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Cooperation with African Countries Circumstances, Conditions and Effects

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Joint Workshop on Collaboration with Africa
Tuesday, 4 June
University of Kent - Brussels Campus, Belgium



Universidade do Minho



Campus of Gualtar
Braga



Campus of Azurém
Guimarães



General data

- Public University, established in 1973
- Student Population - 18.800 students
 - 8 000 undergraduate
 - 4500 integrated master students
 - 4350 master students
 - 1950 PhD students
- 1300 Academic Staff
 - 900 career staff (95% with PhD)
- 880 technical and administrative staff





General data

Schools/ Institutes

- Architecture
- Engineering
- Health Sciences
- Economics and Management
- Education
- Law
- Letters and Human Sciences
- Nursing
- Psychology
- Sciences
- Social Sciences





General data

THE Ranking

- One of the 3 Portuguese universities in the Times Higher Education Ranking 2012





On internationalisation

policy definition

- “The mission [of the University] shall be fulfilled *within an international reference framework*, based primarily on research and on its articulation with teaching” (UMinho Statutes, art. 2nd)
- Among the *goals* of the Institution are: “*Cultural, scientific and technical interchange*, with both national and international institutions and bodies; the *development of learning and research programmes through the establishment of partnerships*; and the *contribution for international cooperation ...*” (UMinho Statutes, art. 2nd)
- The UMinho Action Plan for 2009/2013 points at: “*The internationalization of teaching and research through the development of new partnerships and the promotion of mobility*”



On internationalisation

rationale

- Institutional priority
- Key to achieve and maintain high quality levels of education, research and interaction with society
- Means of promoting a specific type of globalisation, through “the exchange of knowledge and cultural artefacts within a common space” (Torres and Rhoads, 2006)
- Deserves systematic action, with professional support



On internationalisation

some key indicators

- MIT-Portugal; CMU-Portugal; Harvard-Portugal Programmes
- Erasmus Mundus Master Courses
- Several projects under the VI and VII Framework Programmes
- ECTS and DS Labels (since 2004, renewed in 2009)
- Bilateral Protocols with > 350 universities in all continents
- Mobility of students: *out* – 450; *in* - 700
- Teaching staff mobility: c. 70 per year
- 7 Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Windows (Latin America and Asia)



On internationalisation

some key indicators

- ALFA III & ALFA II Projects
- COMENIUS 3 Network
- EU-INDIA Economic Cross Cultural Programme
- Asia-Link & Edulink Projects
- Jean Monnet (1 Excellence Center; 3 Chairs; 2 European Modules; 1 Permanent Course)
- Confucius Institute
- Networks/Associations: Santander Group; Compostela Group; EUA ..

EUA Evaluation Report: “...besides being excellent at research and teaching, the internationalisation of UMinho is absolutely outstanding ...”

Cooperation with African Countries

portfolio of cooperation

Cooperation with several countries (bilateral agreements, staff exchange, research projects, joint programmes, individual student mobility...): Morocco, Tunisia, Lybia ...

Cooperation with the African Portuguese Speaking Countries:

- Angola
- Mozambique
- Cape Vert
- Guinea Bissau
- Sao Tome and Principe





Cooperation with African Countries

specific purposes and reasons

- To strengthen the existing links among HEI
- To promote mutual understanding among peoples and nations
- To foster societal progress through
 - education development
 - knowledge production and dissemination
 - impact on economy, culture and society
- Historical reasons
- Political reasons
- Economic reasons
- Cultural reasons



Cooperation with African Countries

background and strategy

- Solid background of personal and institutional relations – biographies are relevant
- Personal experience of local realities
- Modalities of cooperation
 - International programmes based (EduLink, Asialink...)
 - Non international programmes based



Cooperation with African Countries

background and strategy

- Levels of cooperation
 - Institutional or Group/individual basis
 - Identification of partners
 - Identification of areas of common interest
 - Definition of the basis for cooperation (some steps taken to develop a continuum process)
- Different degrees of intensity
 - Systematic
 - Episodic



Cooperation with African Countries

effects

- Progressive development of cooperation
- Education projects at the core of cooperation - from teacher training, curriculum design and supervision to institutional development
- Improved awareness towards international project management
- Development of postgraduate offer
- Progressive relevance of cooperation among research teams
- Participation in the development of national scientific systems



Cooperation with African Countries

some frameworks, activities and areas of intervention

- Special regime for students from African countries to attend Portuguese HEI
- Edulink Project (PostCaVET)
- Master and PhD programmes: Education (UCV-Cape Vert and UP-Mozambique); Law (UCV-Cape Verde; UPlaget-Angola); Finances (UPlaget-Angola; UCV-Cape Vert); Civil Engineering (University J. Piaget)
- Research Projects: Angola; CV; STP - Geology; Engineering; Education
- Academic staff qualification: UP; UCV
- Staff training : Public Administration; University administrators; magistrates (S. Tomé)



Cooperation with African Countries

“lessons” from UMinho experience

- The relevance of institutional policies vs. the perishable nature of individual actions
- The importance to avoid reductive analysis of the reality (it is not only always a matter of financing...)
- The relevance of individual experience as a starting point
- The importance of the existence of dedicated structures within the institution
- The centrality of national and international programmes to uphold internationalization
- The difficulties emerging from differences between national legal norms and of the instability of political contexts



Cooperation with African Countries

“lessons” from UMinho experience

- The tensions between capacity building and mere reproduction of practices
- The importance of creating conditions to avoid brain drain: working conditions, facilities, mobility format, cooperation structure, etc...
- Funding (mobility) and the promotion of research cooperation still remain a challenge
- Need for stronger academic cooperation programmes between EU and Africa



Cooperation with African Countries

conditions for success

- Policy definition
- Institutional and personal commitment
- Dedicated human resources
- Financial resources (own or external)



more information

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THANK YOU!





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