COMPETENCE – Matching competences in higher education and economy:

Presentation of the Survey Results

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Agenda

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Introduction

► Competence survey undertaken in 2010/2011
► Detect room for improvement of higher education institutions regarding the development of their curriculum
► Graduates and employers of alumni of 8 degree programmes (IIM, Postgraduate IIM, Hotel Management, Tourism, Ceramic engineering, Psychology, Economics and Mechanical Engineering)
► in 4 countries (Macedonia, Montenegro, Bosnia & Herzegovina and Serbia) were interviewed.
Composition of the Questionnaire

In order to collect data about competences that graduates have gathered during their studies and competences demanded by the industries, the questionnaire was separated into **6 different sections** which were:

- Introduction,
- Specific competences (for each degree programme),
- Generic competences,
- Work related skills,
- Conclusion and
- Personal background.
The questionnaire was filled out by 368 alumni and employers.
Sample

- Number of respondents classified by country and degree programme:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Alumni</th>
<th>Employers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Macedonia</td>
<td>IIM</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Postgraduate IIM</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montenegro</td>
<td>Hotel Management</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tourism</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>Ceramic Engineering</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bosnia Herzegovina</td>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mechanical Engineering</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>196</strong></td>
<td><strong>172</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Survey Results
Macedonia - IIM

- 25 alumni of IIM and 14 employers of alumni were interviewed – significance is limited
- Graduates and employers were satisfied with skills and competences learned to have a high work performance
- Specific competences:
  - Language skills
  - Management skills (high relevance)
  - Energetics
  - Mechanical materials (low relevance)
- Graduates feel confident about their skills – employers see space for improvement.
Survey Results
Macedonia - IIM

► Important skills for future career development:
  ▪ Language skills,
  ▪ Operational research management and
  ▪ Project management skills

► Least important were:
  ▪ Technical mechanics and
  ▪ Energetics

► Generic competences more important than specific ones

► Internships and extra-curriculum activities contribute positively to the development of students.
Survey Results
Macedonia – IIM Postgraduates

► 18 alumni of postgraduate IIM and 17 employers of alumni were interviewed – significance is limited
► Quality of work performance was rated high by both
► Specific competences useful for current job for both BUT
  ▪ Employers perceived competences lower – room for improvement
► Specific competences are relevant for the future career – stated by both groups
► Generic competences are prevalent compared to specific competences
► Internships and extra-curriculum activities are positive for current job position
Survey Results
Montenegro – Hotel Management

► 15 alumni of Hotel Management and 16 employers of alumni were interviewed – significance of results limited

► Graduates see the quality of the degree program as positive and would recommend it
  ▪ Similar with the employers but they are not satisfied with the work performance of graduates

► Most important competences
  ▪ Ability to handle conflict situations (graduates)
  ▪ Language skills (employer)
Survey Results
Montenegro – Hotel Management

► Both groups are confident in applying specific competences
  ▪ Language skills most important but there is room for improvement for employers

► Specific competences are identified as relevant for future career development

► Generic competences prevail over specific one
  ▪ Most important one communication skills

► Internships and extra-curriculum activities are positive for current job position
Survey Results
Montenegro - Tourism

- 16 alumni of Tourism and 23 employers of alumni were interviewed – significance is limited
- Specific competences are identified as useful by alumni and employers
  - Ability to respect diversity (alumni)
  - Follow ethical codes (employer)
- Alumni feel competent about all specific competences – employer see improvement
- Specific competences are seen relevant for future career development by both groups
- Generic competence seen as important for both groups
Survey Results
Serbia – Ceramic Engineering

► 16 alumni and 10 employers of alumni were interviewed to assess the needs of graduates – significance of results limited

► Graduates and employers assess the quality of their work performance positive and would recommend the studies

► Specific competences are important for both alumni and employer
  ▪ Ability to respect diversity

► Alumni feel competent about specific competences – employer rated them lower → room for improvement of the curricula

► Specific competences relevant for future career development

► Internships and extra-curriculum activities are positive for current job position
Survey Results
Serbia – Psychology

► 35 alumni and 32 employers of alumni were interviewed to assess the needs of graduates – focus on schools psychologists
► Graduates and employers assess the quality of their work performance positive and would recommend the studies
► Specific competences important for both groups
  ▪ Counseling in educational problems
► Specific competences learned are useful and can be applied in a competent way – both groups
► Generic competences perceived as relevant by both groups
► Internships and extra-curriculum activities are positive for current job position
Survey Results
Bosnia & Herzegovina - Economics

- 30 alumni and 30 employers of alumni were interviewed to assess the needs of graduates – significance of results limited
- Graduates and employers assess the quality of their work performance positive and would recommend the studies
- Specific competences were perceived as useful for their current jobs – both groups
- Almost every alumni felt competent about all specific competences learned in the degree program – same with the employer
- Specific competences relevant for future career development
- Generic competences are seen as useful for alumni and employers
- Internships and extra-curriculum activities are positive for current job position
Survey Results
BiH-Mechanical Engineering

► All in all 41 alumni and 30 employers were interviewed
► Graduates and employers perceive the work performance positive
► Employers feel more comfortable in recommending the study program than alumni
► Specific competences important for both groups
► Generic competences are seen as useful by all responding alumni and most employers
► Internships and extra-curriculum activities are positive for current job position
Conclusion

► Due to change process, effective labour market feedback systems are indispensable for adjusting the eight curricula and study to labour market needs.

► The partaking institutions are performing well, but there is space for improvement to reach the objective of offering excellence in teaching.
Recommendations

► The results from the alumni as well as from the employer surveys also propose that the specific and the generic competences are essential for the future career development.

► Generic competences are seen as more relevant than specific competences – need for stronger inclusion of generic competences in lectures.

► Alumni tended to be more positive about their skill level than employers – need for regular skill monitoring.

► Internships / work placements and extra-curricular activities were useful for graduates of 6 degree programmes – need for stronger inclusion of work based learning in curricula.
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