The MORHEL project

MORoccan Higher Education Leadership

Project No. 101083054 – ERASMUS-EDU-2022-CBHE · Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

Main project objectives

- To establish a **National Leadership Development Centre**, a nationally recognised hub for training and supporting higher education leaders and administrators.
- To deliver a **certified national leadership development programme** for current and future leaders.

15	11	130+
project partners	Moroccan partner institutions	leaders and managers (project target)

Partners: the Moroccan Ministry of Higher Education, 11 Moroccan institutions, EMUNI University, Università Telematica Pegaso and the University of Granada.

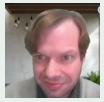
Programme and speakers



Michele Corleto
Università Telematica Pegaso, Italy
Welcome and introduction to the MORHEL project



David Dawson
Università Telematica Pegaso, Italy / University of Gloucestershire, UK
Presentation of the international study



Rodrigo Martín-Rojas
University of Granada, Spain
Presentation of the international study

Followed by Q&A and discussion with the participants.

About the webinar

Organised online by Università Telematica Pegaso as part of the MORHEL dissemination activities. Invitations were sent to the Moroccan partner institutions, the Erasmus+ Office in Morocco and colleagues from the European partner institutions.

Participating institutions: Università Telematica Pegaso, EMUNI University, University of Granada, University of Gloucestershire, Université Abdelmalek Essaâdi, Université Chouaib Doukkali, Sultan Moulay Slimane University, Institut Agronomique et Vétérinaire Hassan II, Mohammed VI Polytechnic University.

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

MORHEL MORoccan Higher Education Leadership

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This brochure summarises the webinar for information purposes. The study and the views presented are those of the researchers and speakers.

MORHEL MORoccan Higher Education Leadership

MORHEL PROJECT
WEBINAR BROCHURE

Higher Education Leadership

Insights from MORHEL and International Research

Wednesday 11 November 2026
11:00 CET (Rome) | 10:00 Morocco time | Online webinar



Speakers and participants at the MORHEL webinar, 11 November 2026

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

Università Pegaso

The international study

The webinar focused on the study ***"The Drivers of Higher Education Leadership Qualities and Skills: An International Study"***, presented by its authors, Prof. David Dawson and Prof. Rodrigo Martín-Rojas. The research builds on several projects, MORHEL in particular.

It addresses two questions: which qualities and skills do higher education leaders most need to develop, and how do institutional support and leaders' own motivation combine to build leadership capacity?

901	53	9	2018–25
leaders	universities	countries	survey period

Leaders were surveyed in nine countries on three continents: Albania, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Indonesia, Kosovo, Moldova, Morocco and Tunisia. In each country, the survey was part of a training needs analysis in preparation for a national leadership development programme.

How leadership was measured

Leaders assessed their own qualities and skills using the authors' **Higher Education Leadership Qualities and Skills (HELQS) framework**.

The original framework covered two areas: leading resources and personal qualities. For this study, the authors added a third area, **leading contemporary issues**, with four new domains: internationalisation, impact, quality learning, and equality, diversity and inclusion. The framework now has 3 areas and 13 domains.



Key findings of the study

- **A similar pattern across countries:** average self-ratings varied from country to country, but leaders ranked their strengths and development needs in a very similar order.
- **Shared development needs:** the areas where leaders most often see room for growth are managing resources (finance and risk), internationalisation, equality, diversity and inclusion, quality learning and impact.
- **Areas of confidence:** leaders feel most confident in their personal qualities and values.
- **Context:** Prof. Dawson observed that academics are often appointed to leadership roles for their expertise in their discipline, and may not always receive specific training or support for these new responsibilities.

What builds leadership capacity

The study also examined how support from the institution and the leader's own motivation and mindset combine. Across the countries studied, the results showed the same chain of five linked steps:

1	**Institutional support** – the university values leadership development and invests resources in it
2	**Commitment** – leaders see development as valuable and professionally useful
3	**Open mindset** – leaders become more open-minded and willing to innovate
4	**Action** – leaders take an active part in leadership development
5	**Capacity** – leaders become more competent across all 13 HELQS domains

The steps are connected: according to the authors, each one supports the next.

Suggestions from the authors

- An integrated and strategic approach to leadership development, creating environments where open-mindedness and innovation can flourish.
- Alongside training, attention to what leaders are expected to do, to their commitment and to the resources for their development.
- Freedom for leaders to act, together with responsibility for delivering valuable outcomes.
- Development work led by each country and adapted to its own cultural context.

Points raised in the Q&A

- **Interpersonal skills:** the MORHEL interpersonal skills workshops were mentioned as a good practice that other countries could adopt, and that could be further developed with the partner universities.
- **Impact beyond the numbers:** it was noted that the value of programmes such as MORHEL lies not only in the numbers reached, but also in their effect on participants and, in many cases, on their institutions.
- **Public support:** the discussion also touched on the importance of helping society recognise the value of higher education, to sustain public investment in the sector.