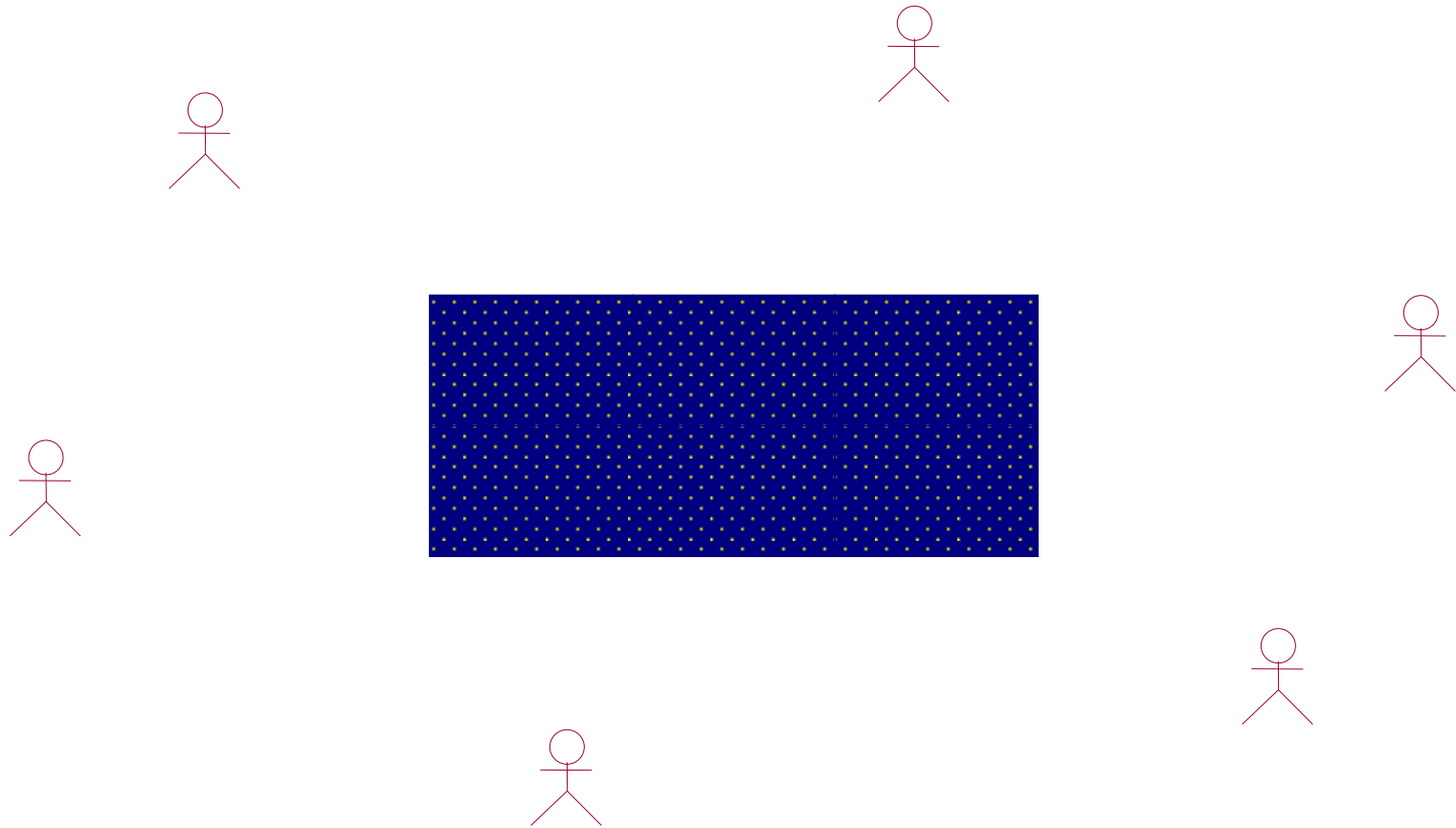
Intel eLite Program: university-industry cooperation aim to identify the soft skills required by local and multi-national companies and to identify the contributing factors of graduates' unemployment [6].

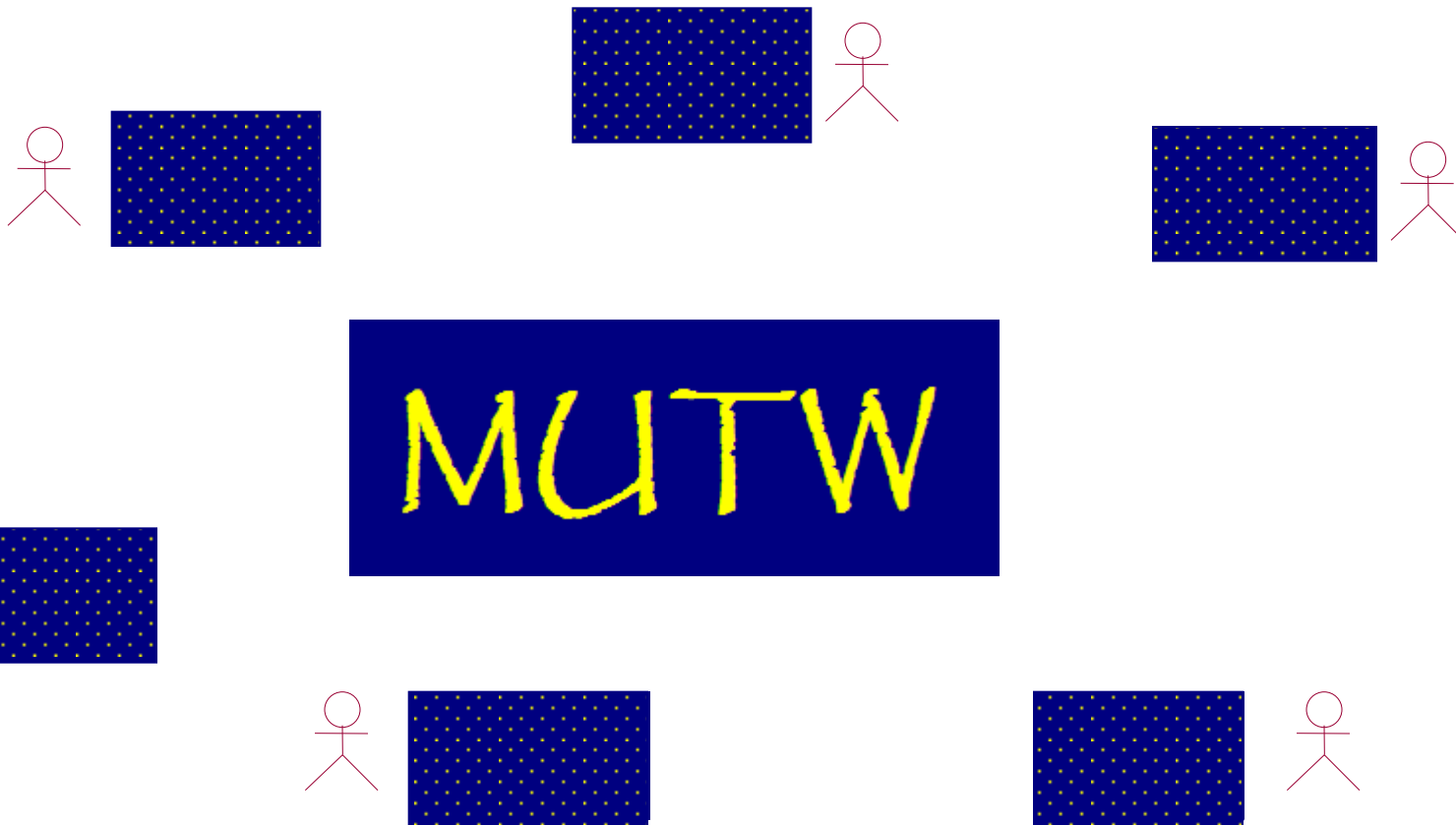
Promote students initiative

- Internationalization, international exposure, **Erasmus**
- **Volunteering.**

Curriculum development

- Flexible internships
- EPS - European Project Semester
- Mid The Gap
- MUTW - Multinational Undergraduate Team Work (blended mobility, non-formal learning, overcoming barriers to mobility).





New opportunities to all

- Open the European labour market to students

PRAXIS European centre for Project/Internship Excellence www.praxisnetwork.eu

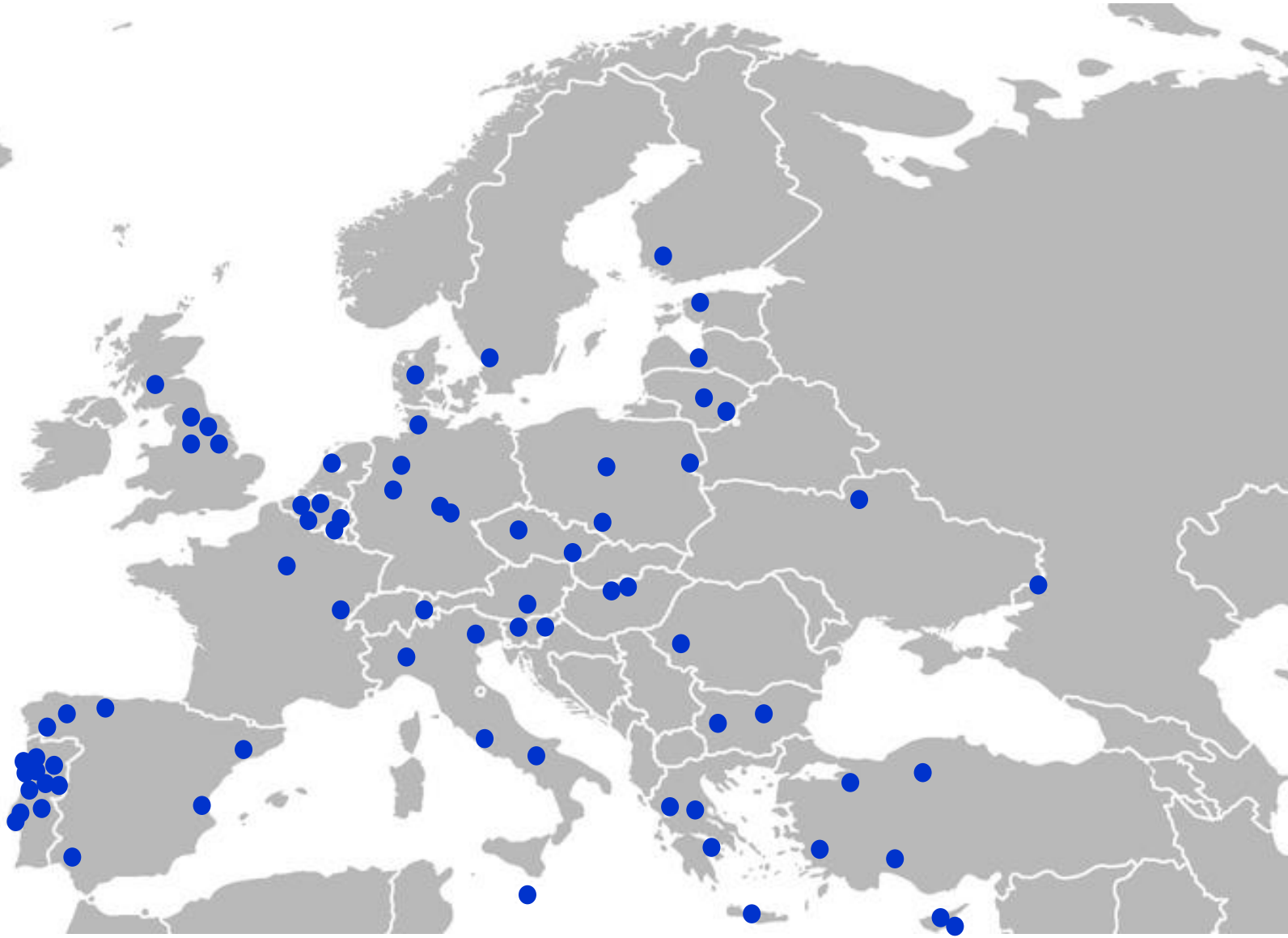
Objectives:

- Promote mobility and employability
 - open global access to project/internship offers
 - effective support to mobility students
 - direct access to the European labor market
- Promote access to young talents
 - enlarge the range of the recruitment base for companies and research labs
 - disclose easy access to all academic disciplines.

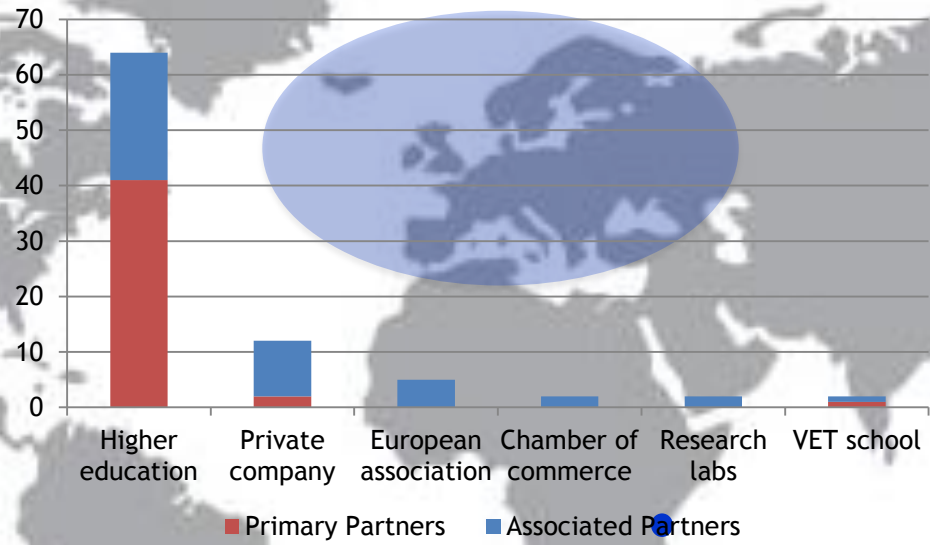
What is PRAXIS?

- European virtual market for PI
- Support centre for students in mobility and staff
- Conference series.

Who is PRAXIS?



Who is PRAXIS?



praxis

Workshop

**Wednesday, 30 April
10:40 to 11:40.**



Lifelong
Learning
Programme

Promote synergies and innovation

STIG - Cooperation between Education and the Labour Market

Kick-off meeting at ERACON 2014

Wednesday, 30 April

11:40 to 12:20.

References

- [1] Mantz Yorke, *Employability in higher education: what it is - what it is not*, Higher Education Academy, 2006
- [2] Hillage, J., Pollard, E., *Employability: developing a framework for policy analysis*. London: Department for Education and Employment, 1998
- [3] Harvey L., *Defining and measuring employability. Quality in Higher Education*, 7 (2), 2001
- [4] Mantz Yorke, Peter T Knight, *Embedding employability into the curriculum*, The Higher Education Academy, 2006
- [5] Hans Heijke, Christoph Meng, Catherine Ris, *Fitting to the job: the role of generic and vocational competencies in adjustment and performance*, Labour Economics, 10, pp 215–229, 2003
- [6] A. Fairuza et. Al., *Employers' perception on soft skills of graduates: a study of Intel Elite soft skill training*, International Conference on Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, 2011

Thank you!