

FUTURE OF HIGHER EDUCATION - BOLOGNA PROCESS RESEARCHERS' CONFERENCE (FOHE-BPRC), THIRD EDITION

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Session 2: Social dimension within a quality oriented HE system

The Social Dimension and the University Rankings, *José M. Nyssen (National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation of Spain, ANECA)*

What if university rankings could foster universities' commitment to better outcomes related to the social dimension?

The present work aims to: 1) encourage universities to work in improving their performance on a range of aspects of the social dimension; 2) publicly value the work of universities on this matter; and 3) provide students and society with more complete, accurate and balanced information on university outcomes according to the Higher Education objectives outlined by UNESCO and European Higher Education Area.

In order to achieve these goals, we consider the development of certain methodological tools and a proposal open to discussion and improvement is presented.

This proposal is part of a broader project analyzing the extent to which the social dimension has been developed in the most globally impactful international university rankings. One of the main conclusions is that there is a noticeable lack of attention to the social dimension in those rankings, although the inclusion of indicators focused on this dimension is not only important but also feasible and affordable.

A typology of admission systems across Europe and their impact on the equity of access, progression and completion in higher education, *Cezar Haj, Irina Geanta (Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation, Romania), Dominic Orr (Institute for Education and Socio-Economic Research, Germany)*

Admission systems to higher education are the key point for determining which students go into which type of higher education institution. Based on how admission systems are designed, they will allow access to a smaller or larger number of students, but they will also shape participation by social background. However, the admission system is neither simply the transition point between upper secondary schooling and higher education, nor simply a matter of procedures and regulations. This paper argues that who gets into which part of a higher education system is determined by three aspects: how the schooling system is organised, how higher education institutions (can) recruit students, and how prospective students make choices about where to go. Each of these three aspects also affects who ends up in a higher education programme, so they are relevant for any discussion of the social dimension of higher education participation. This perspective is operationalised through a four-field typology of admission systems. Understanding how each aspect 'works' and how they interact opens up the opportunity to review and change higher education admission policies to make higher education more inclusive.

**Study Success at the Clash Point of Excellence and Social Dimension? Šimon Stiburek, Aleš Vlček
(Tertiary Education & Research Institute, Czech Republic)**

In our paper, we discuss how and to what extent striving for “excellence” hinders the social dimension of contemporary higher education (HE) systems and higher education institutions (HEIs), taking the study success in the Visegrad countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia) as an example. We review national policies and institutional attitudes towards study success in the four selected countries to identify whether there are measures that could satisfy the demand for excellence and social dimension at the same time. A special case study is devoted to the Czech Republic. We argue that striving for excellence might lead to neglecting aspects not reflected in international rankings or rewarded by national policies such as the quality of teaching and learning, student support, diversity and other social aspects. We argue that various environmental pressures make many institutions invest more resources into excellence, research performance and international reputation rather than into promotion of study success.

The role of student counselling for widening participation of under-represented groups in higher education, Marita Gasteiger, Johannes Ruhland, Janine Wulz (Austrian Students Union)

Making higher education more inclusive is one of the main targets of the Bologna Process. During the last years, national governments set up strategies to widen the access; higher education institutions and stakeholders developed measures to ensure inclusion of learners from diverse backgrounds. Higher education institutions and stakeholders, such as students’ unions, play a crucial role in the development and implementation of strategies. One of the main measures to enable better access to higher education is student counselling. Counselling activities are undertaken by diverse actors with several purposes. It can be provided by universities, stakeholders (as professional associations), psychologists or students’ unions. Counselling activities can be provided to a general audience or to specific target groups, which can be an advantage for those who benefit from specific counselling (e.g. for disabled students), but can also be a barrier for those who do not want to out themselves as “disadvantaged”.

The paper provides an overview of counselling activities in nine European countries (AT, DE, ES, IT, LI, UK, RO, DK, SLO) from a student’s perspective. It will focus on counselling activities provided by students’ unions, their cooperation with other counselling providers (e.g. university counselling, financial support, psychologists) and their approach to supporting disadvantaged learners. This includes the use of modern technology (online counselling, Facebook, Skype) to reach out to a wider audience, mentoring and tutoring activities as well as counselling activities for specific groups (e.g. first generation students). The paper will conclude with an analysis of provided measures, their role in widening access to higher education as well as identified gaps.

**Refugees on their way to German higher education: A new aspect of internationalization?, Jana Berg
(Deutsches Zentrum für Hochschul, Germany)**

Education is a crucial topic for asylum seekers and refugees: Many of them have high educational aspirations and the level of education determines their chances of integration and success in the host country. Supported by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research and the German Academic Exchange Service, universities, universities of applied sciences and preparatory colleges started programs to assist refugees and asylum seekers on their way to and through higher education. Based on a system theoretical intersectional perspective, his article will work out what first contacts for refugees, members of the international offices and a vice-president of internationalization at 5 German higher education institutions identify as specific challenges for refugees and asylum seekers on their

way to German higher education. Then, it comparatively introduces the support structures those 5 German HEI have implemented. It recommends supporting HEIs financially to help them institutionalize their support-structures and working towards a framing of refugees as potentially highly performing international students and a positive enrichment of a diverse and international HEI.

Studying and working – Hurdle or springboard? Widening access to higher education for working students in Malta, *Christine Scholz Fenech (National Commission for Further and Higher Education, Malta), Milosh Raykov (University of Malta)*

Policy makers have recognised the significance of higher education for the individual's social, economic and personal development. While the social dimension of education in the Bologna Process emphasises the need for widening access to education, at EU level it has received renewed interest in recent years, with a focus on increasing higher education attainment and the new skills agenda. Research shows that access to higher education remains highly selective and that the expansion of higher education in European and other OECD countries is characterized by increased student participation in the labour force during the time of studies. This development has attracted much interest in research on the impact of students' paid work on their academic and employment outcomes. Following up on this research, this paper presents results from the 2016 EUROSTUDENT survey conducted in Malta (N=1,423), which describes the profile and experience of working students in Malta. It aims to increase awareness of this issue and to identify possible policy measures to address the challenges encountered by this group of students.

Access, Qualifications and Social Dimension of Syrian Refugee Students in Turkish Higher Education, *Armagan Erdogan (Social Sciences University of Ankara, Turkey), Murat Armagan (Hacettepe University, Turkey)*

Forced migration has been a crucial social phenomenon in the last decade. It has inevitable impacts on higher education in the world and EHEA in particular. This paper aims to investigate the access routes, qualifications and social dimension of the Syrian refugees studying in Turkish Universities. Since 2011 Syrian refugee population living in Turkey increased to 3.3 million which makes Turkey the country having the most refugee population in the world. As of April 2017, 14.740 Syrian students are enrolled in 140 Turkish higher education institutions. However the access route has been a challenging experience both for the students and Turkish universities in terms of recognition of the qualifications. This paper is based on a quantitative data received during a research called Elite-dialogue completed in May 2017. The field research was pursued 497 university students participated to the interviews, of whom 395 have filled in the online interviews and 102 have participated the interviews during the workshops in four different cities (Istanbul, Ankara, Gaziantep and Mardin). The questions designed to learn their academic and social inclusion into Turkish higher education. Therefore the interviews consist of questions relating their academic background to understand if they attended or received any degree at home. Their experiences to access into universities in Turkey, the quality of the education, their qualifications and the barriers they have faced so far have been asked. Lastly, the financial and social conditions they face; social, financial and academic level of their family; their future plans for employment will be investigated.

New legislative rules and implementations, new understanding of the access routes in a central higher education system, new approach to the recognition of prior learning, new programs to overcome language barriers and to keep the quality high have been the challenges Turkey have been facing in the last five years. The findings of the research, analysed in the paper will contribute to overcome the new challenges of the EHEA.

Inclusive practices in response to the refugee influx: support structures and rationales described by German University administrators, *Lisa Unangst, Bernhard Streitwieser (Boston College, USA)*

The refugee influx to Germany has challenged institutions of higher education (HEI's) to develop programs and policies that further support a diverse population of students. Building upon a small number of published works focusing on this highly dynamic environment, we present an analysis of two related studies focused on university administrators' perceptions of approaches to refugee student support at their institutions. Data from interviews and analysis of programming indicate that attaining German language proficiency at the C1 level is a significant barrier for refugee students; that there are key differences in the types of programs offered in distinct university contexts, which may relate to degree of university leadership or administrator background and interest; that the definition of "success" from the university perspective is often opaque and inconsistent; that managing refugees' expectations is a challenge; that there is a desire to enable more Muslim refugee women university access; and that there are large gaps in the number of students interested in study and those actually enrolling in degree programs. This paper presents interview data and document analysis collected from twelve universities, and suggests further areas for inquiry.