



## Mission Report

Type of mission	HERE Seminar in Nicosia, Cyprus
Subject	Universities and social outreach/social inclusiveness (including migrant and refugee integration)
Location	Nicosia
Date	13-14 June 2017
Author	Ahmad Jammal, Pierre GEDEON

### General Context

*(Bullets)*

- A. Jammal, Director General of Higher Education in Lebanon and P. Gedeon two Higher Education Reform Experts (HEREs), participated to the HERE Seminar in Nicosia organised by SPHERE in Nicosia, Cyprus, on June 13-14, 2017. The theme related to the social dimension of the Universities covered migrant and refugee integration in the university social engagement.
- In the session dedicated to the “University strategies for migrant/refugee inclusion” A. Jammal had an intervention. He presented the situation of the Syrian refugees in Lebanon underlying that in the MENA region they are more than 5 million Syrian migrants and 667,973 are aged between 18 and 24 in four host countries of the MENA region, Out of which 102,000 are in Lebanon. The latest figures show a decreasing enrollment numbers in the Lebanese Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). From 7072 Higher Education students in 2014-2015, they are estimated around 5000 in 2016-2017.
- A. Jammal and P.Gedeon expressed that the lack of mastering the foreign languages represent the main obstacle for the Syrian students to pursue their higher studies in Lebanon. In the same time several Syrian refugees have no evidence of graduating from secondary school while the latter is a necessary condition for entering higher education. The absence of the Lebanese National Qualifications Framework (NQF) makes the problem even more complex.
- The experiences of Moldova education system, the Federal State of Bermen in German, the Austrian strategy on the social dimension, and the Cyprus education case and other cases in addition to the MOOCs and Free digital learning initiatives enriched the seminar and oriented us in a new directions to coach the HEIs in their social engagements.

## Discussions

*(Bullets)*

- During this seminar A. Jammal and P. Gedeon identified and discussed with the different HEREs the engagement of their countries and its impact in the social dimension and responsible research and innovation.
- The HEREs discussed together how Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) should respond to the access of students from their recruitment, scholarships, to the different support services offered and especially to the disadvantaged groups.
- Teaching, learning, research and outreach to society represented also other main pillars for the discussions on the social engagement of HEIs.

## My contribution

*(Bullets)*

- We collaborated and provided our inputs on different points in the various sessions.
- A. Jammal provided a short presentation on “Tertiary Education for Refugees in Lebanon”
- A. Jammal has been interviewed by EUA
- In addition to the MOOCs interest to bridge between people and learners, P. Gedeon presented an example on its study on how information and communication technologies could help the access and the integration of persons with disability.

## Lessons learned

*(Bullets)*

- We identified different institutional strategies with regards to inclusion.
- We discovered some good practices in how HEIs are using the digital era innovations to enhance access and its social engagement and especially with the ICT-based learning
- And we started to reflect on how to connect the university social mission with that of research

## Ideas for exploitation

*(Bullets)*

- The academic concept of the “Civic University” could represent a great idea in addressing the leadership and management challenges of maximizing the contribution of universities to civil society.
- It becomes more and more urgent to develop a national dynamic around the development of the national qualifications framework for more than one reason: readability, recognition, employability, internationalization and inclusiveness/integration of displaced people.
- Raising awareness by adding on our country page a special section on the local solutions dedicated to the displaced people (local MOOCs, or other initiatives).