

Lord Mayors Commission on Employment: Promoting Dublin as an International Student City

Background Paper

Proposal:

To hold a workshop of the key stakeholders on the unique role of Dublin in attracting international students and the potential economic and regeneration benefits. This would support the Economic Action Plan as well as inform the work of the Lord Mayors Commission on Employment.

Workshop Details:

Monday 18th January 2010, 9.30am – 12.30p.m, Wood Quay Venue, Dublin Civic Offices

Benefits

“The international education¹ services sector is now of the fastest growing business sectors in the world” according to a Dept. of Education and Science report *Internalisation of Irish Education Services*, and its promotion in Ireland is Government policy.

“The international education sector contributes €900 million to the Irish economy each year and supports thousands of Irish jobs. Yet Ireland attracts less than 1pc of the international student cohort. With international student numbers expected to rise by 300pc over the next 15 years, Ireland should be better positioned to capture a far greater share of that highgrowth global market” according to the Minister for Education and Science in a speech last month.

Attracting foreign students has a range of benefits other than the income/employment generated such as: more innovation in education system and later (with commercialisation of ideas); increased tourism (from family/friends), trade links and investment, more lively and vibrant city, regeneration, promoting Dublin internationally etc

The City Council has agreed to brand international student scholarships of the Universities and Institutes of Technology in Dublin as 'The Lord Mayor of Dublin International Scholarships'. This is aimed at creating closer links with the city and attracting top international students to come and study in Dublin.

Smart Economy

The Governments *Smart Economy* strategy states “We will seek to position Ireland as a destination of choice in the international education market through new regulatory and marketing co-ordination arrangements that will enhance the promotion of Irish education overseas” (p72). Also “We will continue to strengthen bilateral education relations between Irish and Chinese authorities at third level, including further development of economic and cultural links and the learning of the Chinese language”.

Students in the Private Rented Sector

Students in the Private Rented Sector: What are the issues? report published last month and commissioned by DOEHLG, DES, PRTB and USI that examined issues in Dublin (available on www.chr.ie under news). It also reviewed student accommodation in Europe, the role of the private

International education is defined by the DES to include; international students coming to Ireland for second level education, further education in PLC courses, English language course and higher education provision under a number of modes of delivery.

sector, and the role of universities and students in the development of 'knowledge cities'. They quote a King Sturge (2008) report that the student accommodation sub-sector is forecast to experience considerable growth in the medium to long term. Some cities are actively working to ensure student accommodation is provided in a way that makes such cities attractive to students and supports their positive integration into the economic and social life of such cities (p76).

The report recommends that:

*"The fact that student communities are a **strategic resource for urban development** should be recognised. Purpose-built and properly managed student housing can be a significant regeneration engine that could be of great benefit to certain areas .. of Dublin" (p78)*

Dept of Education and Science

The Minister for Education and Science Mr. Batt O'Keeffe T.D. speaking at the launch of the above report stated:

"A second feature of the study was a review of student accommodation in Europe and gives an insight into issues and approaches in other European cities. It reminds us of the need to ensure that we need to market Ireland as a place to study to foreign students. The longterm benefits of developing the international education sector in Ireland are immense.

As part of this strategy, the Minister announced plans to establish a Quality Mark for English language schools and further and higher education colleges. He also announced **Enterprise Ireland** will now take responsibility for marketing and promoting the 'Education Ireland' brand overseas and **Fáilte Ireland** will continue to develop and promote the English language sector.

The Student City

The Student City: Strategic Planning for Student Communities in EU Cities (Leo van den Berg et al, 2004) examines nine EU cities. It finds that:

*"Student communities are without a doubt a strategic resource for urban development" but that **"European cities are seldom ready to recognise and manage this potential"**. They set out a comprehensive urban strategy for a student friendly city (p11) such as attracting and assisting the students, housing, keeping the students linked to the city etc.*

Students can help regenerate areas. Some cities have no central areas to expand educational facilities and provide student accommodation (so it would seem Dublin's significant and central regeneration areas are a competitive advantage. Also in other EU cities it is difficult to get the private sector to invest in student housing but this is not the case for Dublin).

Dublin Region Higher Education Alliance

The Dublin Region Higher Education Alliance (DRHEA, www.drhea.ie) sets out 'Internationalisation' as a key element of its work programme. It states:

"The key deliverable here is an increase in the number of international students attending DRHEA institutions, by 2011/12. This will be achieved through the development of a brand: "Destination Dublin", providing a clear and concise message about the shared values that make Dublin an international location of choice for mobile students.

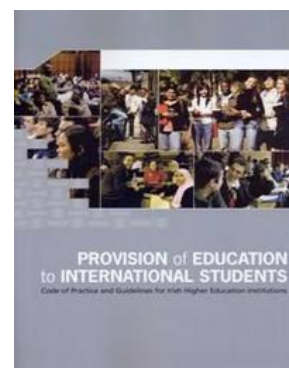
An enhanced experience for Dublin's international students is paramount to the credibility of this brand. "On the ground" activities will take place at critical junctures for the student, such as at the point of arrival in Dublin (working with Dublin Tourism to provide information at the airport, the provision of a pick up service for students etc.), and at the beginning of their stay (providing a shared integration and cultural programme in partnership **with key external stakeholders such as Dublin City Council**). To catalyse recruitment, the provision of Scholarships (branded as the "Lord Mayor of Dublin International Scholarships") will be linked to positive career outcomes for Dublin-bound students."

Irish Universities Association

RESEARCHER HOSTING AGREEMENT SCHEME: Removing obstacles for non EU researchers coming to Ireland is a publication of the Irish Universities Association (IUA, www.iua.ie). Through major government-funded investments, Ireland now has world class research teams who attract researchers from around the world. An essential element of research is internationalisation; it is by its nature a global activity and Ireland cannot achieve national targets without recruiting overseas talent. See also www.fourthlevelireland.ie

Provision of Education to International Students

This [Code of Practice and Guidelines](#) on the provision of education to International Students was published in September 2009 by a subcommittee appointed by the Irish Higher Education Quality Network www.iheqn.ie



Dublin City Council

The **Economic Action Plan for the Dublin City Region** sets out an objective to “Identify and seek to address the challenges experienced by international students in considering Dublin as a city of choice” with DCC as the lead body (p41).

The **proposed Draft Dublin City Development Plan** sets out a policy “To promote Dublin as an International Education Centre, as set out in national policy, and to support and encourage provision of necessary infrastructure such as colleges and high quality custom built and professionally managed student housing” (p112)

Updated: 19th Dec 09