

PANEL

Role of Universities for Social Change

21 SEPTEMBER 2022

(Türkiye Local Time: 10.00 - 12.00)

(CET Time: 09.00 - 11.00)

Panel Venue: İstanbul Bilgi University

Prof. İtir ERHART, İstanbul Bilgi University

Prof. Pinar UYAN SEMERCİ, İstanbul Bilgi University

Prof. Carmen PAUNESCU, Bucharest Academy of Economic Studies

Dr. Shane O'SULLIVAN, Limerick Institute of Technology



Scan QR
code for
online
participation

ADDRESS

İstanbul Bilgi University
santralİstanbul Campus
Energy Museum Control Room



Summary of the Panel

Prof. İtir Erhart and Prof. Pinar Uyan Semerci, in their talks, focused on the importance of inclusivity in higher education today. They emphasized the creation of institutional policies for inclusive education, inclusive classrooms, and inclusive campuses in terms of class, ethnicity, minority status, gender, etc. (<https://www.bilgi.edu.tr/media/uploads/2023/04/18/bilgi-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-policy.pdf>). Prof. İtir Erhart also underlined the role of arts and sports for both inclusive and innovative education environments.

Prof. Carmen Paunescu presented actions by European universities developed in accordance with the EU Commission Communication on a European strategy for universities and the

European Council Recommendation for effective European higher education cooperation. The EU Commission Communication underlines the role of inclusive universities, transnational cooperation and innovation to solve societal challenges and to have open, democratic, fair and sustainable societies. The European Council Recommendation also emphasizes building bridges for effective European higher education cooperation. In this respect, European Universities Initiative comprises of transnational alliances by higher education institutions - <https://education.ec.europa.eu/education-levels/higher-education/european-universities-initiative>; EU degrees are created; “living labs” are promoted to work on challenges in a holistic way, as well as in cooperation with start-ups; skills are promoted to support the green transition such as Higher Education Climate Frontrunners, and “green villages” to open up university campuses to communities; mutual access is important to online learning and research environments, digital libraries, MOOC platforms, and findable, accessible, interoperable, and reusable (FAIR) data.

Dr. Shane O’Sullivan presented case studies from Technological University of the Shannon (TUS), which engage the quadruple helix model of stakeholders of society, government, academia, and business. TUS is part of various ERASMUS+ Strategic Partnerships, that involve transnational meetings, learning/teaching/training activities and multiplier events. For example, the REBOUND project focuses on “Fostering Resilience in Rural Communities” via solution-focused capacity-building training programme in a vocational learning environment. The ComEnt project (Fostering Innovation in Community Led Enterprise Development) aims at developing a blended learning educational programme and associated teaching/learning resources for higher education institutions, accrediting agencies, and social entrepreneurs on community enterprise development. Dr. O’Sullivan presented the principles and activities of Campus Engage as a national promotor of engaged research with community partners for social change. Campus Engage is based at the Irish Universities Association – <https://www.campusengage.ie>. Campus Engage promotes and supports civic and community engagement as a core function of Irish higher education, in terms of community-based teaching and learning; engaged research and innovation for societal impact; student volunteering; and planning for impact. Campus Engage provides how to guides, policy briefings, and tools for planning for impact.