

grants and donations. As a result, revenues generated from fee-based educational services, grants, research collaborations, various commercial activities, and other sources have significantly increased in many public universities in the country.

#### **INSTITUTIONAL DISPARITIES AND INCOME INEQUALITIES**

Universities generally differ in age, geographic location, staff profile, alumni, and program diversity. As a result of such disparities, considerable inequalities exist in the capacity of institutions to generate revenues. The old, well-established universities are better able to raise funds and win grants from industries and donors, while the new ones rarely receive such funds. Besides, universities established in less developed regions have fewer opportunities to generate funds, compared to those located in highly developed regions and urban areas.

#### **THREAT TO QUALITY**

Universities that offer courses in highly demanded fields are better able to enroll more fee-paying students. In order to attract more students, therefore, many universities now offer training in market-oriented programs, even when they do not have the essential resources to support such training programs. Some universities might also tend to compromise admission criteria in order to enroll large numbers of fee-paying students as a means of increasing tuition revenue. This could lead to enroll below-standard students, which in turn compromises the quality of education.

#### **THE WAY FORWARD**

Generally speaking, public universities in Ethiopia have a significant potential to supply various services to industry and private business, thereby generating revenues. Experience at many universities illustrates their commitment towards increasing nongovernmental revenue sources essential to support their institutional operations.

Despite this promising landscape, the strategies used to generate revenues in many universities appear to be largely focused on a few, traditional streams. As a result, institutions have not adequately diversified their income base. Besides, at most institutions revenue generation activities have not been systematically and strategically supported. To conclude, the benefits of such revenues have not been capitalized to significantly contribute to institutional excellence.

In order to successfully institutionalize their strategies and diversify their income base, universities should develop appropriate administrative structures. In addition, revenues generated from various streams should be primarily used to support core university missions. To do so, universities should be given sufficient autonomy to keep additional

revenues generated: there has been external interference on individual universities. Universities should also stimulate staff to engage in income-producing activities, through various incentive mechanisms.

Overall, the increasing share of nongovernmental revenue helps to supplement public budget. Hence, revenue diversification should be seen as an essential source of supplementary income and complementary activity. While pursuing new income streams, however, universities must maintain their core values. ■

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## Higher Education in Western Balkans: Recent Trends and Challenges

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The recent reforms and developments in European higher education have been extensively discussed, researched, and written about. However, the Western Balkans (WB), a region of Southeast Europe encompassing seven countries (Albania; Bosnia and Herzegovina; Croatia; Former Yugoslav Republic (FYR) of Macedonia; Kosovo; Montenegro; and Serbia) with a combined population of 22.7 million, has remained underresearched. The lack of prior studies is mostly due to the absence of systematic data collection on national and institutional levels. This article describes and analyzes some of the most salient challenges and issues facing the academic sector in this region.

#### **ENROLLMENT, COMPLETION RATES, AND STRUCTURAL ISSUES**

In the Western Balkans, the vast majority of students in higher education are enrolled in public institutions. Even though tertiary enrollment rates in the region are relatively high—on average close to 50 percent of the traditional, college-going age-class—the degree completion rates are rather low. Available estimations reflect, on average, graduation rates below 40 percent for students within 10 years of their enrollment for Croatia, FYR Macedonia, and Albania. These educational outcomes, coupled with structural issues and high unemployment rates, present major challenges for WB countries.

Most of the countries in the region faced a difficult transition period after the war following the dismantling of socialist Yugoslavia in the early 1990s. Political and structural weaknesses (namely inefficient bureaucratic structures, weak governmental accountability, and corruption) have continuously affected the countries' academic sectors, especially because they are overseen by their respective governments. The higher education systems in the region have also been influenced by successive, and often contradictory, policies resulting from changes of the political parties in power (i.e., conservative governments often resorted to changing previous liberal legislations, and vice versa). This sociopolitical context and related practices have led to stagnation with regard to the development of long-term national strategic goals in these countries.

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Universities are still financed almost exclusively by the national governments, and governments are very closely involved in the decision-making process regarding the allocation of funds to higher education institutions; their rules must be followed, even in matters such as student enrollment quotas and faculty and administrators' salaries. In light of these circumstances, there is a call for reforms from the local academic community, mostly related to increasing institutional autonomy and moving away from direct state supervision; increasing the quality of education and research productivity; and integrating and professionalizing university leadership and management.

Another structural problem pertains to the lack of institutional or country-level schemes to offset tuition costs and ensure equal access for, and retention of, students from low-income and underserved populations. Some countries in the region have free tuition for at least a portion of their students, and some financial aid is available at certain institutions, as well as in the form of national scholarships. However, these amounts are still far from covering all education-related costs for students, such as fees, books, and living expenses. In some countries, there are projects underway to create solutions and introduce a more robust student aid system (e.g., the Institute for the Development of Education is working on such project in Croatia).

#### **GROWTH OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR**

In the Western Balkans, the rapid growth of the private higher education sector stems from the particular political circumstances in the region (i.e., the transition from socialist regimes to a market economy), combined with a rapid increase in student demand. Several countries, especially those involved in armed conflict after the dismantling of former Yugoslavia, lacked the capacity to develop a comprehensive higher education policy and strategy, which resulted in a proliferation of private (often for-profit) institutions.

For the most part, experience with private institutions in these countries has not been positive. These institutions typically represent a second choice for those students who do not make the cut for admission into public universities. Where regulations do not explicitly define the status of a university, private institutions tend to use the name "university" in their designation, even if they only offer vocational or two-year degrees. At system level, the emergence of private institutions has not significantly contributed to program diversification; the vast majority of programs offered by the private sector are in profitable areas such as business, information technologies, and tourism.

Private institutions in the WB typically have scarce resources and depend to a great extent on faculty from public institutions working for both their home institution and the private one. Part-time employment, contract work, and the employment of practitioners and teaching staff without a doctorate degree are the predominant practice. Faculty "moonlighting" has also substantially affected the quality of education at public universities. In several countries, there are persistent calls for stronger regulations and greater transparency in private higher education.

#### **EUROPEAN UNION FUNDING**

The EU narrative of investment in "knowledge-based" economy has also permeated WB countries. However, even though member and candidate countries are eligible to apply for funds from the EU to finance research and development, competition for these resources has proved very difficult for institutions in the WB. These countries have limited resources at their disposal to begin with, unlike developed countries that are able to invest significantly larger resources in the necessary expertise and infrastructure, to successfully tap into these funding streams. Consequently, the proportion of funding obtained from the EU in the WB is still very low, as the current funding mechanisms employed by the EU are perpetuating the status quo regarding the distribution of funds across Europe. Without significant modifications, this approach could lead to further widening the gap in quality and productivity between the more affluent academic sectors in Western countries and the EU periphery.

**POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

In conclusion, it is worth noting that decision-makers in the region should avoid adopting policies that do not address the countries' specific needs and socio-political and economic circumstances, with a sufficient allocation of resources. The developed EU countries that are able to spend significantly more in absolute terms on higher education are seen as examples to be followed by WB countries. However, experience in post-transition countries, especially in this region, sug-

gests that some of the institutional and systemic challenges in these societies exceed anything that developed countries have ever faced—such as strict government oversight paired up with inefficient bureaucratic structures, lack of long-term strategies, and, in some cases, corruption. If these considerations are not into account, the adoption of various generalized trends and policies may worsen already existing issues faced by the tertiary education sector in these countries.

**NEW PUBLICATIONS**

Berg, Maggie, and Barbara K. Seeber. *The Slow Professor: Challenging the Culture of Speed in the Academy*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016. 115 pp. C\$26.95 (hb). ISBN 978-1-4426-4556-1. Website: [www.utpress.utoronto.ca](http://www.utpress.utoronto.ca).

An argument against the corporatization of universities, this slim volume advocates careful attention to both research and teaching. The increasing fast pace of modern academic life does not permit careful consideration of significant problems. The authors ask for careful consideration of humanistic education in a corporate age.

Douglass, John Aubrey, ed. *The New Flagship University: Challenging the Paradigm from Global Ranking to National Relevancy*. New York: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2016. 216 pp. \$100 (hb). ISBN 978-1-137-50048-9. Website: [www.palgrave.com](http://www.palgrave.com).

A discussion of the nature and role of flagship universities—the academic institutions that focus on research and are at the top of the academic systems of their countries. Among the themes discussed by the authors are the role of rankings in shaping flagship universities, and the role of flagships in specific countries and regions such as Russia, Scandinavia, Latin America, and others.

Ferrara, Mark S. *Palace of Ashes: China and the Decline of American Higher Education*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2016. 240 pp. \$29.95 (hb). ISBN 978-1-4214-1799-8. Website: [www.press.jhu.edu](http://www.press.jhu.edu).

This book discusses developments, both historical and contemporary, in American and Chinese higher education and makes the argument, unsupported by facts, that a perceived decline in American higher education is related to a rise in China's higher education system. Developments in both countries are discussed.

Goastellec, Gaële, and France Picard, eds. *Higher Education in Societies: A Multi Scale Perspective*. Rotterdam, Netherlands: Sense Publishers, 2014. 213 pp (pb). ISBN 978-94-6209-744-5. Website: [www.sensepublishers.com](http://www.sensepublishers.com).

This volume consists of papers stemming from a conference of the Consortium of Higher Education Researchers. The focus of most of them is on issues of access in the European and North American contexts.

Jarton, Michèle. *IFCU: A Prophetic Organization*. Paris: FIUC, 2016. 406 pp Euros 32. ISBN 978-88-209-9567-6.

A history of the International Federation of Catholic Universities from its founding in 1924

to the present, this volume presents information about the organization's activities and leaders. It provides some insights on the modern development of Catholic universities.

Luescher, Thierry, Manja Klemenčič, and James Otieno Jowi, eds. *Student Politics in Africa Representation and Activism*. Cape Town, South Africa: African Minds, 2016. 267 pp. (pb). ISBN 978-1-928331223. Website: [www.africanminds.org.za](http://www.africanminds.org.za).

Student political activism is an increasingly salient issue for higher education worldwide. This book focuses on Africa—with chapters devoted to student representation in governance of universities as well as more traditional forms of activism. Cases from a range of countries in Anglophone and Francophone Africa are provided. Although this book relates to Africa, it is relevant for an international audience.

OECD. *Trends Shaping Education 2016*. Paris: OECD Publishing, 2016. 120 pp. (pb). ISBN 978-92-64-25017-8. Website: [www.oecd-bookshop.org](http://www.oecd-bookshop.org).

The aim of this OECD publication is to provide a stimulus for thinking about major tendencies that have the potential to influence education, and conversely, the potential of education to influence these trends. This fourth

edition of this volume has been significantly updated with a special emphasis on the emerging economies of Brazil, China, India, and the Russian Federation. Focusing on topics such as globalization, the future of the nation-state, and the emerging importance of cities, modern families, and new technologies, this publication raises some interesting reflections on the role of education in society in 2016. (Aisling Tiernan)

*Reflections of South African University Leaders, 1981 to 2014*. Cape Town, South Africa: African Minds, 2016. 181 pp. (pb). ISBN 978-1-928331094. Website: [www.africanminds.org.za](http://www.africanminds.org.za).

This fascinating volume focuses on interviews with eight South African vice chancellors who served during the key transformational period of the country. The experiences and reflections of these thoughtful university leaders reveal considerable insight into both university leadership and the specific challenges of the universities involved.

Rhoads, Robert A. *MOOCs, High Technology, and Higher Learning*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2015. 184 pp. \$29.95 (hb). ISBN 978-1-4214-1779-0. Website: [www.press.jhu.edu](http://www.press.jhu.edu).

A critical analysis of MOOCs in a broad perspective, this vol-