



Ouverture du 10^{ème} colloque « Pascal International Observatory » 29 Octobre 2012 Brest

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Dear Colleagues

It is a pleasure for me, as Vice rector for LLL and academic affairs, on behalf of Pascal Olivard, Rector of the University of Brest, to welcome you in our city, in the framework of 10th conference of the "PASCAL INTERNATIONAL OBSERVATORY".

The President is today in Rennes, mobilised by questions somewhere inline with some of our subjects, as he is working for the European University of Brittany, a cluster of 23 higher Education institutions of Brittany created in 2007. Currently, our Rector is also the President of this cluster and I'm in charge of a mission for the development of LLL for this regional organisation.

He is so sorry not being present for this opening session but he sends a warm message of encouragement for your work and he will participate later as he will come back.

The University of Brest, with its particular situation in the French (and even European) geography, is proud to host this international conference and is specifically interested in this kind of conference which contributes to the necessary networking between organisations coming not only from different countries but also from different activities, but all concerned by the social responsibility, economic contribution and cultural engagement of higher Education institutions, and specifically Universities.

The University of Brest has seventeen thousands (17000) registered students, more than five thousand (5000) trainees in Continuing Education, two thousand and forty hundred (2400) personals, half being professors, researchers...

it's a pluri-disciplinary university with an important territorial anchoring.... and with the will to participate and contribute to the debate on the role of higher Education in our modern society.

Our university has chosen three main directions for its development, for the next five years (based on a contract with the Ministry)

The University wants to reinforce its excellence in certain chosen domains and to affirm its place at National and international level.

- We want to be recognised as leader in the field of Science and technologies for the sea, (Maritime Sciences)

- we want to reinforce the domain of health, Information technology (including mathematics) and Human sciences,
- and to have a clearer place at national and international level.

At the same time, our city, and more widely, our region, is looking for synergies that can enable a real and sustainable improvement of the social and economic situation.

The unemployment is raising in France : +3 % between 2007 and 2012, and up to 10,6% in august 2012 (source Eurostat, 9.7% insee data) but the situation in our region is quite better with only 8.6% of unemployed persons in 2012 (T2, insee data)...

Synergies are searched between research, innovation and industry/production... and include, but certainly not enough, the socio cultural character and human capital of the territory. This has somewhere to do with a lifelong learning strategy...???

But synergies have also to be searched throw networks and cooperation. The Arc Atlantic cities forum that is held in Brest at the same time that our event is an example of such engagement!

The current discussions, started with the new government for a **new reform of Higher Education**, together with the reflexions driven by regional authorities for a **Regional Scheme for Higher Education and research** are showing the new place and new role that our institution plays in the society, but also its responsibilities...

The minister of higher Education and research has opened the reflexion (called "Les assises de l'enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche" by these words:"

«pour remettre l'enseignement supérieur et la recherche au coeur de la société
L'enjeu des Assises est de replacer l'élévation du niveau de formation pour le plus grand nombre, la science et la recherche, au cœur des enjeux sociétaux, culturels, environnementaux et économiques de notre pays.
Les Assises reposent sur la conviction que les acteurs, les bénéficiaires et partenaires de l'enseignement supérieur et la recherche français sont prêts à améliorer son organisation et son fonctionnement au profit de ses acteurs et ses usagers. **De cette conviction, doit naître une nouvelle dynamique.** »

"to put higher education and research at the heart of society.

The issue of the conference is to place the raising of educationnal level for the largest part of the society, Science and research at the heart of societal, cultural, environmental and economic issues for our country.

These conferences are based on the conviction that all the actors, recipients and partners of French HE and research are ready to improve its organisation and its activity for the benefit of all. A new dynamic must born from this conviction."

Since last July, these discussions have mobilised most of our strength and it is one of the raison why it had been so difficult to have more French participants to this conference. The subjects are of high concern but time is lacking. !!!! The national assembly must adopt the reform at the beginning of 2013!



Reading the different contribution to this conference, I'm afraid that many aspects of the engagement of HE & R institutions (like social responsibility, Lifelong learning...) will not be included but the debate has started and must be improved by local and regional initiatives.

The discussion around the **Regional Scheme for Higher Education and research**, is, will be (or could be) an opportunity to widen the points of view with a global perception of the roles of higher education in our region.

To me, this conference seems to be a unique opportunity to debate all these points and to exchange with international experts and researchers in these fields.

I've to thank "the Pascal Board", with a special thinking to Jarl Berngtsson, which have accepted to entrust our university with the organisation of this conference.

Also I've to thank our partners: The European University of Brittany (PRES), the Brittany Region council, the Council of the department of FINISTERE, Brest Metroplitan area, for their support.

I wish you, I wish us!!! a very good work and hope that it will have a great influence on our collective future.

Enjoy your stay in Brest.

