

степень доверия иностранных инвесторов; отсутствие солидных рынков капитала и финансов; неэффективные методы управления в государственных органах.

Для расширения возможностей применения ГЧП в инновационном развитии Беларуси необходимо создание необходимой институциональной, правовой, экономической, организационной среды, что предполагает решение ряда задач:

- доработка Закона Республики Беларусь «О государственно-частном партнерстве» и его принятие на законодательном уровне;

- формирование достаточно полной и замкнутой законодательной базы по концессиям, включающей нормативные акты – инструкции, положения, типовые договоры;

- формирование в стране других элементов институциональной среды: органов исполнительной власти, в ведении которых находятся вопросы ГЧП (в первую очередь концессий), финансово-экономических институтов, обеспечивающих инвестирование и гарантирование частных инвестиций независимых организаций, осуществляющих экспертизу проектов и консалтинг, управляющих компаний, ассоциаций, объединений, фондов;

- формирование институтов ГЧП (информационные центры, система подготовки и аттестации специалистов, система инструментов венчурного финансирования на первоначальную проработку проектов и т.д.).

### **Литература**

1. Об инновационной деятельности в Республике Беларусь в 2010 году: статистический бюллетень. Национальный статистический комитет Республики Беларусь. – 2011. – Режим доступа: <http://www.belstat.gov.by>. – Дата доступа – 13. 09.2011.

### **REDEFINING THE ROLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN KNOWLEDGE ORIENTED ECONOMIES**

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Today's rapidly changing, highly competitive global environment has created a strategic need for specialists able to perform complex tasks and take decisions in challenging business scenarios. This is particularly the case in economies undergoing transition where industries facing significant IT advancements, exploring innovative solutions to the business problems, while trying to maintain efficiency in global settings. In spite of numerous publications in the field there is no single established view on graduates' employability in transition economies in general and management and business-related training needs in particular. Business and industry do remark that universities fail to equip their graduates with core skills such as effective communication and co-operation, organisational proficiency and problem solving competencies, the very foundations of success in the world of business. The argument against this criticism is

that the university curriculum is expected to cover a wide range of subjects relatively thinly in order to give students an overview of the business discipline, while attempting to match the needs of the business world. However, there would appear to be a significant disparity between university curriculum design and delivery, and the workplace demands for graduates.

Current academic literature deals with the issues and relationships between employability and labour markets from a number of perspectives. Wilton [2011] and Boden&Nedeva [2010] study the impact of government policymaking on the way labour markets shape employability. The graduates' perception of employability and accessibility to jobs is examined by Rothwell& Herbert [2008] and Tomlinson [2008]. Overall however, due to increasingly competitive global labour markets and growing social participation [Le Roux, 2008; Taylor & MacDonald, 2007], universities face the ultimate goal of enhancing students' transferrable skills by developing learning systems that enable effective knowledge transfer [Ivanitskaya et al, 2002], and encouraging them to "think outside the box" and act accordingly in a variety of situations.

Since employers are key stakeholders in Higher Education (HE) policymaking, a way to approach this challenge is by matching career profiles to job specifications via curricular development. One way of improving their employability prospects [Hennemann&Liener, 2009] is by systematically analysing current needs and expectations of employers. In case of knowledge-based economies Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are forced to adopt a more entrepreneurial role and take part local, regional and national Knowledge Exchange (KE) while taking a central place in fundamental public policies of economic growth [Gibb et al 2009; Smith et al, 2001]. Western researchers pay some attention to the emergence of KE clusters on the national level. Industry-focused research [Keeble et al, 1999; Keeble&Nachum, 2002; Smith et al, 2010] emphasises the importance of socio-cultural factors in KE clusters' embeddedness on regional level; market issues such as competitive advantages are also addressed to some extent [Nachum&Keeble, 2003]. In most of the studies HEIs appear as having active but exogenous role, since they have been directly influencing KE but not explicitly acting as decision-makers. Inter-organisational KE in systems such as HEIs, Businesses and Government bodies is viewed as a process of inter-organisational learning in which knowledge is transferred through individual and/or institutional interaction. Specific focus is on formal and informal exchanges among actors in the collective learning processes that convey the transfer of both explicit as well as tacit knowledge [Camagni, 1991; Keeble et al, 1999; Lorenz, 1996].

By adopting a further leading role in knowledge transfer activities such as initiation of on-going research, consultancy contracts, facilities and equipment-related services and provision of continuous professional development for those currently employed would result in explicit exchanges between HEI, business and government bodies. Important tacit exchanges can also emerge outside these interactions that probably have to do with "institutional thickness" and moves of social capital [Keeble et al,

1999; Keeble&Nachum, 2002; Smith et al, 2001]. Apart from contractually agreeing explicit KE, universities could also count on high-profile decision-makers who usually build relationships with the industry, public/government bodies and other HEIs. The more links a university forms with industry and other HEIs, the higher the intensity of the knowledge exchange. In general, the intensity of both types of interactions will enable the absorption and diffusion of knowledge by fostering further research and entrepreneurial opportunities within the universities, resulting in a more efficient learning environment as a whole.

“There is no debating that a major responsibility for the smooth integration of graduates into professional life, and hence into society, lies with higher education institutions (HEI)” [Pukelis et al, 2007]. HEIs are not only responsible for preparing well-trained professionals, in both public and private sectors, but also those who can participate in and contribute to the economic transition and policy-making processes while maintaining sustainable employment. Within changing economic environment combined with the varying expectations of employers it is no longer sufficient for HEIs to concentrate purely on traditional educational outcomes. Educational institutions must continue to train employable specialists for the sustainable development of the economy, but they must also equip them to be adaptable and focused on life-learning professional development. This requires a significant change within educational programmes where teaching and learning approaches emphasise the ‘economic’ outputs of training sustainably employable graduates, who themselves must be prepared to become responsible for their own continuous learning and professional development.

In cases where a lecturer does not consider how or whether students learn, it is not surprising that the majority of learners do not feel a part of the process, but simply go through the ‘motions’. Learning is essentially a social practice, because knowledge can be shared given that reflective communication enables the enculturation of professional activities [Sierpienska, 1998; Steinbring, 2005]. A more learner-focused strategy, promoting self-learning through critical enquiry, discussion, and thematic debate, greater knowledge acquisition and self-confidence should be encouraged to stimulate “thinking outside the box”. This would entail the appropriation of cultural tools to transform not only the relation of individuals to situations, but also their relation to other members of a ‘community’ by participating in their practices, beliefs, conventions and values [Goos et al, 1999]. Students need to be aware of what is expected from them to enable reflective conversations about their learning experience and developing their skills. A metaphor of teaching and learning used in Hoban [2000: 176] ‘Hike in the Mountains’ allows us to see the process as ‘a combination of personal influences on learning (prior knowledge, interest, confidence and good mood), social influences from the lecturer (well prepared, approachable and knowledgeable) as well as peer influences from other students.’ Supporting formal teaching with Problem-Based Learning (PBL) [Capon & Kuhn, 2004] where real-life scenarios can be replicated textually via simulation could engage learners in problem solving activities enabling them to

acquire transferrable competencies. Focused integration of Work-Based Learning (WBL) into taught curriculum could further encourage learners' conscious reflection on 'learning by action' in a workplace [Realin, 2008]. Together, PBL and WBL could be combined by means of Project-Based Inquiry (PBI) which is conceived in HE as a system where teaching and learning is developed and applied by interlocking academic and workplace practices. This level of active engagement into the whole process would allow students to see the relationship between personal and social influences, enabling them to cope more effectively with complex real life business scenarios.

Effective knowledge partnerships where universities play a leading role together with re-focused learning provision would allow educational institutions to provide more diverse opportunities for students' engagement with real life situations and ultimately reduce the gap between provided and expected learning and training outcomes. Understanding the needs of the labour market, effective utilisation of research and enterprise activities would enable them to sustain a more effective learning environment. By changing the institutional role of HEIs within the knowledge economy and motivating the innovative and entrepreneurial potential within them, effective negotiation among all the participants of the economic process would ultimately increase the competitiveness of young graduates. Graduates trained in innovative, up-to-date institutions and possessing valuable transferrable professional and intellectual skills and capabilities would be able to compete effectively in both national and international labour markets. The qualification gained in HE then becomes only one of a number of key factors gained during a graduates' employment. It is their ability to lead and contribute to a team, think creatively, adapt to different working environments and take responsible decisions which makes them a valuable and ultimately highly employable person in the global labour market.

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