STARS EU Future Competencies Observatory

MS 5

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Introduction

The STARS-EU project plan includes work package 3.1 to build a so-called Future Competencies Observatory and make it work. So far, a Competences Catalogue has been created, which contains generic competences and specific competences within the framework of each thematic interest group (TiG) of STARS EU.

The next step is to create a Future Competencies Observatory that is tested, implemented and ultimately scaled up for needs outside of STARS-EU.

The Future Competencies Observatory should be a functional part of the STARS EU Curriculum Lab, and it will play a role in ensuring that our (common) curricula stay relevant, up to date and future oriented.

In this document the main roles, services and outputs of the Observatory are described as well as the next steps that have to be taken in creating the Observatory.

1. Main roles

Main roles of Future Competencies Observatory (WP 3.1 task members?):

1. **Monitor** how Future Skills are integrated into their institutions' curricula and drive the development of new approaches based on the STARS-EU Future Skills Catalogue. In this sense, they act as "monitoring and advisory ambassadors," which means encouraging systematic planning and engagement with Future Skills in their own institutions where possible, and monitoring the Future Skills being applied in STARS EU common study programmes. (relationship with WP3, task 3.2 and 3.8).

2. **Update** Competences Catalogue based on observations (trends and needs); with the Labour Market as main external source of demands and needs; research results as fountain of future professional profiles and societal innovations as niches of new demands of skills.

3. **Share :** Act as ambassadors for Future Skills across the alliance. They would share practices from their institutions with alliance partners, reflect on them within Task 3.1, and contribute to **shaping** STARS-EU's Future Skills policy.

4. **Advice**: Advice during the design of joint courses/programmes on how to incorporate Future skills and how to work effectively with the Competency

Catalogue. Also to provide guidance and support for the integration of Future skills into the courses/programmes curriculum at each university.

2. Services and output

Future Competencies Observatory Service(s) and output

1. **Annual update and development of STARS EU Competences Catalogue**
   Involving multiple stakeholders within and outside the STARS EU Alliances and the partner universities. This task involves: expert consultation (TiGs) and stakeholder engagement (students/staff/industries and external stakeholders.)
2. **Exploration** of potential joint course units, Blended Intensive Programs (BIPs), joint degrees at all levels, and Micro-credentials for lifelong learners (relationship with WP3, task 3.2).
   Establish a transversal framework for competencies that can be shared across partner institutions.
3. **Produce an annual report for the Steering Committee:** provide advice, recommendations, and inspiration for partner universities and the alliance, supporting ongoing Future Skills development.

By thoroughly assessing the needs that the STARS EU Future Competencies Observatory will address, the initiative can effectively support educational innovation and competency alignment within the STARS EU alliance, ensuring that students are equipped with the skills necessary for success in a rapidly changing world.

3. Next steps

Test the Functioning of the Observatory

- **Testing Conditions**:
  Establish clear conditions for testing the observatory's functions, including the desired outputs for each service.

- **Service Launch**:
  Implement initial services such as benchmarking, best practices, and competency needs assessment. Each service should involve at least three partner institutions to ensure diversity and comprehensive feedback.

- **Monitoring and Recommendations**:
Execute and monitor the test phase, gathering data on the effectiveness of the services provided. Formulate recommendations based on the testing results.

Roll Out the Observatory

- **Expanded Services**:
Roll out additional services, aiming for at least six distinct services with corresponding outputs, ensuring involvement from multiple partners in each.

- **Continuous Monitoring**:
Continue to monitor the observatory's performance and impact, making necessary adjustments based on ongoing evaluations.

Scale Up the Observatory

- **Broader Outreach**:
Extend the observatory's reach to include other institutions and alliances beyond the EU, enhancing its role as a resource for global educational communities.

- **Evaluation and Recommendations**:
Conduct comprehensive evaluations of the scaling process, documenting insights and recommendations for future phases of the observatory.

4. Steps on university level

1. I**nstitutional Endorsement**: Secure formal support from university leadership to ensure the STARS EU initiative aligns with institutional missions and goals.
2. **Curricular Integration**: Establish processes for reviewing and incorporating STARS EU courses into existing curricula, enhancing educational offerings and meeting competency requirements.
3. **Professional Development**: Provide targeted training for faculty to develop skills in innovative teaching methods and collaboration, essential for delivering STARS EU courses effectively.

Conclusion

The STARS EU Future Competencies Observatory is designed to be a dynamic and responsive entity that bridges the gap between education and the evolving needs of the workforce. By following this structured approach, the observatory can effectively

support educational innovation and competency development across the STARS EU alliance.