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ROAD2EU SUMMER SCHOOL 2026 — LECTURE 2

Implementation Lab: Translating EEA, DEAP and European Semester Guidance into Departmental Roadmaps

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SS LECTURE 12

WHAT THIS LECTURE COVERS



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01 Policy layers

02 Departmental roadmaps

03 Poland as implementation context

04 Outputs, outcomes, and review

DEPARTMENTAL ROADMAPS MAKE EU PRIORITIES VISIBLE, OWNED, AND REVIEWABLE

- Broad EU priorities only matter if they are **translated into concrete departmental actions** with clear owners and timelines.
- A roadmap makes priorities **visible, owned, and reviewable** — transforming abstract policy into operational accountability.
- The roadmap is a governance tool, not a bureaucratic form. It serves the department, not the administration.

THE ROADMAP AS GOVERNANCE TOOL

A departmental roadmap is the single most effective instrument for closing the gap between EU policy ambitions and everyday institutional practice.



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A DEPARTMENTAL ROADMAP IS A SHORT PRACTICAL PLANNING TOOL

- A departmental roadmap is a **short, structured planning document** that translates EU priorities into departmental objectives.
- It specifies **actions, owners, indicators, and review points** — the minimum set of elements needed for accountable implementation.
- It should be simple enough to use in practice and specific enough to be meaningful.

KEEP IT SIMPLE

The best roadmaps are short, focused, and used. A one-page roadmap that is actively reviewed is worth more than a 50-page strategy that sits on a shelf.



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THE EEA STRATEGIC LOGIC: TARGETS, INDICATORS, AND MONITORING

- The **European Education Area (EEA)** provides the overarching strategic framework with binding targets, indicators, and annual monitoring.
- Departments should understand the **wider strategic direction** set by the EEA to ensure their priorities are aligned with national and EU commitments.
- Strategic literacy at the departmental level is a precondition for coherent, fundable implementation.

STRATEGIC LITERACY MATTERS

Departments that understand the EEA framework are better positioned to align their actions with national reform priorities and access EU funding opportunities.



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THE EUROPEAN SEMESTER CONNECTS MACRO-LEVEL DIAGNOSIS WITH LOCAL PLANNING

- The **European Semester** provides annual country-specific analysis of reform needs, structural challenges, and investment priorities.
- Departments should read national Semester signals as **implementation guidance** for their own planning.
- Connecting departmental priorities to Semester findings strengthens the case for institutional action and external funding.

FROM MACRO TO LOCAL

The European Semester is not just a macroeconomic tool; it is a rich source of country-specific evidence that departments can use to justify and prioritise their own actions.



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DEAP AT DEPARTMENTAL LEVEL: FIVE KEY AREAS FOR EVERYDAY PLANNING

AREA 1

Digital Teaching Quality

Reviewing and improving the quality of digital and hybrid teaching methods and tools.

AREA 2

Accessibility

Ensuring digital content and platforms meet EU accessibility standards for all learners.

AREA 3

Assessment

Adapting assessment methods to digital learning environments and competence-based approaches.

AREA 4

Content Review

Updating curriculum content to reflect digital transformation priorities and emerging competences.

AREA 5

Staff Development

Building staff digital competences through targeted training, peer learning, and professional development programmes.



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COHESION POLICY LINKS DEPARTMENTAL IMPLEMENTATION TO SKILLS, INCLUSION, AND INNOVATION

- **ESF+** (European Social Fund Plus) speaks the language of skills development, social inclusion, and structural reform — directly relevant to departmental work.
- **ERDF and Interreg** matter for innovation capacity and territorial cooperation, opening additional implementation and funding pathways.
- Departments can link their implementation actions to different EU investment logics depending on their priorities.

MULTIPLE INVESTMENT LOGICS

Cohesion Policy offers departments multiple entry points: skills and inclusion through ESF+, innovation through ERDF, and cross-border cooperation through Interreg.



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POLAND: WHAT DEPARTMENTS SHOULD NOTICE IN THE NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION CONTEXT

- Key Polish gaps include **STEM participation, digital skills, adult learning rates, and urban-rural access disparities.**
- Departmental priorities should reflect **real national and regional implementation needs**, not just abstract EU vocabulary.
- Grounding implementation in concrete Polish data makes departmental roadmaps more credible, relevant, and fundable.

GROUND IT IN REALITY

Abstract EU priorities become actionable when they are connected to specific, measurable gaps in the national and regional context. Use real data, not just policy language.



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FROM OBJECTIVE TO ACTION AND OWNER: OWNERSHIP IS THE MOST COMMON IMPLEMENTATION WEAKNESS

- Define **one clear objective** that is specific, measurable, and achievable within the planning period.
- Name **one lead owner** — a named individual, not a committee — who is accountable for delivery.
- Set **one realistic action and one expected output** to maintain focus and avoid overcommitment.

OWNERSHIP IS EVERYTHING

The most common reason implementation fails is not lack of resources or ambition — it is the absence of a named, empowered owner who is accountable for delivery.



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OUTPUTS, OUTCOMES, AND INDICATORS: THE BASIC LOGIC OF PLANNING AND EVALUATION

- **Outputs** are the delivered activities or products of an action — what you produce.
- **Outcomes** are the changes expected for beneficiaries as a result of the outputs — what changes.
- Indicators measure whether outputs have been delivered and outcomes achieved, providing the evidence base for review and learning.

THE PLANNING LOGIC

Confusing outputs with outcomes is one of the most common planning errors. Outputs are within your control; outcomes depend on how beneficiaries respond to what you deliver.



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A SIMPLE ROADMAP TEMPLATE READY TO ADAPT

COLUMN 1 EU Priority	COLUMN 2 Departmental Objective
COLUMN 3 Action	COLUMN 4 Owner
COLUMN 5 Indicator	COLUMN 6 Evidence Source
COLUMN 7 Review Date	COLUMN 8 Risk / Mitigation



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SUGGESTED IMPLEMENTATION-LAB OUTPUTS FOR THE SUMMER SCHOOL



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1 Departmental Roadmap
A completed one-page roadmap using the template, adapted to your department's context.

2 KPI Sheet
A short table of key performance indicators with targets, data sources, and review dates.

3 Mini Dashboard
A simple visual tool tracking progress against the roadmap's key indicators.

4 Risk Note
A brief register of key implementation risks with proportionate mitigation measures.

5 Short Policy Brief
A concise document communicating the department's implementation priorities to leadership.

SELECTED REFERENCES

- **European Commission.** *European Education Area Strategic Framework.* 2021-2030.
- **European Commission.** *European Semester: Country Reports and Recommendations.* Annual series.
- **European Commission.** *Digital Education Action Plan (DEAP) 2021-2027.*
- **European Commission.** *Cohesion Policy 2021-2027.* Regulation (EU) 2021/1060.
- **European Commission.** *Education and Training Monitor 2025: Poland.* Publications Office of the EU, 2025.



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Questions & Discussion

What is hardest in practice: choosing priorities, assigning ownership, or defining indicators?

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