Future of European higher education in an age of demographic headwinds

The **impact of demographic decline on higher education system structures and funding in Romania, Poland and Russia**

by Robert Santa

The demographic trends and student populations

Country	TFR 1990	TFR 1995	TFR 2000	TFR 2005	TFR 2010	TFR 2015
Russia	1.89	1.34	1.20	1.29	1.57	1.78
Poland	2.04	1.65	1.35	1.24	1.38	1.29
Romania	1.83	1.33	1.31	1.32	1.30	1.58

Share of 1980´s mean annual birth cohort size, of post-communist mean annual cohort sizes grouped into 5 year clusters.						
Country	1981-1990	1991-1995	1996-2000	2001-2005	2006-2010	2011-2015
Russia	2,331,154	1,506,644	1,265,872	1,429,145	1,670,868	1,895,560
Poland	641,475	496,327	399,361	358,711	401,501	378,065
Romania	358,093	253,808	234,931	216,127	218,141	191,556
Russia %X	100.0%	64.6%	54.3%	61.3%	71.7%	81.3%
Poland %X	100.0%	77.4%	62.3%	55.9%	62.6%	58.9%
Romania %X	100.0%	70.9%	65.6%	60.4%	60.9%	53.5%

Falling student populations
(but not a reversal of massification)

	Poland		Romania		Russia	
Year	X	Y	X	Y	X	Y
2007	613	1,923	370	1,030	2,374	7,461
2008	587	1,912	374	1,035	2,297	7,513
2009	570	1,880	365	939	2,158	7,419
2010	552	1,818	345	816	1,976	7,050
2011	533	1,737	320	661	1,782	6,490
2012	517	1,676	294	572	1,632	6,074
2013	496	1,549	269	541	1,507	5,647
2014	472	1,469	244	512	1,409	5,209

Cohort size reductions can explain the bulk of student population reduction, especially for Poland and Russia.

The decline of private, part-time, fee-paying education

Edu sector	Peak enrolment			2013 enrolment			Decline
	Number	Year	Share	Number	Year	Share	
RU - public	6.215.000	2008	86,7%	4.762.000	2013	84,3%	23,4%
RU - private	1.298.000	2008	17,3%	885.000	2013	15,7%	31,8%
PL - public	1.330.717	2004	69,6%	1.150.859	2013	74,3%	13,5%
PL - private	660.467	2007	34,4%	397.889	2013	25,7%	39,8%
RO - public	650.247	2007	63,1%	461.314	2013	85,3%	29,1%
RO - private	410.859	2008	39,7%	79.246	2013	14,7%	80,7%

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- Demographic change -> background factor or key transformative challenge?

Questions, barbs and comments

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