

Development of FLPs from the higher education institutions' perspective

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Some general comments

- The published report *"Flexible learning pathways in higher education"* is valuable document providing holistic picture and interesting insights into the broad context and wide range of instruments and practices of flexible learning pathways in HEI
- Policies, frameworks, instruments and practices under the concept of FLPs are numerous and varied so the comprehensive policy approach and definition of the concept is important to be accomplished
- The instruments & practices although many complete and support one another (eg. availability of continuous learning possibilities and flowing transfer procedures within higher education support better and earlier access to higher education (i.e. People do not use alternative path for upskilling or changing their major subject)



More specific notions relating to open studies pathway

Recommendations supported

- **Strengthening guidance and counselling services based on learners need**
 - Observations of TRY-project clearly showed that guidance and counselling services are very critical for the development of the open path
 - Constantly changing, vague and imprecise admission criteria (e.g. the quota of study places, demanded amount of ECTS, demanded level of academic marks, final selection procedure, etc) cause significant obstacles for increasing its share as an alternative pathway
- **Meta-analysis of the Government's key projects**
 - TRY-project (Alternative path to university) is just finalizing manual (From marginal to established admission pathway – Ideas to develop open path)



Key aspects for sustainable development in flexibility access to higher education (I)

Comprehensive longitudinal study on various pathways to higher education

- Finnish country report recommended to continue develop the open studies pathway
- However, there is very limited national data available on the provision of open studies and the impact of this pathway
- Our systems and procedures need to be developed evidence-based, so longitudinal follow-up study on different entrance routes and their impact is needed
- The study should gather quantitative and qualitative data
- Areas of interest are e.g.:
 - number of applicants, admission criteria, study progress, grades, graduation, drop-outs, commitment to studies and students wellbeing



Key aspects for sustainable development in flexibility access to higher education (II)

National "steering committee" to structure, evaluate and monitor the development of open pathways

- The committee acts as a steering group for the longitudinal research project
- It outlines policy plan for the development work in open pathways
- It guides the implementation of recommendations and good practices developed in TRY-key project
- It promotes joint policy definitions concerning funding issues of open study pathways and possibly provides national recommendations concerning quota share of this alternative study pathway alongside with the main student admission procedures