



وزارة التربية  
والتعليم العالي



UNIVERSITÉ DE BALAMAND  
ACADÉMIE LIBANAISE DES BEAUX-ARTS

Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



# Higher Education Reform Activities and Surveys

Rethinking Lebanese Higher Education

ALBA - Balamand

9 November 2017

# Who are we?

- Current HEREs
  - Ahmad JAMMAL, DG
  - Nada MGHAIZEL NASR
  - Hania NAKKASH
  - Pierre GEDEON\*
  - Mohamad OUEIDAT
  - Chafic MOKBEL\*
- Former HEREs
  - Mazen El KHATIB\*
  - Nissrine El GHADAR

\* Have formed the first HERE team in 2008



# About HEREs

- Network of HEREs established within the EU Tempus Programme
  - 250 experts from Tempus countries
- Continues to be supported under Erasmus+ KA3
- Goal: Promote and Enhance the Modernisation
  - Participate in the development of policies and reforms
    - e.g. Quality Assurance
  - Contribute to training the stakeholders
    - e.g. Seminars and roundtables organized
- Support by SPHERE
  - EUA and UB

# Promote and Enhance Modernisation

- Participate in the development of policies and reforms
  - Work tightly with the DGHE and have been active in the different taskforces and committees
    - Quality Assurance Agency law
    - Qualifications Framework
    - Doctoral studies
  - Surveys and recommendations
    - 2008, 2015
  - Participate to conferences
    - Arab Ministers responsible for HE
    - Policy Dialogue Conferences
- Contribute to training the stakeholders
  - Seminars and conferences organised locally
    - Credit systems, Learning Outcomes, Doctoral studies, Internal Quality Assurance, Student services, Quality Reviewers, Indicators,...
  - Specific events in projects and institutions

# Support by SPHERE

Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



- Objectives
  - Capacity Building
  - Awareness raising
    - in particular about EU Higher Education Policy
  - Enhancing Networking
  - Peer Learning
- Tools
  - Seminars and Conferences
    - ICT, Joint programmes and degrees, Innovating learning and teaching, QFs, ESG, ...
  - Study Visits
    - Internationalisation and mobility, International credit mobility, Learning outcomes and student centered learning, Doctoral studies ...
  - Technical Assistance Mission
    - E-Learning, IQA, Indicators,...

# How do we operate?

- Action plan that we set
  - Multiyear and yearly
  - Based on discussions, needs, events, ...
  - Based on surveys and recommendations
- Regular meetings
- Participating in SPHERE events
  - Feedback and dissemination
    - Reports, web, replicating in local meetings, ...
  - Sharing our local experience in the events
- Contribute to national committees and meetings
- Organizing local events
  - Readers, Programmes, ...
- Writing leaflets and brochures

# National Consultation 2008

Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



- R1. The **modernisation** of the Lebanese Higher Education is **necessary to respond to the challenges** facing this sector and to transform them into opportunities. This modernisation must be **in line with Lebanese National Strategy** for education.
- R2. The modernisation process should **respect a sensitive balance** on several issues: **autonomy vs. accountability, innovation vs. tradition, “flexibility” vs. quality assurance, productivity and efficient research structures.**
- R3. The **Bologna Process and the Lisbon Strategy** may serve as a model of reference to inspire the modernisation process of the Lebanese Higher Education sector.
- R4. A **network of reform experts** across the Lebanese Higher Education Institutions is a matter of interest.
- R5. There is a need for **a reference and mandatory Lebanese National Qualifications System** that would facilitate **mobility and recognition.** Qualifications levels should be clearly defined and adopted.
- R6. The applied credit-based systems must provide a **central role to the students.** A transfer and equivalency table is necessary and must be defined as part of the Lebanese National Qualifications System.

# National Consultation 2008

- R7. The Lebanese **Research Structures** must be clearly and **well defined and reinforced**. Interactions and **partnerships** between the local, regional and international actors and the universities are needed. This would **facilitate the employability** of our graduates.
- R8. **Quality Assurance processes** must be implemented **internally** to the institutions **and externally** at the national level. These processes must respect global quality standards. The stakeholders must be assisted in establishing their Quality Assurance procedures.
- R9. A national committee involving the Lebanese Higher Education stakeholders must be formed to study and prepare the **Lebanese National Qualifications System (LNQS)** and the process to implement it. This committee would assist the Ministry of Education and Higher Education in preparing this LNQS.
- R10. A committee involving the Lebanese Higher Education stakeholders must be formed to help **improving Research Structures** and to assist in organising and reinforcing partnerships between the universities and social and economic actors. This committee must cooperate with the existing and operating national/regional committees.



# National Consultation 2008

Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



*R11. A committee involving the Lebanese Higher Education stakeholders must be formed to study and prepare a **National Quality Assurance Agency** and to support the different institutions in implementing their quality assurance procedures. This committee must cooperate with existing and operating national/regional/international committees.*

*R12. All the previous described effort would **prepare the lifelong learning** on the medium and long term.*

# Survey 2014-2015

- 128 questions
  - General Issues [13 questions]
  - Governance and Learning Environment [30 questions]
  - Programmes: Structures and Modernising Curricula [45 questions]
  - Mobility and Internationalisation [14 questions]
  - Higher Education and Socio-Economic Development [26 questions]
- Responses from 18 HEIs

# Survey 2014-2015

## General Issues

Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



**The following problems could be facing the Lebanese Higher Education Sector.  
In your opinion how urgent is to tackle each of them?**

	Not Urgent	Fairly Urgent	Urgent	Very Urgent	No Opinion
<b>Absence of quality assurance</b>	0%	6%	38%	<b>56%</b>	0%
<b>Absence of research structures and funds</b>	6%	6%	38%	<b>50%</b>	0%
Access to higher education	11%	22%	45%	11%	11%
Divergence of current higher education systems	11%	45%	22%	16%	6%
<b>Employability of graduates</b>	0%	6%	28%	<b>66%</b>	0%
<b>Lack of accreditation system</b>	0%	22%	17%	<b>61%</b>	0%
Lack of inter-university cooperation	11%	33.5%	22%	33.5%	0%
Lack of National Qualification Framework	6%	28%	28%	38%	0%
Obstacles to mobility	0%	50%	22%	28%	0%
Weak continuous education programs	11%	17%	55%	17%	0%
<b>Weak partnership with labor market</b>	0%	6%	33%	<b>61%</b>	0%

# Survey 2014-2015

## General issues

**In each of the following domains please rate your perception of the advances that would have been achieved in the Lebanese HE System during the past five years?**

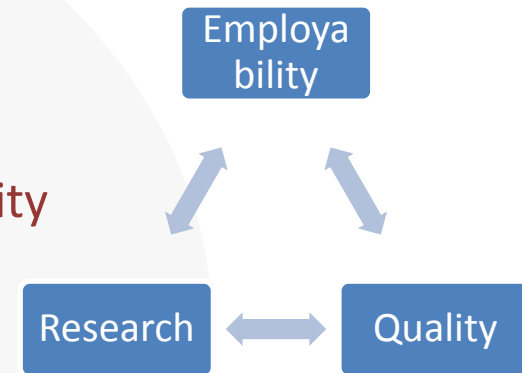
	No Advancement	Weak	Fair	Strong	No Opinion
Adoption of learning outcomes in the definition of courses and programmes	6%	28%	44%	22%	0%
Definition of a National Qualification Framework	11%	50%	33%	6%	0%
Employability of graduates	22%	44%	28%	6%	0%
Establishment of a data management system	22%	33%	39%	0%	6%
External quality assurance	17%	28%	38%	17%	0%
Harmonization of the credit-based systems	22%	22%	34%	22%	0%
Mobility of students	28%	34%	38%	0%	0%
Organisation of University-Industry relations	0%	78%	22%	0%	0%
Recognition of diplomas and degrees	0%	17%	39%	44%	0%
Strategic planning in the higher education sector	17%	28%	44%	11%	0%
Support to research	11%	67%	22%	0%	0%
Using the e-Learning	38.5%	38.5%	17%	0%	6%
Internationalisation	6%	44%	44%	0%	6%

# Survey 2014-2015

## General issues

- Most urgent issues to tackle
  - Employability of graduates AND Weak partnership with labour market
  - Lack of accreditation system AND Absence of quality assurance
  - Absence of research structures and funds
- and...
  - Qualifications framework
  - Mobility
  - Lifelong learning
- EU2020 strategic objectives perceived as fitting with the Lebanese context

Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



# Survey 2014-2015

## Governance and learning environment

- **Quality Assurance**
  - 69% => established internal QA
  - 65% => undergone external evaluation
  - ~100% support a Lebanese agency
  - Involving mainly administration and faculty
- **Financing Higher Education**
  - **Little of diversification of sources**
    - Mainly based on tuitions
    - Valorisation of research outcomes?

Which of the following represent a major challenge in terms of finance?	
Buildings and infrastructure	69%
Competition	31%
Diversification of financial sources	69%
Equipments	56%
Massification of Higher Education	44%
Research	100%

# Survey 2014-2015



## Governance and learning environment

- Human resources
  - 100% => clear system for HR management
  - 100% => clear system for hiring
  - 94% => clear system for promotion
    - 67% => national rules for HR
    - 81% => national rules for academic ranking

What advantages are offered to the employees?	
Children schooling	94%
Family allowance	65%
Medical insurance	100%
Sabbatical year	47%

# Survey 2014-2015

## Governance and learning environment

- Students' services

### What student's services among the following your institution is offering?

Assistantship	94%
Counselling	82%
Finding internships and placements	88%
Funding clubs and extra-curricular activities	76%
Health care	82%
Housing	71%
International student office	76%
Internet access	94%
Library and study rooms	100%
Orientation	100%
Scholarship	94%
Support to students with special needs	82%
Tutoring	71%

### What student's services among the following your institution needs to develop?

Assistantship	20%
Counselling	20%
Finding internships and placements	40%
Funding clubs and extra-curricular activities	33%
Health care	27%
Housing	47%
International student office	27%
Internet access	6%
Library and study rooms	13%
Orientation	0%
Scholarship	20%
Support to students with special needs	40%
Tutoring	33%



# Survey 2014-2015

## Programmes: Structures and Modernising Curricula

- Learning Outcomes

- Credit-based system

- 60% => need for translation between ECTS and American credits

- Diploma Supplement

- 44% => offer DS

- 75% => DS useful

- 88% => improve readability of qualifications

Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



### Are the learning outcomes defined for your programmes?

No	0%
Yes for few programmes	0%
Yes for most programmes	38%
Yes for all programmes	62%

# Survey 2014-2015

## Programmes: Structures and Modernising Curricula

- Curricula Modernisation

**In what sense from the following do you understand curricula modernisation? (at most 3 choices please)**

Adopt Learning Outcomes in the definition of the courses and/or programmes	50%
Define new programmes that respond to socio-economic needs	31%
Update existing programmes to respond to socio-economic needs	50%
Update existing programmes with more precise learning outcomes and teaching methodologies and assessment approaches	63%
Replace an existing programme with a new better targeted programme	19%
Engage dialogue with socio-economic partners to define the programme learning outcomes	50%
Add new courses to the curricula dealing with entrepreneurship or other	38%
Better use of research oriented education	50%
Better use of individualised education	13%
Change for a more active learning	50%
Update programme to respond to lifelong learning	38%

# Survey 2014-2015

## Programmes: Structures and Modernising Curricula

- Doctoral studies

Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



What are the main challenges facing doctoral studies?	
Lack of excellent research environment	77%
Lack of strategic planning and of good definition of objectives	38%
Lack of funding	92%
Lack of motivated candidates	0%
Recognition of degree	0%
Lack of dialog with socio-economic potential partners	38%
Language skills	15%
Lack of time and interest from supervisors	23%

# Survey 2014-2015

## Programmes: Structures and Modernising Curricula

- NQF
- E-Learning
  - ~50% => use social media
  - 31% => use MOOCs
  - 20% => use m-Learning
  - 21% => e-Learning and QA

### Do you feel the need for a National Qualification Framework in the Lebanese Higher Education?

For job offering/seeking	75%
For internal mobility	63%
For international recognition	81%

### Do you believe education could be online?

Strongly agree	6%
Agree	50%
Neutral	31%
Disagree	13%
Strongly disagree	0%

### Do you think that online education is critical to the long-term strategy of your institution?

Strongly agree	13%
Agree	56%
Neutral	31%
Disagree	0%
Strongly disagree	0%

### Does your campus currently offer?

	No Offering	Courses Only	MOOCs	Courses and Full Programmes
Blended learning	60%	33%	7%	0%
Online learning	73%	20%	0%	7%
100% e-Learning	86%	7%	0%	7%

# Survey 2014-2015

## Programmes: Structures and Modernising Curricula

Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



- Priorities regarding structures and modernising curricula

**Among the following domains what is the most important to tackle?**

Credit-based system	6%
Diploma Supplement	6%
Doctoral Studies	12.5%
e-Learning	19%
Learning Outcomes	12.5%
Modernisation of curricula	25%
National Qualifications Framework	19%
Three-cycle system	0%

# Survey 2014-2015

## Mobility and Internationalisation

- **Mobility**

- All types of mobility are important according to the respondents

Please indicate within the following two major obstacles to mobility?	
Lack of funding	81%
Non interest from the students or professors	6%
Non recognition of credits or degrees	50%
Visa issue	31%
Other	12.5%

- **Recognition**

- Lebanese ENIC-NARIC would facilitate recognition

- 70% nationally
    - 90% internationally

# Survey 2014-2015

## Mobility and Internationalisation

Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



- Internationalisation and cross-border education
  - ~100% assert internationalisation is part of their strategic plans
  - ~50% plan to have campuses outside Lebanon

### For what reasons you have or you might plan to have a campuses outside Lebanon?

Attract excellent students and faculties	40%
Diversify activities	40%
Diversify the sources of funding	40%
Respond to a demand	80%
Other	40%

# Survey 2014-2015

## HE and socio-economic development

- **Employability**

- Definition of jobs and related skills would improve employability
- QF improve employability
  - Better readability of degrees (63%)
  - Update/define programmes (37%)
- Developing internships
- Need for more transferable skills



# Survey 2014-2015



## HE and socio-economic development

- **University-Industry cooperation**
  - Have research cooperation (20%)
  - Involve in developing/updating programmes (63%)
  - Good relationship with alumni
- **Research based education**

Are you adopting research based education?				
	No	Slightly	Fairly	Strongly
Bachelor	12%	38%	50%	0%
Masters	0%	12%	50%	38%
Doctoral	18%	9%	9%	64%

# Survey 2014-2015

## HE and socio-economic development

- **Social dimension**
  - **Equity of access**
    - Gender, impaired students, social classes
- **Lifelong learning**
  - **Continuous education programmes (80%)**
  - **Recognition of prior learning (66%)**

# Survey 2014-2015

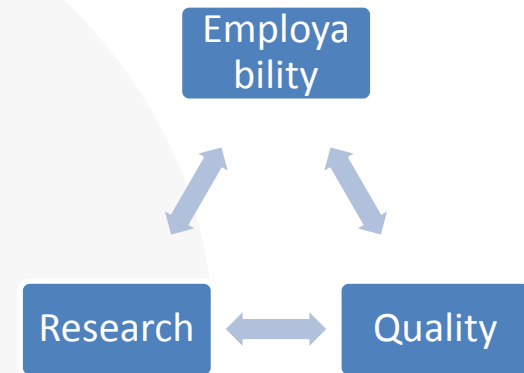
Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



- Lessons learned

- Improve Employability
- Foster Research
- Enhance Quality

- Landscape: fragmented teaching based HE
- Financing and diversification of sources of fund is a major issue
- Need develop modern tools
- Good reputation regionally



# Some Events

- **Civic Engagement**
  - **Technical Assistance Mission**
    - Prof. Lucas Meijs, Erasmus University Rotterdam
  - **16 February 2017**
  - **Issues tackled**
    - Institutional culture and identity
    - Existing and foreseen civic engagement activities
    - Community-campus partnerships
    - Civic engagement and citizenship
    - Civic engagement and curricula
  - **Suggested Lebanese Charter for civic engagement**
  - <http://erasmusplus-lebanon.org/sites/default/files/documents/reader%20EN.pdf>

# Some Events



- Financing higher education
  - Often single source of funding: tuition fees or public funds for UL
  - Large differences in the price of the credit!!!
  - Employability of graduates and return on investment
    - Increasing unemployment rates among HE degrees holders
    - Decrease in the number of students
  - Limited research activities
  - Possible solution: Quality but also need for productivity and integrated tertiary education
  - <http://erasmusplus-lebanon.org/sites/default/files/documents/Reader%20in%20English.pdf>

# Next events

- 2017
  - Employability
  - Doctoral studies
- Satellite events to TLQAA+
  - Roundtable
    - NQF, Recognition, e-Learning, core standards for the evaluation of programmes



# Conclusions

- Fragmented teaching HE
- Need for a QA system
- Need to tackle employability
  
- Delay in the application of reforms (QA, QF, ...) increasing the divide
- Need for an integrated tertiary higher education
- Financing HE interrelated with previous challenges
- Structure of the Directorate General
  
- Urgent need for a serious strategic plan based on the studies of the Erasmus+ HEREs
- Care about the divide... global challenges to be faced too

Thank you  
Merci  
شكراً