Work-based learning in higher education: Approaches and challenges

European Association of Institutions in Higher Education

Quality Assurance and Work-based Learning

Michal Karpíšek, EURASHE Secretary General

CONTENT

- Future Universities?

- Introduction of EURASHE and professional higher education

- External challenges and developments

- Priorities for professional higher education

- Project examples

VISION

EURASHE strives to support the development and transformation of European society through professional higher education.

MISSION

EURASHE's mission is to strengthen the impact of innovative, high quality professional higher education and related user-oriented research in Europe by representing professional higher education institutions and facilitating their multi-stakeholder cooperation and dialogue.

PROFESSIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION

Professional higher education is a form of higher education that offers a particularly intense integration with the world of work in all its aspects, including teaching, learning, research and governance, and at all levels of the overarching qualifications framework of the EHEA.

Its function is to diversify learning opportunities, enhance the employability of graduates, offer qualifications and stimulate innovation for the benefit of learners and society.

The world of work includes all enterprises, civil society organisations and the public sector. The intensity of integration with the world of work is manifested by a strong focus on the application of learning achievements. This approach involves combining phases of work and study, a concern for employability, cooperation with employers, the use of practice-relevant knowledge and use-inspired research.

Membership

EURASHE

European Association of Institutions in Higher Education

- EURASHE represents universities of applied sciences and other institutions of PHE (colleges, universities with professionally oriented programmes/faculties)
  - 55 full members: 15 national associations, 40 individual institutions
  - 1 associate member
  - 9 affiliate members: 6 individual institutions outside the EHEA, 3 bona fide organisations
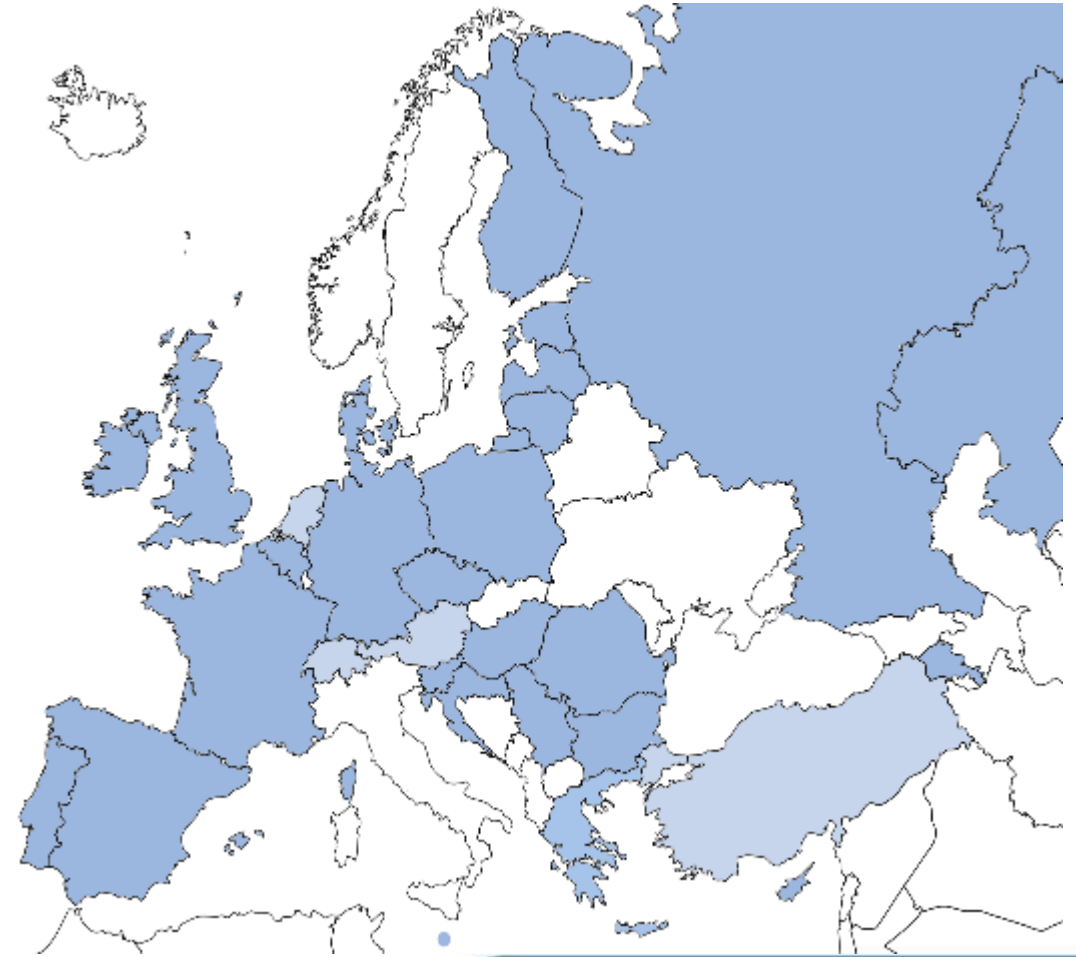
CHALLENGES & DEVELOPMENTS

Context

- Societal changes: knowledge society, role of expertise, education, information

- Economy & Labour market changes: globalisation, changing economic structure, digitalisation, qualifications characters and requirements

- Technological changes – digitalisation, mobility, access

- Cultural changes – priorities, mobility, flexibility, personal development…
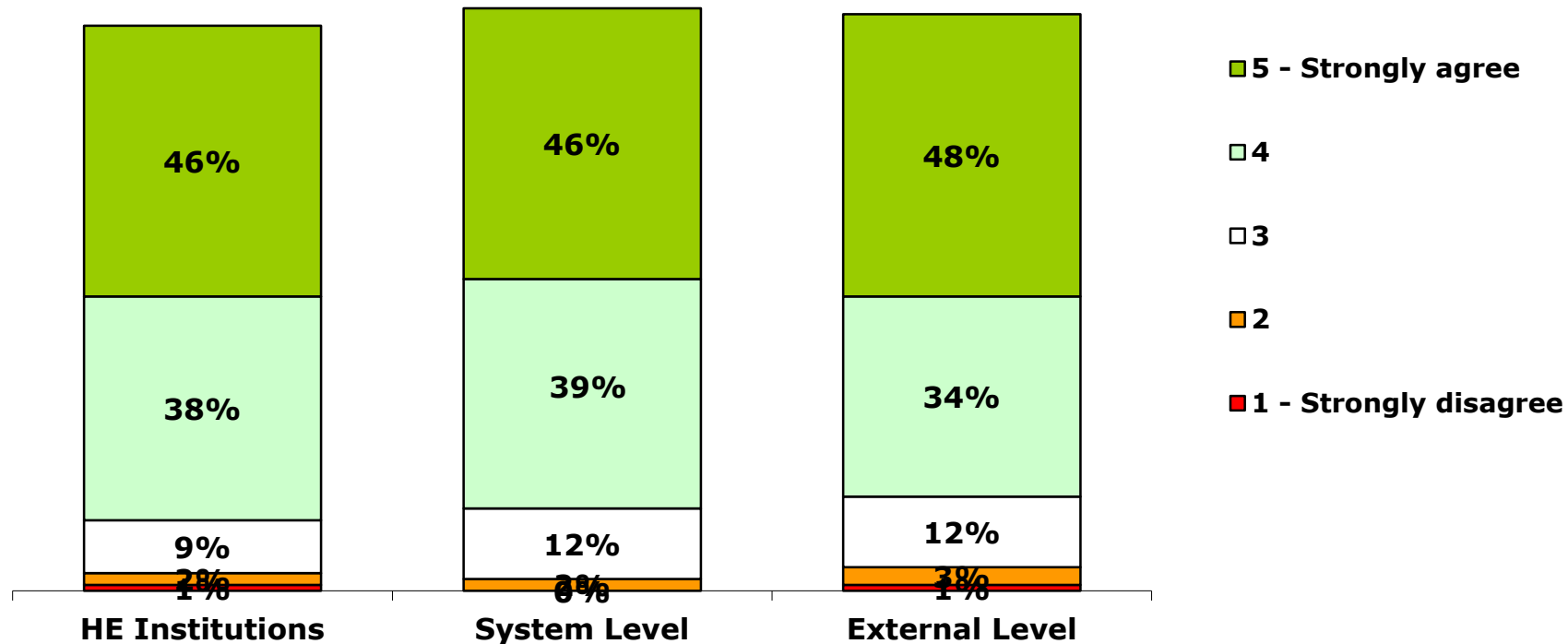
From Elite to Universal Higher Education

- Access & selection, attitudes
- Function of higher education
- Curricula and forms of learning
- Students "career"
- Diversity and characteristics
- Decision making mechanisms
- Quality standards
- Governance

Martin Trow, 2006

How does a future university look like?
How would you describe it in one word?

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service

research

innovation

entrepreneurial

connected

MISSION

flexibility

learning

diversity

Excellence

Life-long-learning

practice

Ideas

Openess

challenge

opportunities

education4all

creativity

INCLUSION

communiti

Over the next years, industry demand for employees with qualifications combining practical skills and academic higher education will increase.

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	HE Institutions	System Level	External Level
5 - Strongly agree	46%	46%	48%
4	38%	39%	34%
3	9%	12%	12%
2	2%	3%	3%
1 - Strongly disagree	1%	0%	1%

- 5 - Strongly agree
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1 - Strongly disagree

Future Student Profiles

- Creative, Critical and Innovative Thinker

- Independent and Autonomous Learner

- Team member and Collaborator

- Learning to Learn & Life Long Learner

- Specialist and Multi Skill

- Computing and Technology Oriented

Shyamal Majumdar, UNEVOC, 2019

Major Dimensions of Transformation

Inclusiveness	Access and inclusion
Quality	Focus on learning outcomes and quality
Lifelong learning	School to work, work to school path
Greening	Developing skills for green jobs
Digital	Promote digital and convergence technology
Social innovator	Educational institutions as innovation hubs

European Higher Education Area

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EURASHE POLICY STATEMENT FOR THE EHEA MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE IN PARIS IN 2018

EHEA Ministers' Communique 2018

- Key role of higher education
- Fundamental values, institutional autonomy & academic freedom, participation, social responsibility
- Implementation of agreed key commitments
- Promotion of Life-long learning
- Support innovation in Learning & teaching
- Recognise the role of Learning & teaching
- Digitalisation
- Recognition of Short cycle HE

- Links between learning/teaching and research
- Promote global focus through Bologna Policy Forum

WORK-BASED LEARNING

Rationale for WBL

- Learning *about* work and *for* work should occur *in* work, not primarily in educational institutions

- Knowledge growth occurs on many sites in business and industry

- Educational institutions should equip learners with the means to learn, wherever that occurs

- Educational institutions are not and cannot be the repositories for and definers of knowledge, nor can their staff have the disciplinary knowledge to support different practices

Prof. David Boud, Middlesex University,
EURASHE WBL conference Leuven, June 2018

Work-based learning

- Work-based learning (WBL) is an educational strategy that provides students with real-life work experiences where they can apply academic and technical skills and develop employability skills. (*Wikipedia*)

- Mix of various approaches:
  – Apprenticeships/placements/internships
  – Dual learning
  – Tailored courses…

Challenges

- terminological confusion
- statutory borders between HE and VET
- cultural dimension – perception of learning outside of school
- comprehension of potential benefits
- collaboration, balanced engagement and mutual understanding among stakeholders
- capacity and recognition of WBL and related activities
- change of academic staff and students' roles
- individualised approach & assessment, supervision & guidance
- external assessment
- administration and bureaucracy, flexibility
- financial aspects, incentives

EVLESSONS FROM THE PROJECTS

WORK-BASED LEARNING PROJECTS

- Strategic partnerships (BEEHiVES)
- Policies (PROCSEE)
- Concept (WEXHE)
- Quality (ApprenticeQ, SPRINT)
- Promotion at SME – guidelines & criteria (SAPS)
- Institutional level and organisation (ApprenticeTrack, MentorTrain)

learn to work

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Supporting Apprenticeships between Professional Higher Education and Small and Medium-size Enterprises

SAPS PROJECT

SMEs might not have the structures in place to take on apprentices

The value proposition is not always clear for the SMEs

PHE Institutions are not always well-prepared to work with SMEs

SAPS background

SAPS objectives

Improve the perception of SMEs of the benefits of engaging apprentices from PHEIs

Lower the barriers to cooperation between PHEIs and SMEs

Establish more regular and structured cooperation between the umbrella organisations for PHE and organisations of SMEs

Why embrace WBL?
Message for SMEs

- Tackle skills gaps in your company

- Benefit from financial support

- Improve your competitiveness and boost motivation of staff

- Extend your company into new products and markets

- Try before you buy

- Improve the public perception of your company

Risks to the Quality of Apprenticeships

- **Professional Higher Education Institutions (PHEIs) Risks**
  - Not all PHEIs have robust processes for managing and evaluating placements
  - Many PHEIs have problems matching apprentices with placements

- **Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) Risks**
  - Most SMEs do not have appropriate structures and processes to allow them to receive or mentor apprentices
  - Many SMEs are unsure of the value proposition offered by apprenticeships

- **Communication Risks**
  - PHEIs and SMEs do not always speak the same language

Apprenticeship Quality Toolkit:

- **Apprenticeship Quality Checklist for PHEs**

- **Apprenticeship Quality Checklist for SMEs**

Apprenticeship
Quality Toolkit

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Supporting Apprenticeships between
Professional Higher Education and
Small and Medium Enterprises

Apprenticeship Quality Checklist for SMEs

SMEs Processes:

1. Create
2. Negotiate
3. Manage

https://learntowork.eu/?lang=eu

Ikasi praktiketako ikasleak enpresa barruan kudeatzen gure praktiketako kalitatezko herramintekin

deskargatu

EASY APPRENTICESHIPS FOR SMALL BUSINESS

Four Guides on how to Boost your Business with Apprenticeships

1
Enpresa Txikientzako
Praktika Errazak

Ekin Lanari
Praktiketako Plan Bat
Antolatu eta Ezarri

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2
Enpresa Txikientzako
Praktika Errazak

**Enpresak Parte Hartzearen
Aldeko Arrazoi Guztiak**
Praktiketako Programa
Errentagarrien Diseinua

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3
Enpresa Txikientzako
Praktika Errazak

**Zure Enpresako
Aurkezpen Eraginkorrak**
Praktiketako Ikasleak
Enpresan Hasi

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4
Enpresa Txikientzako
Praktika Errazak

**Praktiketako
Ikasleentzako Laguntza
Laneko Praktiketarako**
Tutoretza Eraginkorra

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Feedback

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Supporting Apprenticeships between
Professional Higher Education and
Small and Medium Enterprises

Integrating Entrepreneurship And Work Experience In Higher Education

WEXHE PROJECT

WEXHE

wexhe

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In WEXHE, associations and universities come together to identify and analyse current provision of work experience in higher education in 7 different European countries;

Münster University of Applied Sciences

University of Groningen
(Coordinating Organisation)

University of Warwick

Polish Chamber of Commerce

Spanish Chamber of Commerce

Novatex Solutions Ltd.

University of Ljubljana

Together with:

ENQA
EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

ENQA
Belgium

EURASHE
European Association of Institutions in Higher Education

EURASHE
Belgium

UIIN
University Industry Innovation Network

UIIN
The Netherlands

WHY WEXHE?

European graduates report worries about their employability and their future career paths;

At the same time employers voice their concerns over increasing difficulties in finding graduates with matching skills and capabilities for 'knowledge age' jobs.

WEXHE responds to such concerns by…

Identifying what kind of work-based learning (WBL) leads to high quality jobs;

Developing tools and models to facilitate WBL implementation in HEI and organizations;

Increasing capacity of HE staff and enterprises to provide high quality work experience;

Supporting policy development in the field.

WBL UNDERSTANDING

EU PERSPECTIVE

PARTNERS' PERSPECTIVE

No common understanding of WBL
- commonly associated to VET

Great disparity in WBL adoption
across countries

- in modes of delivery
- in its relevance for HE

Broad understanding
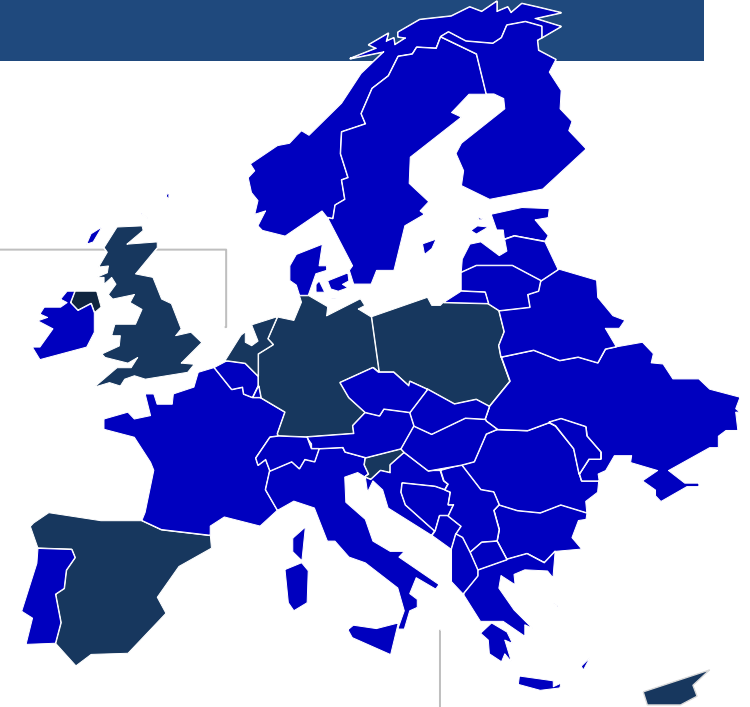- VET
- Dual Studies
- Internships
- Graduate Schemes

WBL plays a relevant role in HE

Narrow understanding
- Internships
- VET

WBL plays a limited role in HE

WBL IMPLEMENTATION

EU PERSPECTIVE

PARTNERS' PERSPECTIVE

Institutional gap;
- univ. of applied sciences > research universities

More common in applied areas;
- specially for work placements
- business and engineering dominate

Multi-disciplinarity
- for traineeship and entrepreneurship

Narrow institutional gap
- universities accepting WBL

Lower disciplinary disparity
- WBL strong in **most disciplines**

Narrow institutional gap
- universities accepting WBL

Great disciplinary disparity
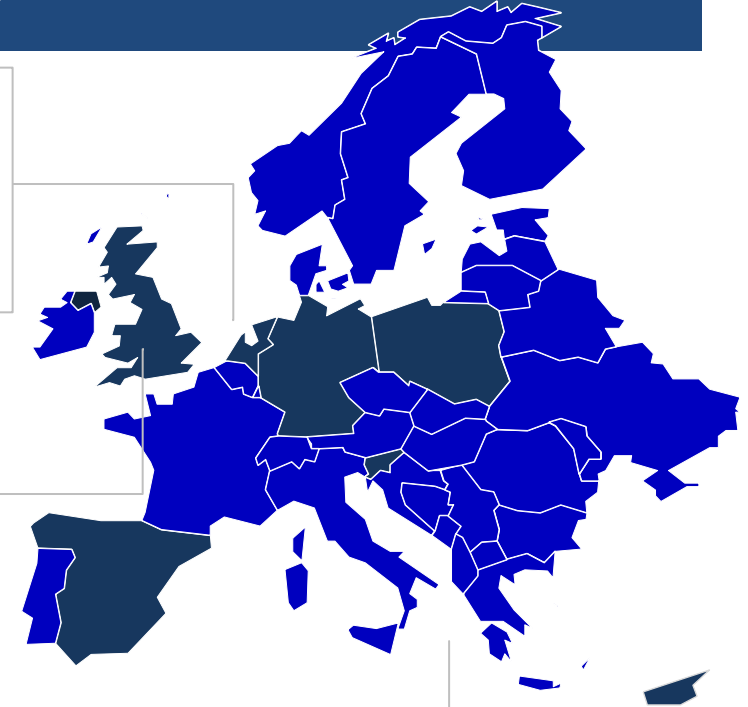- concentrated on **engineering and business**

Wide institutional gap
- Universities don't embrace WBL

Great disciplinary disparity
- concentrated on **engineering and business**

WBL IMPACTS

EU PERSPECTIVE

PARTNERS' PERSPECTIVE

Awareness is increasing;

Positive impact on employability;

Lack of evaluative studies;
 - scope is too broad
 - time consuming

No quality assurance standards in place;
 - UK is the exception

'A Few' Impact Studies
- student satisfaction
- employment

WBL awareness is high

No Impact Studies
WBL awareness is increasing

No Impact Studies
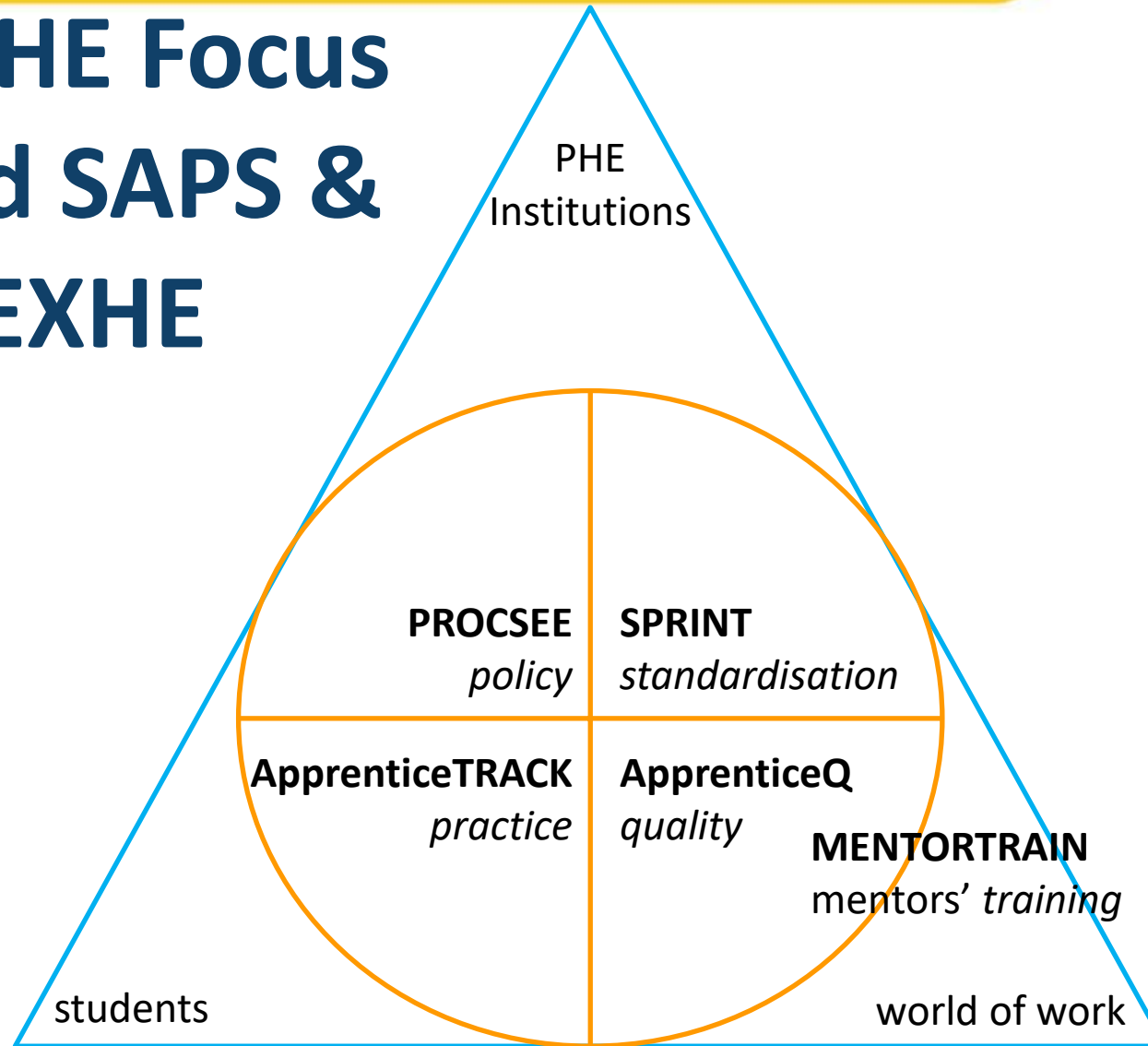WBL awareness is stagnated

Success factors/DRIVERS*

★ Robust national/regional **regulatory framework**

★ Alignment with **market needs**

★ Close **collaboration** between HE and work (design and delivery)

★ **Quality** assurance (learning objectives, work conditions, support to learners)

★ **Support** to tutors and mentors (train the trainer)

* According to Apprenticeship and Traineeship Schemes in EU27 (2013); WBL as an Integrated Curriculum (2013) and Harmonizing Approaches to Professional Higher Education in Europe (2014)

LESSONS LEARNED

☑ **Multiple designs** per mode of delivery
with design not necessarily being shaped by disciplinary areas

☑ WBL is way more common in **applied areas**
specially for work placements; traineeship and entrepreneurship are more interdisciplinary

☑ **HE sphere of influence** varies according to mode of delivery
entrepreneurship>work placements>traineeships

☑ Good cases are marked by broad **student support**

☑ **Learning outcomes:** i) specific professional development + ii) soft skills

EURASHE Focus beyond SAPS & WEXHE

PHE Institutions

PROCSEE
policy

SPRINT
standardisation

ApprenticeTRACK
practice

ApprenticeQ
quality

MENTORTRAIN
mentors' *training*

students

world of work

Conclusions

- More attention and recognition to work-based learning at both system and institutional levels
- Lead in mindsets of institutions and companies
- Partnership and communication with the world of work – support and easy-to-use packages
- Balanced role & engagement of all three parties – students, HE institutions and world of work
- Holistic concept for relevant integration and provision of work-based learning within the entire learning process - reflect learning outcomes and learning purpose and their assessment
- Address different countries' circumstances and frameworks
- Remove organisational, administrative, financial obstacles
- Consider quality assurance provisions for enhanced trust, respect and recognition

- Show how work experience can develop the competencies required for employment and career success

THANK YOU!

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