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### International Themes

- 2 AHELO: The Myth of Measurement and Comparability  
**Philip G. Altbach**
- 3 The Impact of Transnational Education on Receiving Countries  
**Jane Knight and John McNamara**
- 5 Mobility Matters: the ERASMUS Impact Study  
**Uwe Brandenburg, Obdulia Taboadela, and Mihaela Vancea**
- 7 Countering Campus Extremism in Southeast Asia  
**Anthony Welch**

### European Trends and Challenges

- 8 Greece: Old Challenges and the Current Crisis  
**Dimitrios Dentsoras**
- 10 Non-Publishers in European Universities  
**Marek Kwiek**
- 12 The Rise of University Mergers in Europe  
**Thomas Estermann and Enora Bennetot Pruvot**
- 13 Private-Public Patterns in Short-Cycle Higher Education in Europe  
**Snejana Slantcheva-Durst**

### Central and Eastern Europe

- 15 Albania: The Never Ending Challenge  
**Blendi Kajsii**
- 16 Challenges for Romanian Higher Education  
**Ligia Deca**
- 18 Institutional Corruption in Russian Universities  
**Nataliya L. Rummyantseva and Elena Denisova-Schmidt**

### Countries and Regions

- 19 California and the Future of Public Higher Education  
**Simon Marginson**
- 21 Pitfalls of International Cooperative Education Programs in Vietnam  
**Thu T. Do**
- 23 India's Need for Higher Education Internationalization  
**Philip G. Altbach and Eldho Mathews**

### Departments

- 25 New Publications
- 27 News of the Center

# AHELO: The Myth of Measurement and Comparability

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The idea of AHELO, the Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes, has been around for a decade. The basic concept is to test students in several academic fields in a variety of countries to compare learning outcomes across countries. The brainchild of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), a feasibility study, was conducted and evaluated in 2012. Now, in 2015, the OECD is proposing a full-scale implementation of the project. The pilot was deemed by most to be a failure, and it is very difficult to see how a resurrection of the project would yield any better results. Among the problems cited were the soundness of the instrument used (based on the US Collegiate Learning Assessment) and other methodological issues inherent to cross-national research.

AHELO advocates point out that the only way that academic institutions and systems are compared today is through flawed rankings that use questionable methods and have little validity. They also mention that learning outcomes are not included. While these advocates claim that AHELO will not be a ranking, they propose to compare the achievements of institutions and countries—leading inevitably to a hierarchy. Indeed, the OECD's Andreas Schleicher, in the *Times Higher Education* issue of May 7, noted that AHELO would likely emerge as another, according to him, more meaningful ranking.

## A BIT OF HISTORY

In January of 2010, OECD's Institutional Management in Higher Education (IMHE) program proposed the development of a learning outcomes test for global use. A feasibility study was carried out, involving 17 countries and three American states, costing perhaps \$10 million. It included two disciplines, economics and civil engineering, plus a somewhat ill-defined category of "generic skills." The IMHE board recommended in 2012 that the project be discontinued. Thus, it is a surprise to many that the OECD administration is seeking to proceed with the full-scale AHELO effort.

This comes at a time when the OECD has systematically cut its programming in higher education by eliminating *Higher Education and Policy*, an excellent journal, and other initiatives. IMHE itself may be on the chopping block.

Thus, it is questionable if the OECD has the internal capacity to thoughtfully administer a highly complex initiative like AHELO.

## WHO PAYS THE BILLS?

The AHELO revised scoping paper, issued in April 2015, is somewhat unclear about who will be paying for what as the study proceeds. The costs will run into the millions of dollars during the several years of the initial study. The individual countries joining AHELO will probably be expected to pay the costs both of their own participation and perhaps of the OECD bureaucracy responsible for central planning and coordination.

## SOME BASIC PROBLEMS

From the beginning, a variety of questions were raised about the basic concepts and practicality of AHELO. Many of these questions proved to be sufficiently compelling that those responsible for evaluating the feasibility study recommended the end of the project. The basic concepts seem to be largely unchanged in the April 2015 scoping paper, which is apparently the main roadmap for the new project.

It seems highly unlikely that a common benchmark can be obtained for comparing achievements in a range of quite different countries. Indeed, postsecondary studies start at different ages globally. Some smaller and highly homogenous places are likely to score better. Perhaps this contributes to such high scoring entities as Finland and Shanghai in the secondary school PISA test. At least at the school level it is more likely to find some commonality of

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curriculum across countries. At the tertiary level, courses and curricula vary significantly and it is hard to imagine much commonality. Further, who is to determine what is the "gold standard" in different disciplines across institutions and countries? Thus, AHELO would be testing apples and oranges, not to mention kumquats and broccoli.

Universities that are highly selective in admissions would presumably do better than mass access institutions. AHELO, after all, would not be testing for "value-added" knowledge, but accomplishment at a particular time. Large and highly diverse countries—such as India, the Russian

Federation, and perhaps the United States—can be expected to have a wider range of achievement and knowledge among students. In differentiated systems, an additional question should be asked: will AHELO look at all of post-secondary education or only at the university sector?

The current project seems to emphasize generic skills even more than the feasibility study. These skills are mainly critical thinking and communication. Defining these elusive characteristics may be difficult, and interpreting them in different national contexts will be even more challenging. Critical thinking may be one thing in China and quite another in Norway. Those few countries that have a strong liberal-arts tradition where broad thinking and communication are embedded into the curriculum, such as many colleges and universities in the United States, may have an advantage. But even in the United States, definitions of the liberal arts vary considerably among institutions. Further, in most countries, undergraduate education is highly specialized, with students often admitted to specific discipline-based faculties and having no opportunity to develop generic skills. Such skills may have been imparted during secondary studies, which last for varying periods of time in different countries, creating further challenges for measuring postsecondary achievement.

The two specific disciplines chosen for examination—civil engineering and economics—also present problems. While there have been some efforts to build a consensus in some fields concerning what is appropriate content for post-secondary study, this process is far from complete. Even for civil engineering, there are no doubt variations among universities and countries with regard to an appropriate knowledge base and the depth of study. Economics is even more problematical since approaches to the field vary according to different academic traditions, political realities in various countries, and the like. Further, a student enrolled in an undergraduate business curriculum may receive a quite different economics curriculum than someone in an economics department. And those who are studying in narrow faculty-based programs may have deeper knowledge than students studying a broader curriculum.

If there are problems in these two reasonably well-defined fields, the possibility of being able to compare student achievement in the humanities or most social sciences will prove to be much more challenging.

While AHELO intends to test students at the end of the first year of study—degree programs lasting three years, as is now the norm in much of Europe—may well differ from programs lasting four years, as is common in North America and much of Asia. More content may be required in a single year of a three-year program.

These problems, and many others, have no doubt been experienced in the AHELO feasibility study—and might

well have contributed to the recommendation not to proceed.

#### LET'S DROP A BAD AND EXPENSIVE PROJECT

Proceeding to a full-scale AHELO project seems like an extraordinarily bad idea. There is far from a consensus or even a significant number of countries interested; and the scoping paper seems to be anticipating eight countries. The costs are quite high—in the millions of dollars. The OECD seems to want to keep close control over the study, although it will be funded almost exclusively by the participating countries. It is unclear how individual academic institutions or even governments will have a significant say in the management or conceptualization of the study. It is also unclear what will be learned from the results of AHELO; and major questions remain about the basic methodology, assessment instruments to be used, and orientation of the effort. Much money has already been spent, some would say wasted, on the feasibility study. Now there is the opportunity to save considerable time, effort, and money. Those genuinely concerned about the quality of student learning and learning outcomes might better focus on developing authentic assessment tools that universities and colleges can use in self-evaluation and for self-improvement. ■

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## The Impact of Transnational Education in Receiving Countries

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For many years, transnational education (TNE), also known as crossborder mobility of academic programs and providers, has provided new modes of study for students; opportunities for provider institutions to broaden their reach; and alternative strategies for host countries and institutions, to widen access to higher education. There is no question that more and more students across the world are choosing to study international higher education programs, without moving to the country that awards the qualification. This growing phenomenon is facilitated by higher education institutions establishing branch campuses or de-

living their programs in foreign host/receiving countries alone or in collaboration with local partners.

To date, the majority of research, discussion, and debate on TNE has been from the sending/home country perspective. Given the criticism that TNE is for revenue and status building purposes by sending institutions, a frequently heard phrase these days is that “TNE is a win-win situation.” This may be correct, but to examine the true impact of TNE on receiving/host countries it is necessary to get their opinions and understand their views. To that end, a major survey study was undertaken by the British Council and the German Academic Exchange Service, with collaboration from Australian International Education, and in association with Campus France and the Institute for Education in London. Customized surveys were sent to eight different target groups—TNE students, TNE faculty members, senior TNE institutional leaders, higher education experts, government agencies, employees as well as non-TNE students, and non-TNE faculty in 10 TNE active countries in all regions of the world. The analysis of the 1,906 responses yielded some fascinating insights.

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**While there is no typical TNE student, the data suggest that TNE students are generally older than the traditional secondary school leaver entering higher education.**

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#### **TNE IS REACHING A DIFFERENT PROFILE OF STUDENTS**

An interesting and helpful outcome of the research is insight into the profile of TNE students. While there is no typical TNE student, the data suggest that TNE students are generally older than the traditional secondary school leaver entering higher education. The proportion of TNE students with previous employment experience, as well as the high numbers studying master’s and PhD level programs, also point to a relatively older student cohort. Worth noting is the high proportion of students working full-time during their studies, facilitated by modules delivered over concentrated time periods during the evenings or weekends. The flexibility of TNE clearly has appeal for students with requirements to balance work, study, and other life demands.

#### **“CAREER DEVELOPMENT” IS THE MAIN MOTIVATION FOR CHOOSING TNE**

Understanding why students chose their TNE program is fundamental to understanding their expectations and objectives. A clear message from students is that TNE is per-

ceived as a way to improve their professional skills, thereby improving their career prospects. TNE students also believe that employers perceive TNE to be advantageous when selecting job candidates. The two main reasons cited for this were: (1) prestige and status of the foreign institution/education system; (2) the international outlook and multicultural experience of TNE graduates relative to local non-TNE graduates. While students perceive that employers are predisposed to TNE graduates, more research is needed to ascertain employers’ awareness level of TNE, their perceptions of its value, and their support for further education through TNE programs.

#### **COST OF TNE—POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE**

The affordability of TNE relative to study abroad represents the most positive attribute of TNE for students. This provides evidence that increasing demand for international education can be partially met through program and provider mobility and also highlights the extent to which the lines between TNE and traditional student mobility have become blurred. On the other hand, the high cost of TNE compared with local academic programs represents a main negative attribute of TNE. Issues about pricing, affordability, and how TNE tuition fees compare with local education options are important to students and institutions alike. In studying the costs and benefits of TNE, more attention needs to be given to differentiating between the various modes of TNE, such as branch campuses, franchise/twinning, distance education (including MOOCs—massive open online courses), and joint/double degree programs.

#### **INCREASED ACCESS: A TOP BENEFIT**

Feedback from senior TNE leaders, higher education experts, government agencies, and employers suggest that TNE is having the greatest impact by “providing increased access to higher education for local students” and “improving the overall quality of higher education provision.” The findings also show that TNE, in general, is not providing different programs to those offered locally, which somewhat dispels the myth that TNE offers specialized niche programs not available in the host country. For the most part, TNE programs appear to be responding to student demand.

#### **LACK OF AWARENESS OF TNE**

A surprising finding is an overall lack of awareness about TNE programs in the host country. The majority of non-TNE students and non-TNE faculty surveyed were not aware of the TNE opportunities in their country and sometimes in their own institution. Surveyed employers often expressed a lack of understanding or confusion about what actually constitutes a TNE experience. This revealing finding sug-

gests that the full potential of these programs is not being realized and that much work is needed to publicize TNE opportunities in the host country.

#### **TNE GRADUATES HIGHLY SKILLED BUT NOT NECESSARILY IN LINE WITH LOCAL NEEDS**

All target groups believed that TNE graduates are better equipped than locally educated graduates across a varied set of specific skills—such as problem solving, critical thinking, and international outlook. Thus, while TNE graduates are perceived as relatively skilled, the research suggests that TNE may be only “moderately” addressing skills gaps in the local labor market. Specialized TNE courses covering niche topics were felt to have a positive impact on addressing local skills gaps, but overall, many TNE providers are offering programs already available locally.

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**The results paint an overall positive picture of the impact of TNE in host countries, especially in terms of TNE providing increased access for local students to higher education.**

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#### **OUTLOOK FOR TNE**

Respondents were generally optimistic about the outlook for TNE and indicated that both the number of new programs and the capacity of existing programs will continue to grow over the medium term. In terms of helping to build the local knowledge economy and producing collaborative research output, TNE looks well placed to play an increasing role in the host country. Economic considerations, such as the capacity of TNE to attracting foreign-direct investment and improve local infrastructure, appear less pronounced and will largely depend on host country government policy and country specific circumstances.

The results paint an overall positive picture of the impact of TNE in host countries, especially in terms of TNE providing increased access for local students to higher education. But, there is very little concrete evidence to back up these opinions, as few TNE receiving countries have the capacity or will to gather enrollment data on all TNE operations in their country. An important challenge is the collection of data by host countries on the number and type of TNE operations in their country and the aggregate enrollment of local students, expatriate students living in the country, and international students enrolled in all TNE operations.

For further information see: British Council and DAAD (2014). *Impacts of transnational education on host countries*. <http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/ihe/knowledge-centre/internationalisation/impacts-transnational>. ■

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## Mobility Matters: the ERASMUS Impact Study

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Europe seems to experience a significant mismatch between the skills employers require from graduates, and the skills students acquire in higher education institutions (HEIs). There are 5.7 million unemployed young people in Europe, including many higher education graduates, at the same time as one third of employers cannot find employees with the right skills on the labor market. An analysis of the obvious mismatch between what employers demand and what young adults in general, and higher education graduates in particular, supply, may effectively inform policymakers in labor market and education policy areas. This was one of the reasons for the European Commission to initiate an analysis of the Erasmus program, with a special emphasis on employability.

#### **MOBILITY AND THE LABOR MARKET**

From 1987 until the end of 2012–2013, over 3 million students from more than 4,000 higher education institutions participated in Erasmus mobility. Erasmus is the largest mobility program in the world, financed by the European Commission. It is especially designed to promote the mobility of students in higher education. Therefore, an assessment of the contribution of this program to employability might shed some light on the general issue of employability of higher education graduates. Research tells us that mobility in general and therefore probably Erasmus in particular,



might be a solution for the mismatch between employers' expectations and employees' competences. Previous studies have found that young people who study or train abroad, gain knowledge in specific disciplines and strengthen key transversal skills. Very often, though, studies on the effect of mobility have so far relied on hearsay, assumptions, or at best perceptions.

On the other hand, even if mobility could be a solution for the problem, stated above, this could only be true for a minority. It is an illusion to think that everybody can be mobile. Mobility seems to be related to social status. Several studies have compared mobile and nonmobile students, and revealed substantial socioeconomic differences between students participating in mobility programs and students not going abroad. Apart from notable differences in socioeconomic status, students who plan to go abroad tend to score higher on measures of intercultural communication skills. Mobile students appear to be intrinsically motivated, they value international experience as a whole and not so much in terms of immediate outcomes. The Erasmus Impact Study (EIS) also provides some new insights on this aspect.

No study, so far, has linked the aspects of social selectivity, mobility, and impact on employability with relevant personality traits, except for the relation between predisposition for study abroad and personality traits. EIS represents an innovative approach in a number of ways. It addresses all five relevant target groups simultaneously: students, alumni, staff, HEIs, and employers. Moreover, it goes beyond the classical issue of intercultural and language skills. It introduces the new element of psychometric-related analysis of the real personality traits of individuals, using a selection of six factors that stem from the memo© (monitoring exchange mobility outcome) project. Further, it brings together these personality traits and their changes through mobility, with perceptions. In other words, it compares what people *think* is the case with what can be measured *objectively*. Not the least, by including alumni over a range of decades, EIS analyzed the short-, medium-, and long-term effects of mobility—not only in relation to employability skills, but also in relation to real career and employment outcomes, as well as social life and relationships.

#### HOW WAS THE ERASMUS IMPACT STUDY DONE?

EIS consists of a quantitative study including 56,733 students, 18,618 alumni, and 4,986 staff members, and for all three groups, mobile and nonmobile individuals. It covers 964 higher education institutions and 652 employers across 34 European countries. To measure real developments in students' and staff's skills after their stay abroad, EIS uses six memo© factors closely related to employability

and considered relevant by 92 percent of employers interviewed: 1) Tolerance of Ambiguity (acceptance of other people's culture and attitudes, and adaptability); 2) Curiosity (openness to new experiences); 3) Confidence (trust in own competence); 4) Serenity (awareness of own strengths and weaknesses); 5) Decisiveness (ability to make decisions); and 6) Vigor (ability to solve problems). EIS also includes a qualitative study that used online and telephone interviews, focus groups, and institutional workshops at HEIs.

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**From 1987 until the end of 2012–2013, over 3 million students from more than 4,000 higher education institutions participated in Erasmus mobility.**

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#### MOBILITY HAS A STRONG IMPACT, BUT SO DOES SOCIAL BACKGROUND

EIS shows that mobile students are fundamentally different from nonmobile students even before going abroad. They show substantially higher memo© values and come far more often from families with an academic background. In other words, students with better employability values and starting conditions are also more apt to take the chance to improve their personality through a stay abroad.

After the stay abroad, 52 percent of the students show real improvements on memo© values. On average, Erasmus students present higher memo© values than 70 percent of all students in Europe. The change in their personality traits is equivalent to a change over four years of life. Nonmobile alumni need even more years to achieve the memo© values of an average Erasmus student before going abroad. However, students also tend to overestimate their improvement. About 81 percent *think* they improved, nearly 30 percent more than the quantitative testing confirms. This shows that surveys based only on perceptions cannot fully grasp real effects.

Next to their personality, Erasmus students also think that they improve their language skills, international competences and other transversal key competences, such as knowledge and awareness of other countries and cultures; ability to deal with people from different cultures and environments; and communication skills. This perception is seconded by higher education institutions, employers, and alumni alike.

**MONEY, CAREER, AND LIFE**

Between 2006 and 2014, the proportion of employers doubled, who considered international experience important for recruitment and paid higher salaries to employees with international experience.

Erasmus students are half as likely as nonmobile students to be long-term unemployed; five years after graduation, their unemployment rate is substantially lower. Ten years after graduation, Erasmus alumni are considerably more likely to hold managerial positions. They are also far more inclined to take a job abroad than nonmobile students.

In addition, Erasmus influences the entrepreneurial attitude: one third of the students on Erasmus work placements were offered a job by their host company, and nearly 10 percent started their own businesses; approximately ten times the usual rate among graduates.

Another objective of Erasmus is to contribute to creating a European identity among students and graduates. Indeed 80 percent of Erasmus students feel a strong attachment to Europe. This sense of belonging seems to be particularly reinforced by social or intimate ties with people from abroad: 33 percent of the Erasmus alumni stated that they had a life partner of a different nationality, while 27 percent had met their current life partner during their stay abroad. *Erasmus does change a person's life!* ■

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## Countering Campus Extremism in Southeast Asia

**ANTHONY WELCH**

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**E**xtremism has long been part of higher education. The suppression of Arabic and Jewish scholars in Spain during the 15th century, the Nazi persecution of Jewish and communist intellectuals, and the mass murder of scholars in Cambodia by the Khmer Rouge, are potent reminders of the tyranny of intolerance.

Now, Islamic extremism on campus is troubling higher education systems around the world, including many Muslim nations. The storied Al-Azhar University in Cairo—a beacon of Islamic learning founded before Oxford or Cambridge—has just pledged to fight militant tendencies among its students. In acknowledging criticisms that it is fostering extremism, Al-Azhar president Abdel-Hai Azab,

recently ordered the formation of academic committees charged with revising textbooks to purge them of radical jihadist ideas.

**EXTREMISM IN SOUTHEAST ASIAN HIGHER EDUCATION**

In Southeast Asia, too, rising campus radicalism has led to campaigns to curb its influence. But the present extremism did not spring from nowhere. Radical movements in the region are decades old and in some cases linked to the desire for regional autonomy, or to fighting for Islam in far-flung places such as Afghanistan. Hundreds of Filipinos, Malaysians, and Indonesians—an unknown proportion of whom were young university students, volunteered as Mujahadeen warriors and returned radicalized.

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**Islamic extremism on campus is troubling higher education systems around the world, including many Muslim nations.**

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Indonesia in the 1980s saw examples of radical Islamist movements, some associated with Hizb ut-Tahrir at universities such as Gadjah Mada in Jogjakarta and Bandung Institute of Technology. Hizb ut-Tahrir is currently banned in countries such as Germany, Russia, China, Saudi, Jordan, and Egypt but legal in the United Kingdom, Australia, and elsewhere, where repeated investigations have revealed no evidence of terrorist activities.

Most recently, a national deradicalization blueprint was developed, with a national terrorism prevention program that focused on the 13 most-affected provinces. It included strengthening the capacity of universities to resist terrorism. Yet, Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict director Sidney Jones pointed out recently that training 575 trainers at Indonesian universities is of questionable value, since campuses have not been a particular target of violent extremists—partly because organizations such as Hizb ut-Tahrir are active in keeping them out—and, since, as well, the details of the training module seem, at least so far, rather vague.

It is also not clear that the recent visit of radical clerics from Egypt to Indonesia, including their involvement in a conference at Universitas Indonesia, had much effect in tempering radicals. More successful have been visits to universities from members of groups—such as the Survivors Foundation (Yayasan Penyintas) and Association for Victims of Terrorism Bombings in Indonesia, who have shared their stories with students and staff.

Islamic extremism in the Philippines can be partly traced back to effects of the Afghan war, during which hundreds of Muslim Filipinos, travelled to Pakistan and Afghanistan to join the mujaheddin. It is not clear how many may have been students. The militant Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) in the Philippines' south has openly pledged allegiance to Islamic State (sometimes called Da'esh), while Abu Sayyaf members were reported among slain jihadists in Syria. Nonetheless, the dean of the University of the Philippines' Institute of Islamic Studies expressed concern that media sensationalism provoked fear and potentially worsened the situation.

Like Indonesia, the Philippines also has used visits by prominent clerics, including from Egypt, recently at Mindanao State University. The visits have been attended by thousands of students and staff, with messages on the five pillars of faith, good governance, and peaceful coexistence with other communities of faith. In an eerie reminder, however, their visits paralleled a firefight between government military and the BIFF, which forced thousands of villagers to flee.

Thailand, too, has its problems with Salafist jihadist groups and with clumsy responses by the Thai military, although there is little evidence of extremist activity in universities in the southern-most border provinces of Yala, Narathiwat, and Pattani.

In Malaysia, an early example was Mohammed Fadly, a student at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, who, after taking an oath of allegiance to Jemaah Islamiah, sought to fight for Islam in southern Thailand. Recently, increasing tensions between Malaysia's secular constitution and Islam as the state religion provoked a group of leading Malaysians, calling themselves the G40, to warn of increasing Islamization. In response to the radicalization of its youth, the Malaysian Islamic Development Department established a cross-agency committee to explain misconceptions surrounding jihad, notably including to Malaysia's universities. A Mahasiswa Islam Tolak Keganasan (Muslim Undergraduates Reject Violence) campaign hopes to use Muslim student leaders at universities to disseminate the real meaning of jihad. Support also has come from clerics in the form of a nationwide fatwa declaring that the call of jihad and martyrdom by Islamic State is un-Islamic. Malaysians who fought for Islamic State and died could not claim to be martyrs.

Malaysia has enhanced the scrutiny of international student applications, via the national agency Education Malaysia Global Services that manages all aspects of international student applications, including passport checks. As a result, rejection rates fell from 28 percent in 2012, and 24 percent in 2012, to only 3 percent in 2013. Nonetheless, despite these efforts, a captured Hamas terrorist recently re-

vealed that the organization is actively recruiting young Palestinians studying in Malaysia. In another case, a captured Hamas terrorist revealed that he had been sent to Malaysia, with 9 others, to train using hang gliders, in preparation for terrorist attacks against Israel. Some 40 Palestinian students were said to have been recruited in this manner. The recruitment and associated activities are allegedly centered on the International Islamic University of Malaysia, with one or two of its professors named as having been involved.

#### HEARTS AND MINDS?

Such recruitment activities give cause for pause, regarding the success of regional hearts-and-minds campaigns, aimed at countering extremism. Of more than 12,000 foreigners who joined the fight in Syria last year, perhaps 10 percent or more came from Southeast Asia and show the problem remains real. While the above shows that some terrorist recruits are international students (and some domestic), just how many were from the higher education sector remains unknown.

Ultimately, a solid foundation in what it means to be a good Muslim, as well as acceptance of Muslims within the wider society (in the case of Thailand and the Philippines), is needed to counter the attractions of groups such as Islamic State within the region's universities.

But more work remains to be done to counter the effects of extreme Islamist ideologies in the region's universities. If universities are sources of ideas, there is a need to harness this energy to research the phenomenon more fully, work with communities to promulgate a moderate Muslim message of peace and understanding, and promote a more inclusive form of democracy—which can undoubtedly weaken the appeal of extremism, to impressionable young university students. ■

## Greek Higher Education: Old Challenges and the Current Crisis

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It is unfortunate that descriptions of the Greek higher education system usually tend to focus on its shortcomings and dysfunctions. This emphasis may be unfair to the individual and collective achievements of Greek academics. Yet, it is also understandable, given the obviousness, size, and longevity of the problems of Greek higher education—and, more importantly, the way in which they reflect the structure and deficiencies of the Greek state. Some of the problems that Greek universities face are so basic that their continued existence is a source of wonder and embarrassment. Until recently, the Ministry of Education could not establish how many students and how many employees Greek universities had, just as the official statistics agency was unable to give an accurate picture of the state's deficit and debt. Greek universities, like many other public institutions, suffer from chronic underfunding, resulting in inadequate infrastructure and services, even basic ones. Yet, the state insists on—often gratuitous—overspending, such as providing books to all students for free, or establishing an ever greater number of universities in small towns that fail to attract any student interest. For the most part, the money seems to be spent unevenly and in an undisciplined manner, relying mostly on criteria of political favoritism. In many ways, this involves mostly public agencies and institutions.

#### **BAD HABITS**

Some of the most evident and usual problems of Greek universities have their roots in “bad habits” that Greeks often exhibit in their public life. Such a habit is the tendency of groups and individuals to immediately resort to the most drastic measures to protest or to defend their interests: street demonstrations, strikes, sit-ins, even occupations of public buildings. Courses and research in many Greek universities are regularly brought to a halt when professors, staff members, or students decide to protest for some important reason, most of the time with little opposition from other stakeholders. Greek universities also suffer from the misapplication of a constitutional mandate, which prohibits the police from entering the university grounds without the consent of university authorities—consent that is rarely granted, even if vandalism or blatantly illegal activities take place. This tolerance of forms of demonstration, which often disrupt public life and even forms of illegal activity when it is directed against “the system,” is a widespread, characteristically Greek phenomenon.

#### **THE MAIN PROBLEMS**

For all its particularities, though, the country's higher education system mainly suffers from the same fundamental problems that plague the country's public life. Two of these problems loom large: overcentralization and the infiltration

of party politics into almost every aspect of public and private life. For the most part, these two problems occur in tandem, which aggravates their impact. Among European Union countries, Greece has one of the most centralized systems of higher education. Almost every important (and unimportant) decision, from university entrance requirements to the number and structure of universities and departments, to the hiring of everyone employed at the universities goes through the central administration of the Greek Ministry of Education. This has some obvious adverse effects: long delays in decision making and implementation, planning based on insufficient knowledge of particulars, long-reaction times to any kind of crisis, and instability caused by the change of leadership through every political and government cycle. Also, while the ostensible reason for this overcentralization is the establishment of incorruptible, objective controls—thus limiting localized favoritism and nepotism—the result in most cases is exactly the op-

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**Two of these problems loom large: overcentralization and the infiltration of party politics into almost every aspect of public and private life.**

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posite: most decisions are taken through nontransparent dealings and the exchange of political favors.

At the same time, party politics dominate most aspects of Greek higher education. Elections of student representatives and university administrators run along party lines. Party affiliation in universities, for both students and faculty, seems to be a necessary requirement and a facilitator for enjoying all sorts of benefits, from good grades to promotions and to hiring one's friends and relatives. Party politics also spill over to the greater picture of Greek higher education. Local politicians lobby successfully for establishing universities and departments in their districts, regardless of real need; union leaders press for hiring more state employees with the appropriate party affiliation in universities; and all sorts of businessmen vie for lucrative infrastructure or service contracts. The result of such under-the-table dealings, so common in Greek public administration, is inefficiency, overspending, and generally poor-quality services in Greek universities.

#### **FAILED REFORMS AND BACKTRACKING CHANGES**

One would expect that an attempt to improve Greek higher education would start by focusing on these two fundamen-

tal problems. In fact, the last major attempt to reform Greek higher education, undertaken in 2011, aimed at correcting some of their most evident manifestations, especially those related with the role of party politics in university administration. But the law was never fully implemented, or supplemented by a comprehensive long-term plan to modernize Greek higher education and make it competitive on an international scale. As a result, the planned reforms got bogged down by disagreements regarding relatively minor issues—such as the maximum time for completing a degree—and by intra-university power struggles. Finally, the recently elected Greek government announced its plan to take back the majority of the previous law's reforms and return to the pre-crisis status quo.

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**Elections of student representatives and university administrators run along party lines.**

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The latest developments in the seesaw of Greek educational reforms are baffling, at first sight. A large portion of Greek academics and intellectuals, who vocally opposed the new government's backpedalling, saw the annulment of the previous reforms as an act of revisionism, inspired by outdated leftist ideological convictions. But there are deeper causes, just as in the case of many other reforms that Greece was pushed to make during its fiscal crisis. The most important is the lack of a convincing argument and narrative, as to why reforms are not only necessary but also beneficial in the long run. Many, including the members of the new government, see reforms as a smoke screen for the purely financial objective of limiting government spending—in order to pay off old debts or as an attempt to change the balance of power in Greek universities. In these respects, Greek higher education functions as a mirror for the country as a whole, illustrating the public's increasing distrust toward any new reforms, which are often viewed as attempts to establish external control and to further fiscal austerity. Without a convincing narrative and clear long-term planning, any attempted reform is doomed to be viewed with suspicion and to face a strong opposition to its implementation. ■

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## Non-Publishers in European Universities

**MAREK KWIEK**

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In a traditional account of the scientific community, full-time academics employed in European universities, who do *not* conduct research, should not be regarded as part of the scientific community. No publications means no research. No research does not fit the profile of the European university sector—or does it? There are a few hundred thousand non-publishers across European universities. Is non-publishing increasingly becoming compatible with academic work in current massified universities?

The data reported here are drawn from 11 European countries involved in the “Changing Academic Profession” (CAP) and “Academic Profession in Europe” (EUROAC) surveys: Austria, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. We only analyzed the subsample of (N=8,886) full-time academics working at universities and involved in research.

### CROSS-COUNTRY DIFFERENTIALS

More than 40 percent of Polish academics; and between 15 and 20 percent of Finnish, Portuguese, Norwegian, and German academics—as opposed to less than 10 percent of Irish, Italian, Dutch, and British academics—are actually research nonperformers. According to surveys performed in the university sector in 2007 or 2010 in various countries, the percentage of full-time employed, self-reported non-publishers is as follows: the Netherlands, 2.7; Italy, 5.4; the United Kingdom, 5.7; Ireland, 9.1; Switzerland, 12.4; Germany, 15.4; Norway, 15.9; Portugal, 18.3; Finland, 20.2. In Poland it is as high as 43.2. The data for Austria: 72.2 percent of nonperformers, seem unreliable and are therefore not commented on here.

Differences in institutional cultures and in national academic cultures lead to other levels of research productivity. Institutions of low academic standing may not value academic research, while institutions of high academic standing may exert normative pressures on academics to get involved in research. Similarly, the normative pressures exerted on academics, to get involved in research in some countries, may be considerably lower than in others; and Poland, until a recent wave of reforms, is a good example. In an age of massified universities, though, perhaps the scale

of the phenomenon of research nonperformance should not be surprising. But the fact that in a country like Poland, the share of non-publishers across all clusters of academic disciplines and all age groups exceeds 40 percent—demonstrates how far Polish academia has drifted away from the traditional academic values of combining teaching and research (that is, publishing) in European universities.

#### GENERAL PATTERNS OF NON-PUBLISHING

European non-publishers share some general patterns. Unsurprisingly, in the whole sample (N=17,212) studied, their share in the nonuniversity sector is higher than in the university sector. Their share among part-time academics is higher than among academics employed full-time. The gender distribution is consistent: in all countries, except for Germany and Poland, the percentage of female nonperformers is higher than the percentage of male nonperformers. In most cases, the difference is 50 percent; it is strikingly higher in the Netherlands (with 7.7% vs. 1.3%) and in Switzerland (23.5% vs. 7.8%) respectively.

In terms of age, surprisingly, the highest percentage of non-publishing academics is under 40. But in Poland, Italy, and the United Kingdom, most non-publishers are aged 60 and over. On average, among disciplines, engineering has the highest percentage of non-publishers in most countries surveyed. They reach almost 40 percent in Finland and almost 35 percent in Germany, two countries with a very high patenting rate.

#### NON-PUBLISHERS, LOW PUBLISHERS, AND HIGH PUBLISHERS

Although there is a difference between nonperformers and low performers, both groups significantly reduce the average national research productivity.

The combined share of non-publishers and low publishers among academics (defined as producing an average of 1–4 articles in three years) totals about 30 percent in the Netherlands and Italy and 60–70 percent in Poland, Norway, Finland, and Portugal. In Germany, Switzerland, Ireland, and the United Kingdom, their share is about 50 percent.

In contrast, the percentage of high publishers (publishing 10 and more articles) is also highly differentiated across Europe: it is about 40 percent in the Netherlands and Italy; about 30 percent in Switzerland and Germany; and 16–22 percent elsewhere, with Poland coming last with 13 percent. In the most productive national systems, the Netherlands and Italy, the share of nonperformers is the lowest and the share of high performers the highest.

The global research competitiveness of European universities—especially in such countries as Poland, Finland, and Portugal—is clearly endangered unless strong policy

measures are introduced: the share of nonperformers there is much above the European average.

#### EXPECTED TO PUBLISH?

Certainly, in an age of massification, it is not realistic to expect that every European academic will publish something. But it is realistic to expect *university* academics to publish. The prestige of universities in Europe rests almost entirely on research and publications. Non-performers should increasingly be transferred to less research-oriented higher education institutions, or encouraged to leave the academic profession. Given the increasing role of competitive research funding in most European systems, there may simply not be enough space for unproductive scholars in the university sector.

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**Nonperformers should increasingly be transferred to less research-oriented higher education institutions, or encouraged to leave the academic profession.**

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#### INCREASING SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

The social stratification of science is increasing. Our research shows that the top 10 percent productive academics in European universities produce about 4 out of every 10 articles (41.5%) and the top 20 percent about six (61.2%). The remaining 80 percent produce less than four (38.8%). If we divide the research-active European academics into two halves, the top half produces more than 90 percent of all articles (91.5), and the bottom half produces less than 9 percent.

High performers, low performers, and nonperformers in science have always been differentiated by their individual research output. As John Ziman argued in *Prometheus Bound. Science in a dynamic steady-state* (1994), research “is a rigorous pursuit, where incompetent performance, as signaled by persistently low achievement, eventually clogs up the system.”

Indeed, in European research universities, and in Polish universities in particular, non-publishers may soon clog up the system. The ongoing changes in the social stratification in science have therefore powerful policy implications for academic recruitment, retention, and progression. ■

# The Rise of University Mergers in Europe

THOMAS ESTERMANN AND ENORA BENNETOT PRUVOT

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Mergers and concentration processes are not a recent phenomenon in the European higher education landscape. They constitute one of the responses to a series of change drivers—such as globalization, internationalization, the drive for quality, expectations surrounding new modes of teaching, rankings, the growing importance of research and innovation within the economic development agenda, and above all a challenging economic environment. The view that, by gaining mass, universities can generate economies of scale and rationalize the use of resources has been an important driver for merger and concentration processes. However, there is a lack of comprehensive evaluation whether at the system or at an institutional level. The European University Association (EUA) has recently conducted a study analyzing these processes in 25 European higher education systems from an efficiency angle, exploring the rationale for universities to merge, and assessing the efficiency dimension of these developments.

There is a wide spectrum of collaboration projects and initiatives in place between European universities, including various forms of cooperation, from research projects to strategic alliances. Mergers are complex processes, whereby new legal institutions are created or where several institutions are brought together under a common umbrella to form a tightly connected federation.

Between 2000 and 2015, around 100 mergers have been recorded in 25 European higher education systems. There has been a continuous increase in numbers since 2000 from 3–5 mergers per year until 2006, between 7 and 8 mergers per year between 2007 and 2012, peaking in 2013 and 2014 with 12 and 14 mergers per year.

The increase from 2007 onwards is also due to a number of bigger systemwide reforms like the wave of mergers in Denmark in 2007; in Belgium in the French-speaking community over the period 2009–2011; and in Flanders in 2013. Also, outstanding is the evolution in France, which combines a series of individual mergers to the broader

trend of establishing “university communities” (federative type of cooperation entities) in 2014 and 2015.

## RATIONALES AND AIMS

There is a wide array of drivers for mergers and the rationale behind them typically includes academic factors (e.g., expected positive impact on research output and learning and teaching outcomes), organizational factors (e.g., redeployment of university structures), and financial factors (e.g., more efficient use of funding through economies of scale).

Increased quality in both research and teaching activities is a frequent aim of mergers and is derived from the pooling of academic talent and infrastructure, greater financial or staffing resources, and opportunities for interdisciplinary research with a wider variety of academic subject areas.

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**The view that, by gaining mass, universities can generate economies of scale and rationalize the use of resources—and has been an important driver for merger and concentration processes.**

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In the case of systemwide reforms, the aim is often related to the need to consolidate the higher education landscape—to overcome fragmentation, achieve critical mass, avoid duplication of programs, create synergies (for instance by integrating universities and research centers), or adapt to changing demographic dynamics.

Universities also consider mergers as a means of strengthening their institutional position, both at home and on the international stage. Mergers are seen as an effective way to gain a greater profile and attract foreign staff and students, as well as to generate additional opportunities to undertake international collaboration.

## ECONOMIC GAINS SHOULD NOT BE THE MAIN DRIVER

The achievement of economic gains, such as economizing financial and human resources, has been a strong expectation in many systems across Europe. Due to the basic characteristics of the funding system in many European countries, increasing staff and student numbers is seen as advantageous from a financial perspective. The potential to generate more revenues from private sources may also be a consideration. Likewise, there can be economies of scale in the provision of services—such as more efficient delivery of

professional services and possibilities for streamlining arising from the enlarged infrastructural stock. However, experience shows that economic gain should not be the primary driver for undertaking a merger process, if only because of the high transition and implementation costs. There are often long-lead times, when it comes to the implementation of mergers. Even when the processes have been completed, the real financial and institutional effects of the transformation may take some years to become fully apparent. Institutions involved in mergers often acknowledge that they underestimated how long it would take to mainstream procedural change (e.g., human resources and finance processes) and establish cultural change. Underestimating the duration of the transition period leads to allocating too little time and resources to complete all the work as envisaged in the plan, which also has a knock-on effect on the delivery of efficiencies and the overall success of the merger.

#### ELEMENTS FOR SUCCESSFUL MERGERS

University leaders and managers, involved in merger processes, thus need to focus on sound pre-evaluation and costing but also need to ensure good planning and implementation as well as productive relationships with public authorities. They must also promote an inspired vision and leadership, fostering both trust among and the involvement of staff and the wider community.

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**Due to the basic characteristics of the funding system in many European countries, increasing staff and student numbers is seen as advantageous from a financial perspective.**

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The merger should be chiefly supported by a strong academic and business case, considering that mergers are lengthy, resource-consuming processes that are difficult to reverse. It is important to specify defined assessment criteria and apply these equally across the whole institution, to arrive at a balanced and comparable assessment of the wider situation.

A merger process may not be the best option for the institutions concerned—once an evaluation of the costs involved (both real and opportunity costs) and the potential benefits (both academic and financial) have been carried out. The university leadership and relevant stakeholders should consider other possible cooperation options, in order to ensure that the most suitable way forward is selected. The overall goal should be the development of balanced

structures and adequate processes that facilitate, rather than disrupt or hinder, the academic mission of the institution. ■

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## Shifting Private-Public Patterns in Short-Cycle Higher Education Across Europe

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Institutions for advanced education of a nonuniversity type—labeled tertiary short-cycle higher education—spread quickly throughout most of Europe in the 1960s and 1970s, as a result of rising demand for higher education, growing diversification of the student body, and the changing needs for high-skilled manpower of industrialized societies. The institutional diversity in short-cycle provision was tremendous—including tertiary higher schools, technological institutes, colleges, academies, tertiary professional centers, higher professional schools, vocational schools, and many others. By the 2000s, short-cycle programs served close to 18 percent of Europe's postsecondary students. Programs, focused primarily on professional training of short duration, of a terminal character, and opportunities for transfer to research universities, were limited to nonexistence. European short-cycle education developed both public and private sectors, with private initiatives often covering areas neglected by public universities, or in rising demand. By 2002, enrollments in the private short-cycle sector had grown to 1,246,480, almost half of all students (49%) in short-cycle programs across Europe.

#### CHANGING SIZE AND SHAPE OF THE SHORT-CYCLE

Prior to the 2003 Berlin Summit of the European ministers of higher education, short-cycle institutions and their programs were rarely considered an integral part of higher education systems. However, since 2003, and promoted by the Bologna process, a different and innovative kind of short-cycle higher education programs have been spreading throughout Europe. Unlike the predominantly terminal training short-cycle education programs of the past, the Bologna-driven short-cycle programs fulfill the dual role



of preparing graduates for employment, while simultaneously equipping them with the skills and the opportunity to continue their studies toward a bachelor's degree. With this dual function, then, these innovative programs have the potential to serve as a bridge between the traditionally separated vocational and academic sectors and to create more flexible learning pathways into and within higher education. These programs' dual function is also reflected in the place allotted to them in qualifications framework: as intermediate qualifications within the first (bachelor's) cycle in the Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area and as Level 5 qualifications in the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning.

Today, most of the 28 European Union countries boast innovative short-cycle higher education qualifications. Among them, only a few had already integrated intermediate qualifications from as early as the 1960s and 1970s. Several of the remaining countries have either seriously redesigned their old short-cycle programs in order to integrate them into existing bachelor's degrees—as in Denmark, Hungary, Iceland, and Latvia—and/or have created completely new intermediate qualifications, as in the Netherlands, Belgium, Malta, and the United Kingdom. In 2012, the private sector held 42 percent of all short-cycle enrollment, significantly higher than the private sector's share of higher education overall. France, Poland, Portugal, Germany, Belgium, and Spain have especially high shares of private short-cycle higher education.

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**The private sector steadily declined between 2003 and 2012, and not only proportionally amid increased short-cycle enrollment overall, but even in absolute enrollment.**

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#### PRIVATE DECLINE

The redesign of the short-cycle higher education qualifications has strongly impacted private provision of intermediate qualifications. The private sector steadily declined between 2003 and 2012, and not only proportionally amid increased short-cycle enrollment overall, but even in absolute enrollment. In this period, the sector lost almost a quarter (23%) of its students. The largest drop occurred between 2003 and 2004—the years of redefinition of short-cycle higher education and its incorporation in the Bologna process—when the sector lost almost 27 percent of its student population. In contrast, public provision of short-cycle

qualifications increased by close to 9 percent between 2003 and 2012, albeit with climbs and falls at different times. The combination of public gains and private losses has brought a significant shift in the intersectoral balance. Whereas in 2003, private outstripped public by two to one, by 2012 the sectors had become roughly equal in size.

#### WHY THE PRIVATE DECLINE?

Several reasons can account for the strong shrinking of private short-cycle higher education after the emergence of the intermediary qualifications in 2003–2004. First, the fact that the private decline began right after Bologna, at least suggests that Bologna was a key contributor. The new short-cycle programs demanded an alignment (direct or indirect) with bachelor's programs; and such alignments depend on successful interinstitutional and intrainstitutional partnerships. Such partnerships, especially ones that cross the private-public divide, are difficult to arrange. Europe's private higher education sector spreads mostly at the lower programmatic levels, with public institutions having a stronger hold on bachelor programs. As a result, one can speculate that public short-cycle higher education programs and institutions had an advantage in developing programmatic bridges.

Probing within the private sector, we discover that the fall was especially steep in the “government-dependent” private short-cycle higher education programs. Government-dependent means that more than half the funding comes from government. Ten countries offered such programs. Enrollment there, over a million in 2003, fell by a third by 2012. This drastic reduction involved both the discontinuation of these programs in total (as in the Netherlands) and/or their strong reduction (as in Latvia, Slovenia, and the United Kingdom). In stark contrast, student numbers in the “government-independent” short-cycle programs *increased* by 24 percent in the same period. However, even after this rise in the independent subsector and fall in the government-dependent subsector, the latter still remains far larger than the independent subsector. In 2012, only 182,285 students studied in government-independent programs, barely more than a 10th of all short-cycle higher education students in these countries, as compared to 655,868 students in government-dependent programs. Thus, the major percentage decline in the (large) government-dependent subsector far outweighed the major percentage increase in the (small) independent subsector—hence, the significant decline in the private short-cycle sector overall.

A larger conclusion from these developments points to the changing roles in the short-cycle arena. If one considers the sectoral spectrum as running from private government-independent to public, with the middle occupied by private government-dependent programs, the shrinking of the gov-

ernment-dependent sector with the simultaneous rise of public programs may be interpreted as public “substituting for” or “crowding out” government-dependent programs. These developments thus signal the sharpening of private-public distinctiveness in short-cycle provision across Europe. ■

## Higher Education in Albania: The Never Ending Challenge

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Since the collapse of communism in 1991, Albanian higher education has been torn between massification and a lack of adequate funding. During the last 10 years alone, the number of students enrolled in Albanian universities has almost tripled. Yet, Albanian governments did not match such rapid increase in the number of students with an equal increase in the higher education budget. As of today (2015), Albania remains one of the countries that spends the smallest proportion of its GDP, around 0.6 percent, on higher education. This means that while higher education has become more accessible to larger numbers, its quality has suffered dramatically.

During the past 25 years, the challenge of accommodating a growing demand for higher education in the context of limited financial resources has drawn three distinct responses by different Albanian governments. During the first decade of Albanian transition (early 1990s to early 2000s), the main objective was to open and increase the number of state-owned higher education institutions (HEIs). During the second decade, from 2005 until 2013, when the Democratic Party was in power, the main government strategy was to stimulate private HEIs that would accommodate the additional demand for higher education—which state institutions could not meet. Since 2013, when the Socialist Party returned to power, the new reform has aimed to merge the state and the private sectors, transforming all HEIs into not-for-profit institutions that will be partly financed by the state and partly through private means.

### **EXPANDING PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION, 1995–2005**

Faced with a growing demand for higher education, Albanian governments initially responded by expanding the state-funded higher education sector. Existing HEIs outside the capital Tirana were transformed into universities. Between 1992 and 1998, six such universities were created. By 2005, state-funded universities had opened in all the major cities in Albania.

While these measures helped increase the number of students enrolled in higher education institutions, they also undermined the quality of higher education. The constant increase in student numbers in public universities, without a corresponding increase in state funding, resulted in a serious drop in quality of teaching and research. Faced with overcrowded classrooms, lecturers were burdened with too much teaching, which undermined their ability to carry out research. As a result of financial restrictions, many public universities started hiring and attracting cheaper faculty dedicated exclusively to teaching. In many cases, departments did not meet even the minimal standards required by law concerning student-faculty ratios or faculty qualifications.

### **EXPANDING THE PRIVATE SECTOR, 2005–2013: THE MARKET WILL SAVE US!**

During the period 2005–2013, when the Democratic Party came to power, almost 50 new private HEIs were licensed and the number of students in the private sector increased 15 fold. The government limited itself to accrediting HEIs without attempting to rank or evaluate them. By 2014, Albania had one of the highest numbers of private HEIs per million inhabitants in Europe.

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**While these measures helped increase the number of students enrolled in higher education institutions, they also undermined the quality of higher education.**

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From 2005 to 2013, the ruling Democratic Party turned a blind eye to the declining quality of higher education, both in the public and the private sectors. It constantly increased admission quotas in the public sector, without a corresponding increase in state funds, while licencing numerous new private universities. The government ignored major scandals in some of the most corrupt private HEIs, which were openly selling Albanian university degrees, including to citizens from neighboring countries such as

Italy, who spoke no Albanian.

The decreasing quality of the public sector also brought down the quality of some of the best private-sector institutions. Once the public universities completely opened up their doors without additional resources, further lowering their standards, the pool of students from whom private universities could choose and charge fees decreased both quantitatively and qualitatively. As a result, some serious private institutions began to cut costs by lowering faculty-student ratios and other academic standards.

#### THE SOCIALIST REFORM: MERGING STATE AND PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS

Once the Socialist Party came to power on June 2013, it promised a new law on higher education that would bring it up to European standards. As part of this process, the current administration started a general inspection of the higher education sector. This culminated in August 2014, with the closure of 17 private and 8 public HEIs, which were found in breach of basic government regulations. The government will also conduct an evaluation of the remaining institutions in collaboration with the British Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

Despite the above positive measures, the Socialist reform faces major limitations, as long as the state lacks the necessary resources to properly finance higher education. The new law allows public universities to raise funds by increasing tuition fees, on the premise that the state cannot provide much additional funding. It also stipulates that private universities can receive state funding, if they are transformed into not-for-profit organizations. The distinction between state and private universities is therefore blurred.

A major transformation of higher education that is not backed by increased state funding does not bode well for the future. Just like earlier governments, the current government has not shown a clear commitment to properly funding higher education. During its two years in power (2013–2015), there has been very little additional funding for the higher education sector—even though when in opposition, the Socialists recognized that the sector was severely underfunded by the state. It seems unlikely that the situation will change in the near future, given that on February 2014 the government signed a US\$330 million loan with the International Monetary Fund that called for reduced public spending. Under these circumstances, the challenge of higher education in Albania remains intact. ■

## Challenges for Romanian Higher Education

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Romania is a relatively recent member of the European Union (EU), since 2007, and a NATO member. Its geo-strategic options seem thus to be clearly defined and one of few generally accepted issues. Reforms in the field of higher education have been seen as part of a larger national agenda for reintegration in the Western democratic world. However, in the past 25 years, Romanian higher education policies have rarely been based on sound data collection, impact assessments, or inclusive consultations within the system. Discussing new versions of the national education law seems to be a political obsession for every new minister, without any reflection on what really needs to change policy wise.

Judging by the influence of international norms on domestic reforms, one can say that Romanian higher education has gone through three main development phases: the post-1989 “international actors” phase, in which a shift from previous models was heavily influenced by the World Bank, the OECD, the European Commission, and UNESCO-CEPES; the phase of implementation of the Bologna process, which started in 2004–2005 with major legal overhauls aimed at increasing the “readability” of the Romanian higher education system (three cycles: ECTS, Diploma Supplement, quality assurance); and the recent phase of global competitiveness, influenced mainly by the rankings and excellence discourse, but also by demographic challenges.

Romania’s decision-making environment is rather unstable—20 education ministers tried to define a new vision for education in the past 25 years. This brought a fast-changing decision-making environment, heavy bureaucracy, and incoherent legislation—except for occasional inspired policy decisions.

#### DOUBLE DISCOURSE

As part of recent planning efforts for the EU 2014–2020 financial exercise, Romania had to submit a number of strategies that were supposed to include both national priorities and accompanying actions for: the tertiary education sector; early school leaving; and lifelong learning. These strategies were designed in 2013–2014 with the assistance of the World Bank and submitted to the European Com-

mission. Despite their importance, these documents are in no way present in the public debate on education, and the analysis on which they were grounded lies peacefully in the drawers of those who were supposed to act upon them. The opportunity to think carefully about the challenges that Romanian higher education currently faces, and find publicly endorsed solutions, was again missed. This speaks about the Romanian decision-makers' habit of using a double discourse when it comes to higher education policy—one message is intended for the internal public and one for international actors.

In this context, before embarking on any new reform, a set of publicly assumed policy options should be agreed upon by all those interested and affected, as some challenges can no longer be ignored: demographic downturn; equity; public investment; and internationalization.

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**Romanian higher education policies have rarely been based on sound data collection, impact assessments, or inclusive consultations within the system.**

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#### **DEMOGRAPHIC DOWNTURN**

One of the biggest issues confronting Romania is demographic decline. Universities have to adapt to shrinking pools of potential students and will continue to do so in the coming decades. Thus, the system faces the need to rationalize its structure, with resources better distributed to those universities that now hold a rising share of the remaining student population. As this is politically difficult and controversial, few steps have been taken in this regard. Better targeted, resourced equity policies, and sound internationalization policies could be the answer, if embraced by politicians and members of the academic communities alike.

#### **EDUCATIONAL EQUITY**

Unfortunately, equity in Romania is a controversial subject, seen as a threat to the meritocratic mainstream discourse. Political actors usually stay clear from talking about equity in higher education during national debates, despite the priority given to overcoming societal inequalities in the current government's program and the inclusion of equity, as one of the three pillars of the tertiary education strategy. Romania has a high—and rising—drop-out rate, which reduces the share of the population eligible for higher educa-

tion. This takes Romania further from its EU 2020 target of bringing down early school leaving to 11 percent. Structural issues in secondary education include poor quality of rural education, unattractive salaries for staff, and a lack of adequate staff training. There is also a perennial lack of support for poor and Roma students, leading to low participation among these groups. Currently, children from disadvantaged backgrounds find it very difficult to access higher education, and talent is lost on the altar of so-called meritocratic policies.

#### **SPENDING RATHER THAN INVESTING**

Although higher education funding is a problem in many countries, Romania holds the unfortunate record for having the lowest ratio of funding per student among EU countries. The current education law states that education should benefit from a minimum public investment of 6 percent of the GDP. This figure has never been reached, although education is the first priority in most electoral programs of Romania's main political parties. Student numbers have declined with over 40 percent, compared to the peak year 2008/2009. This presented an opportunity to raise per-capita funding without increasing the public share of total funding and jeopardizing national deficit targets. Instead, the government opted for shrinking funding at the same rate as student numbers fell, wasting an easy opportunity to improve quality through better funding. In addition, it largely ignored the need to implement the legal provisions in the current education law, which allowed additional funding for institutions doing well in priority areas (employability, equity, internationalization, and research performance). The double discourse here is visible as soon as elections are over.

#### **INTERNATIONALIZATION—A PROGRESS AREA?**

Currently, internationalization is high on the political agenda. Romania has been active in a number of international policy fields. It hosted the Bologna Secretariat in 2010–2012 and organized the Bucharest Ministerial Conference and Third Bologna Policy Forum in April 2012. Also, in addition to successful efforts by universities, there are a series of projects to develop more coherent policy frameworks at both the national and the institutional levels. One EU-funded initiative by the Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation Funding (UEFISCDI) in cooperation with the International Association of Universities (IAU), aims to assist 20 Romanian universities in developing institutional strategies for internationalization. UEFISCDI and IAU are also drafting a background analysis for the future development of a national strategy on internationalization of higher education. Everyone agrees that internationalization of higher education is important,

and this becomes obvious also when looking at the strategic plans of Romanian universities. However, as often stated in closed national debates, the rationales for this consensus are mostly linked with the opportunity to attract more non-EU, fee-paying students.

#### A NEED FOR POLICY COHERENCE

Romania can be seen as a laboratory for how various international processes, norms, and institutions have changed the higher education landscape in 25 years of democratic transition. Despite its openness to international developments, the public debate and ownership over substantive reforms remain illusory, and that is partially due to the double discourse used by decision-makers in order to avoid international stigma or lose votes internally. Without a sound public debate on current challenges and their solutions, drawing on existing good practice and taking into account international commitments, Romania's higher education sector will remain vulnerable, instead of bringing a solution for sustainable socioeconomic development. ■

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## Institutional Corruption in Russian Universities

NATALIYA L. RUMYANTSEVA AND  
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Russia is about to become an academic superpower, which makes it very successful at least in the context of the BRIC countries—Brazil, Russia, India, China. After various effective reforms, including the Bologna process and the modernization of admissions procedures, the Russian government is now working hard on remedying corruption in higher education. Why is corruption in this sector so prevalent? In this article, we argue that the improper dependencies of all the involved actors make corruption possible. Improper dependencies are mutually dependent relationships that lead to unhealthy or unconstructive outcomes. Young people without an academic degree have few chances on the job market in Russia. The faculty is under pressure from the university administration, to retain the current cohort of students at all costs. The administration is under budgetary pressure from the Ministry of Education

and Science at public universities and from the students themselves at private universities.

#### DEMOGRAPHIC CRISIS AND “UNTEACHABLE” STUDENTS

Many Russian universities are currently facing difficult times. The continuing decline in the birth rate, taking place since the 1990s, has inevitably resulted in a decrease in the numbers of university applicants. The number of universities, however, remain high, despite the obvious demographic crisis. In the 2014–2015 academic year, there were 950 universities in Russia, including 548 state and 402 private schools and, in addition, more than 1,600 regional branches. Only the most prestigious universities—about 30 to 40 institutions throughout the country that receive generous support from the Ministry of Education and Science—are in a position to be selective with their admissions.

The remaining mass higher education institutions are left to compete for students, who are often not qualified to carry on with university-level studies, not invested in receiving a high-quality education, and looking instead to get by until they finish their diploma—however, nominal their actual learning may be. The total number of students in Russia is very high. Each year, almost 80 percent of all secondary school graduates go to a university, and almost all of them graduate—a number that has remained constant since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

#### THE INSTITUTIONAL TRAP

These mismatched trends produce a power imbalance, where universities need their students more than the students need the universities. Public universities receive their budget allocation according to the number of students. If they expel students, they need to return the money they received from the state for those students. This is hardly possible, because the money is already covering personnel and other costs. It might also mean that, in the next academic year, the budget will be cut by the state and the universities will need to dismiss faculty or staff, or close some programs. Private universities are completely dependent on their students' fees. With some exceptions, those universities would not be able to exist without their students. This is further complicated by the fact that, formally, universities are the gatekeepers of the official credentials, endorsed by the government, and are responsible for raising quality of higher education. The conflicting goals of the empowered students and the disempowered universities create a further problem of clashing interests. This is where improper dependencies are essentially formed. Universities, as a result, are squeezed between a rock (students' preferences) and a hard place, to appear legitimate and meet governmental requirements, which effectively places their day-to-day operations in an institutional trap.



**INSTITUTIONAL ADAPTATION AND CORRUPTION**

Survival and self-preservation can be powerful motivating factors. Institutions can be easily propelled by these forces to create methods to adapt to their difficulties. Faced with this challenge, which threatens their own organizational survival and personal financial stability, university faculty members have no choice than to lower their standards informally, while projecting outward quality in order to satisfy their assessors. The lowering of standards creates a breeding ground for cynicism, professional disappointment, and resentment toward students as well as the government, which is unable to regulate the situation effectively.

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**These mismatched trends produce a power imbalance, where universities need their students more than the students need the universities.**

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Once the standards are lowered and cynicism is allowed to flourish, a fertile ground has been created for academic corruption. If it is no longer possible to derive professional satisfaction from intellectual engagement with the students, then the fact that the students can be used as a source of additional income provides a certain amount of consolation. Each individual faculty member has a choice to take part or not to take part in this culture. Those who do not participate will be coerced to abide by the silent agreement, to lower their standards. Those wishing to remain active participants have the opportunity to supplement their income—average Russian academic salaries are quite low—and recalibrate the institutional power imbalance in their favor, albeit only at a personal level. The majority, thus, forms an academic conspiracy, which is a very powerful structure that sustains the existence of the individual faculty members in both financial and psychological terms—and naturally punishes those who do not participate willingly.

**WHO IS GUILTY AND WHAT CAN BE DONE?**

Students, or at least some of them, are guilty of lacking the proper motivation when entering higher education. It might be unfair to expect this from very young or sometimes even underage people in a society in which blue-collar workers have lost their former prestige, and the system of vocational education is almost destroyed. Disappointed, disillusioned, and overloaded academics have a choice with regard to their individual involvement in obvious monetary corruption or covert nonmonetary corruption, including ac-

ademic collusion—by ignoring the lack of academic integrity among their students. They may even not be fully aware of how inappropriate their actions are. As most academics in a given university are also graduates from the same institution, they simply end up repeating the familiar patterns they have learned, while being students themselves. The government, while striving to boost the international legitimacy of the higher education system, is disregarding the natural demographic trends and the quality of the secondary school graduates. Equally, however, each individual actor, including the government, is a victim of the overall institutional trap and the burgeoning corruption grounded in its distorted links and relationships. The victim status perpetuates the sense of helplessness, and the belief that the “citadel” is more powerful than its members. ■

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## California and the Future of Public Higher Education

**SIMON MARGINSON**

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California has been at the leading edge of modernity since World War II. New social trends, tendencies, and tensions tend to show up in California before they spread to everywhere else. For example, in an extraordinary 14-year period, California invented university student power (Berkeley 1964), hippies and the collectivist counter-culture (San Francisco 1967)—followed by the high individualist tax revolt, in the form of Proposition 13, which was passed by a state referendum in 1978 and capped local government taxes and spending. All of these movements went on to sweep across the whole world, and, in some respects that are still with us. The 1980s and 1990s phenomena of Silicon Valley and Steve Jobs—also still with us, is not to mention the continuous influence of California’s film and television industry.

In the past 60 years, California has also led the world in policy and provision of higher education and university-based science, while at the same time leading the evolution of ideas about university education. California is unmatched in its concentration of high-quality public campuses (for example, University of California, Berkeley; University of

California, Los Angeles; University of California, San Diego). It also has some top-private universities including Stanford, Caltech, and the University of Southern California. Only the Boston corridor, where private education plays a greater role, is in the same league as universities in California, and Boston lags behind.

#### THE GREAT CALIFORNIA MASTER PLAN

Perhaps more surprisingly, given the high-capitalist ideology that characterizes California today, the state also long led the world in public planning and the public principle of social access to higher education. In that regard the shining moment was the 1960 master plan. This was led by Clark Kerr, who was then president of the public system of 9 (now 10) research university campuses, known as the University of California, and agreed by a state legislature and governor mindful of growing public pressure to expand educational opportunity.

At that time, California led the United States in its rate of participation in higher education. The master plan was a blueprint for continuing the expansion of the system, while maintaining research universities of the highest quality, on the basis of what became the much-cited principle of differentiated provision.

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**Both the University of California, Berkeley, and Los Angeles *each* have more low-income students than the *whole* US Ivy League.**

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The plan enshrined a high-access model funded by the state, with low-tuition charges. The cost of student participation was limited by channeling most of the growth into two-year California community colleges, and confining the research-intensive campuses of the University of California to the top 12.5 percent of school leavers—in between lay the four-year California State University sector. This tripartite scheme has survived to the present day. The barriers generated by what is a highly stratified system of participation (in many other countries half or more of all tertiary students enter research universities) are meant to be offset by upward transfer of a good proportion of students from the community colleges to the California State Universities or the University of California campuses.

The distinctive character of the California master plan lay not only in the creation of three-stratified sectors of higher education with carefully segmented missions, but the fact that this ternary system proved so enduring, despite

the inevitable pressures for mission drift in the California State Universities and community college sector. From early in its life, the plan was hailed nationally and internationally as a mechanism that combined excellence in the top-tier universities, with universal access down below. For example, the extraordinary transformation of higher education in China, from the late 1990s onwards, has been partly patterned on California.

On the whole, the excellence part of the master plan has worked out very well. Seven of the University of California campuses are positioned in the world's top 50 research universities, according to the Shanghai Academic Ranking of World Universities, and 9 are in the top 150. Perhaps Berkeley, University of California at Los Angeles, and San Diego are not quite as strong as they used to be in competition with Stanford and Harvard for top researchers, especially since the cutbacks in state funding triggered by the 2008 recession, but in terms of research outcomes they remain stellar.

It is the access part of the master plan that has proven more difficult to sustain. Here the record is decidedly mixed.

#### SOCIAL EQUITY HAS FALTERED

On one hand, the elite University of California campuses are relatively equitable in terms of access. Students from poor families and first generation higher education students are much better represented on the University of California campuses than in private universities like Stanford or Harvard. Both the University of California, Berkeley and Los Angeles *each* have more low-income students than the *whole* US Ivy League. Further, 40 percent of Berkeley undergraduates pay no tuition; 65 percent receive financial aid; and half graduate with no debt. In a country in which tuition is rising rapidly in all of higher education, these are extraordinary numbers. There is no other global top-ten university that is as accessible as Berkeley, though it must be added that all of Berkeley's students, rich and poor, have exceptional academic credentials.

But the resulting contribution to social equity is a drop in the ocean of a highly unequal education system. Data published by Suzanne Mettler show that in the United States in 2011, of people in the top income quartile, 71 percent completed college by early adulthood, a substantial increase from 40 percent in 1970. In the bottom quartile, the completion rate had also increased, but only from 6 percent to 10 percent. In the second-bottom quartile it rose from 11 percent to just 15 percent. In other words, the bottom half of the population is largely shut out of higher education, placing a ceiling on the further growth of participation and ensuring that higher education tends to reproduce prior social inequalities.

School retention in California was just 78.5 percent in 2012, with stark inequalities between rich and poor districts, and ethnic communities: 73.2 percent of Latinos and 65.7 percent of Afro-Americans completed school in 2012. The quality of community colleges and California State Universities is uneven by locality, and upward transfer rates from the California community colleges and California State Universities, and beyond, are very patchy.

Why has access faltered? Arguably, the culprit has been California's Proposition 13, an extraordinary law which enshrined as a "social" principle the antisocial doctrine that government tax/spend is a violation of individual liberty. The proposition has made it very difficult to increase taxes, and triggered recurring budget crises in California. Proposition 13 remains in place today and is a major stumbling block of efforts to improve access to high-quality public education.

Since the prolonged recession that began in 2008, California has chopped off one third of state funding for higher education. All levels of institution are turning away qualified applicants, for the first time since 1960. Significantly, community colleges no longer provide opportunity for all, forcing many students into the for-profit sector, plagued by low completion rates, and the highest level of average student indebtedness in any sector of American higher education.

#### WHERE TO FROM HERE?

Currently, institutions in the University of California system face an impossible choice between steeply hiking tuition, undermining access, or allowing material educational conditions to deteriorate and educational and social inequalities to widen further.

Will rampant individualism and fiscal neoliberalism continue to hold sway over the common good in California? Will public support for public higher education continue to deteriorate? Or will Californians find ways to regenerate public support for common provision and equality of opportunity, recognizing that in the education of each lies the interest of all? If they do resurrect the public mission of the system, their example will again influence the world. Repeal of Proposition 13 would be a good place to start. ■

## Pitfalls of International Cooperative Education Programs in Vietnam

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As a result of globalization, the number of international cooperative education programs between Vietnamese and foreign higher education institutions has been increasing in the last decade. Both involved universities and other organizations appear to achieve their goals; however, the degree of success varies broadly. There are many pitfalls as a result of differences in educational systems and communication among institutions. For various reasons, depending upon the goals and the details of these programs, some languished, some fell apart, and others required further negotiations.

#### INTERNATIONAL COOPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN VIETNAM

International cooperative education (ICE) programs are study programs collaboratively offered by Vietnamese and foreign higher education institutions. Students can choose either to complete the whole program in Vietnam or to take part of the coursework in Vietnam and complete the program at the foreign institution. The curriculum includes courses designed by both Vietnamese and foreign institutions. Upon completion of the study program, students are awarded a diploma issued by the foreign institutions.

As of January 2015, the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) has approved 266 ICE programs for operation in Vietnam. The top five countries whose higher education institutions offer such programs are France (42 programs), United Kingdom (40), United States (33), Australia (27), and Taiwan (20). Most of these programs are in business- and economics-related fields—such as accounting banking, business administration, finance, information technology, and marketing.

#### GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS

The central government in Vietnam acts as the direct supervisor and administrator of higher education. Despite market reforms, Vietnam remains a unitary, nonfederal state in which state power emanates from the National People's Congress, Vietnam's top legislature. The central government determines the management of colleges and universities and educational exchange activities through MOET. MOET is responsible for governing all levels of education



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except for vocational training—which is managed by the Ministry of Labor, Invalids, and Social Affairs. MOET approves all degrees granted by Vietnamese institutions, deciding students' annual enrollment, tuition, and curricula of state-owned institutions. MOET reviews and approves educational exchange programs and develops strategies and policies for foreign invested projects. It also organizes, manages, and examines the quality of foreign cooperative programs and institutions.

In October 2012, the Vietnamese government issued a decree on Foreign Collaboration and Investment in Education. This decree identifies all regulations regarding educational exchanges, from how to get authorization for operation to the number of Vietnamese students to be taught in one classroom. Regulations and guidance, both from the central government and MOET, establish the framework allowing foreign schools to educate Vietnamese students in partnership with peer Vietnamese higher education institutions—as long as they are granted permission from MOET for academic programs and from the Ministry of Labor, Invalids, and Social Affairs for vocational training programs.

#### EMERGING ISSUES

Though cooperative education programs have been implemented in Vietnam since 2000, it was not until October 2012 that the government of Vietnam issued a decree on Foreign Collaboration and Investment in Education to regulate these programs. During 2011–2012, the government of Vietnam also established a committee to review the cooperative programs. The review committee found many violations in these programs. Among them was the fact that both parties announced recruitment and application before receiving the approval from MOET. For example, before receiving approval from MOET, Phuong Dong University announced and recruited a number of students to a program in collaboration with Humanagers, a training organization in Australia. Other cooperative education programs have recruited students for a long period without authorization. The case occurred between Vietnamese American Vocational Training College and Broward College, a Florida state college in the United States. This program has recruited and trained more than 700 students since 2007, without authorization.

Another issue is the quality of the programs and of the foreign institutions. The governmental review committee found that some foreign institutions lacked both a good reputation and good-quality programs. In Vietnam, many consulting centers for students wanting to study abroad now focus on recruiting and reviewing candidates applying for online programs to some foreign institutions. For example, by contacting Orchard Edu Group, a consulting group collaborating with the University of Sunderland,

Thanh Nien Online, a Vietnamese newspaper, reported that the University of Sunderland offers a long-distance master of business administration program and recruits Vietnamese students. Applicants for this program are not required to have a bachelor's degree, but just need five years of work experience to apply. The program takes from six to eight months. Apparently, these centers are not eligible to act as admission committees. It is undeniable that programs like this one are problematic. In the list of foreign institutions that offer programs in Vietnam, it appears that none rank among the top hundred institutions in their home countries. It seems to be difficult to get top-ranked universities to develop programs in Vietnam.

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### **In October 2012, the Vietnamese government issued a decree on Foreign Collaboration and Investment in Education.**

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An additional issue of program quality is the high tuition. The difference in tuition between four-year cooperative programs and traditional programs offered by Vietnamese institutions is relatively high. For example, Hanoi University of Science and Technology (HUSTECH) collaborates with Troy University in Alabama (US) to offer cooperative programs. The tuition is \$10,000 per student enrolling in this program, taking classes in Vietnam, but receiving the degree offered by Troy; in comparison, the tuition fee for a regular four-year program at HUSTECH is \$1,500, which already exceeds the per capita GDP in Vietnam (\$1,411). One wonders how Vietnamese people can afford the high tuition of cooperative programs. Apparently, wealthy Vietnamese families want their children to receive a foreign degree, because they believe that a degree issued by a foreign institution has more value than a degree issued by a Vietnamese institution. This is why they take the risk of investing a huge amount of money for a degree offered by a foreign institution.

In response to these and other issues, MOET decided to give violating institutions financial fines. MOET also asked these institutions to stop their recruitment and operation, required them to reimburse tuition to their students, and warned not to recognize diplomas graduate students received from these institutions. So far, there have not been legal suits from the institutions or the students against the decisions of MOET; however, there seems to be considerable confusion and ambiguity concerning these joint programs between the Vietnamese government and the institutions involved.

**CONCLUSION**

Vietnam will enjoy a further expansion of international cooperative education programs with foreign countries in the coming decades; however, it is important that collaborating parties recognize the existing issues and seek solutions to the problems. Foreign institutions need to understand the laws and regulations and Vietnamese communication culture. Vietnam needs to establish and review a reliable system for enhancing and measuring the quality of the programs, to avoid having unqualified institutions enter its educational market. ■

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## India's Need for Higher Education Internationalization

**PHILIP G. ALTBACH AND ELDHO MATHEWS**

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India is on the verge of great power status. The success of the Mars Orbiter Mission is an example. The problem is that India generally does not act like a great power, nor does it have the necessary infrastructures. Let us take one small example—higher education. India dramatically underinvests in its universities and colleges. Most large countries not only have world-class universities but also an effective international higher education “foreign policy”—some call it soft power.

The establishment of Nalanda University and the South Asian University are some small initiatives to develop internationally competitive higher education. But are they enough when compared to India's aspirations to be recognized on par with China's rising global stature?

Higher education internationalization is at the forefront of academic thinking globally. Providing local students with some kind of international consciousness and knowledge is considered important for employment as well as citizenship in a globalizing economy. Educating students from abroad helps by bringing international students to local classrooms. Bringing students from abroad to the country will help future cooperation, economic ties, and the like. Some countries, such as the United Kingdom, the United States, and Australia, earn quite significant sums from educating international students.

Many countries and academic institutions have elaborate strategies for internationalization. The Americans have the Fulbright program, which brings thousands of students and academics to the United States each year—and sends Americans abroad to study and engage in teaching and research. The German Academic Exchange Service offers similar programs. Both China and Japan have national programs to attract foreign students. The Saudi Arabian government sponsors a massive scholarship program to send its students abroad to study.

**INDIAN INITIATIVES**

Although institutions like the Indian Council for Cultural Relations offers scholarships to foreign students, its scope is very limited both in terms of numbers and the fields when compared to the programs mentioned earlier. In 2013–2014 this council administered only 3,465 scholarships for foreign students to pursue undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral programs.

The emergence of the new global environment has been creating tremendous opportunities for internationalization of India. The dramatic expansion in the number of students going abroad and a significant rise in the number of partnerships with foreign institutions are examples of this growth. Apart from this, inward mobility of international students to Indian institutions has also been increasing in recent years, with the majority of the foreign students coming from Asian and African countries. This is mainly because the cost of pursuing higher education and the cost of living in India is very low when compared to other countries.

According to the latest figures available with the Association of Indian Universities, during the year 2012–2013 approximately 21,000 international students were pursuing higher education in 121 institutions in India—compared to the 200,000 Indians studying abroad. Japan and China each host more than 100,000 international students, and the United States hosts more than 800,000.

Most of India's international students are from South Asia, and regionalization might be a better term than internationalization. The large majority of non-Indian students study in private universities and are hardly represented in the public sector. Manipal University, a private university, stands first with an enrollment of 2,742 international students in 2012–2013.

Interestingly, the majority of the Indian public universities seem to be unaware of the potential of attracting short-term study abroad (one semester-in-India/casual studentship)—students from the United States and European countries to their campuses. Currently, only a few central government funded universities—like Jawaharlal Nehru University, Hyderabad University, and the Tata Institute



of Social Science—facilitate the short-term incoming student visit programs. Since the fees charged to international students are at least five to eight times higher than Indian counterparts, significant income could be earned by the ailing state universities. Apart from generating additional revenue, foreign students would promote diversity in university campuses.

However, the host universities would have to change some of the regulations, with regard to credit transfer. The recent initiatives taken by the University of Kerala, to issue academic transcripts in international style, could be a model for other universities. The initiatives undertaken by Mumbai and Pune universities to attract foreign students are also worth emulating. Apart from credit transfer regulations, the host universities would also have to ensure many facilities to the foreign students—in the form of orientation programs, excellent hostel facilities, remedial courses, health care facilities, help in getting student visas, registration with the Foreigner Regional Registration Office after arrival, and others.

The number of Indian branch campuses functioning abroad has also increased during this period. An off-shore campus of Manipal University—a prominent private university—operates in Malaysia, and another private university, Amity University operates campuses in the United States, Britain, China, and Singapore. The presence of four Indian private institutions in the Dubai International Academic City also reflects this trend.

Another trend is the opening up of off-campus centers—franchising arrangement—of Indian universities in countries where a sizable number of Indians are working. However, recently there were some reports in the media that the University Grants Commission had advised the Mahatma Gandhi University in Kerala, to shut down its seven international off-campus centers in the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, and Oman—because of violation of the University Grants Commission guidelines on the territorial jurisdiction of universities.

#### **STRATEGIC PLANNING?**

Internationalization has so far not been integrated into strategic planning at the majority of Indian higher educational institutions. Universities alone cannot be blamed for this situation, because currently India does not have a national policy governing the entry or operation of foreign higher educational institutions. Although the Foreign Educational Institutions (Regulation of Entry and Operations) Bill that was introduced in the Indian Parliament in 2010 to regulate the entry and operation of foreign higher educational institutions, it failed to achieve sufficient consensus in the Parliament and eventually lapsed. However, following the

path of the All India Council for Technical Education—the statutory body under the Ministry of Human Resource Development for technical education—the University Grants Commission came up with a set of regulations last year to promote and maintain the standards of academic collaborations between Indian and foreign educational institutions.

#### **ALLIANCES?**

Currently, only a minority of Indian universities and colleges have significant alliances with foreign institutions for activities including development and delivery of courses, joint research, or the exchange of staff and students. The new private universities and colleges are very active in promoting internationalization through the adoption of foreign curriculum, twinning programs, and other initiatives. Yet, their objectives are mainly aimed at improving their market position, through the promise of preparing students for the globally integrated economic environment.

There is a general feeling that integration of foreign educational programs into Indian institutions will provide an efficient way to improve academic quality and standards, which is not always true when it comes to the realities on the ground. During last two decades, the joint operation of programs with foreign partners and the collaborative delivery of educational programs have increasingly become part of internationalization in Indian higher education. This collaboration is generally between a newly established private institution from the Indian side and a middle-grade institution from a foreign country. Most of these institutions tout the presence of foreign faculty and placement assistance as their achievements. The web sites of some of the private institutions with foreign tie-ups boast that half of the faculty members employed by them are foreign nationals, which is not true in reality in many cases. Most of the foreign nationals work in their Indian partnering institutions on a short-term basis. For these institutions, revenue generation is more important than educational quality, and they see internationalization as a tool to attract more domestic students to ensure a high return on their investments.

The main attractions of private for-profit institutions in India with foreign tie-ups are: a foreign degree, lower tuition and fees compared to institutions abroad, opportunities to gain international experience by spending a semester in the partnering institution, professional development, academic standards equivalent to those in the partner country, access to extensive online resources, direct admission to the foreign institution's courses after the completion of an undergraduate course in India, internationally recognized degrees, and international placement assistance. However, discussions about the goals, content, and quality of the programs offered by these institutions have not been given pri-

ority, so far leaving open the question of whether students coming out of these institutions can broaden their skills and horizons simply by following an adopted curricula?

So far, there is no strategy for internationalization de-

spite the tremendous benefits that could accrue to Indian higher education. Higher education internationalization is a priority in much of the world. India needs to join the race.

## NEW PUBLICATIONS

Martinez-Alemán, Ana M., Brian Pusser, and Estela Mara Bensimon, eds. *Critical Approaches to the Study of Higher Education: A Practical Introduction*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2015. 321 pp. \$34.95 (pb). ISBN 978-1-4214-1665-6. Web site: [www.press.jhu.edu](http://www.press.jhu.edu).

This volume includes a series of essays discussing key issues in American higher education from a range of critical perspectives. Among the perspectives used are critical race theory, semiotics, critical theory, feminism, and others. Topics discussed include the college completion agenda, poststructural approaches to policy research in higher education, human capital theory, critical history, and others.

Bhandhari, Rajika, and Alessia Lefébure, eds. *Asia: The New Higher Education Superpower?* New York: Institute of International Education, 2015. 196 pp. \$39.95 (pb). ISBN 978-0-87206-375-4. Web site: [www.iiebooks.org](http://www.iiebooks.org).

Asia's higher education enrollments are growing rapidly, and several Asian countries, especially China, have invested heavily in higher education. This book focuses on aspects of Asia's higher education growth, including rankings, Asia's role in the global knowledge economy, the challenges of quality and opportunity, among others. Countries, such as China, India, Vietnam, and Japan, are also considered.

Bowen, William G., and Eugene M. Tobin. *Locus of Authority: The Evolution of Faculty Roles in the Governance of Higher Education*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015. 379 pp. \$29.95 (hb). ISBN 978-1-40086-5635. Web site: [www.press.princeton.edu](http://www.press.princeton.edu).

The basic argument of this book is that American higher education has adapted to changing circumstances fairly effectively,

and that the governance structures that have been built up over time are useful. Case studies of four different academic institutions and systems provide evidence. The authors also argue that change is appropriate so long, as it does not destroy the role of faculty involvement in governance.

Hazelkorn, Ellen. *Rankings and the Reshaping of Higher Education: The Battle for World-Class Excellence (2nd edition)*. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015. 304 pp. (hb). ISBN 978-1-137-44666-4. Web site: [www.palgrave.com](http://www.palgrave.com).

The second and revised edition of Hazelkorn's pathbreaking book on global rankings, this book brings the original 2011 volume up to date. It focuses on the role of rankings in global higher education, the nature of rankings and what they measure, and the impact of rankings on student choice, higher education policy, and related issues.

Munene, Ishmael I. *Multicampus University Systems: Africa and the Kenyan Experience*. New York: Routledge, 2015. 160 pp. \$145 (hb). ISBN 978-0-415-82514-6. Web site: [www.routledge.com](http://www.routledge.com).

This book is not about multicampus university systems in the accepted sense of the term. Rather, it discusses the challenges facing selected universities in Kenya and to some degree elsewhere in Africa. An effort is made to link the discussion with various theoretical perspectives.

Paget, Karen M. *Patriotic Betrayal*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015. 527 pp. (hb). ISBN: 978-0-300-20508-4. Web site: [www.yalebooks.com](http://www.yalebooks.com).

This is the fascinating story of how the American Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) infiltrated and ultimately controlled the foreign policy and activities of the National Student Association (NSA), the representative organization of American student govern-

ments, during the Cold War period. The CIA secretly provided much of the funding for the NSA's work.

Palfreyman, David, and Ted Tapper. *Reshaping the University: The Rise of the Regulated Market in Higher Education*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2014. 307 pp. (hb). ISBN 978-0-19-965982-1. Web site: [www.oup.com](http://www.oup.com).

The focus of this volume is on how English higher education has been changed by introducing market forces into higher education. Underlying the changes are the diminishing of financial support from the state for higher education and the increased costs to students and the adjustment made by universities. Issues such as students as consumers, the research mission, the entry of the for-profit sector, and others are discussed. While focused on England, comparisons with the US experience are included.

Ream, Todd C., and John M. Braxton, eds. *Ernest L. Boyer: Hope for Today's Universities*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2015. 281 pp. \$90 (hb). ISBN 978-1-4384-5565-5. Web site: [www.sunypress.edu](http://www.sunypress.edu).

Ernest L. Boyer was US Secretary of Education, Chancellor of the State University of New York, and president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. This book includes some of his essays and speeches on aspects of higher education, including the role of students, college access, financial issues, general education, and others.

Renn, Kristen A. *Women's Colleges and Universities in a Global Context*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014. 178 pp. \$44.95 (hb). ISBN 978-1-4214-1477-5. Web site: [www.press.jhu.edu](http://www.press.jhu.edu).

A survey of the status of women's universities and colleges worldwide, this volume discusses such themes as gender empower-

ment on campuses, the campus climate in women's institutions, access for women, and a discussion of the variety of women's colleges and universities worldwide.

Sheregul, F. E., and A. L. Arefoev, eds. *University Rankings: International and Russian Experience*. Moscow, Russia: Ministry of Education and Science, Center for Sociological Research, 2014. 504 pp. (hb) ISBN 978-5-906001-25-2.

This volume provides an overview of research and analysis, concerning university rankings—with a goal of illustrating useful experience, as it relates to Russian higher education. Most of the chapters deal specifically with Russia, but there are several translations from other languages.

Shin, Jung Cheol, Gerard A. Postiglione, and Futao Huang, eds. *Mass Higher Education Development in East Asia: Strategy, Quality, and Challenges*. Dordrecht, Netherlands: Springer, 2015. 371 pp. \$129 (hb). ISBN: 978-3-12672-2. Web site: [www.springer.com](http://www.springer.com).

A wide ranging discussion of mass higher education in the East Asian context, this book provides both analyses of countries and of cross-national themes. Among the places discussed are Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Malaysia, China, and Hong Kong. The broader themes include the progress of universal education in the West and in Asia, the impact of mass higher education on students, employment prospects in mass higher education systems, quality issues, university governance, and others.

St. John, Edward. *Refinancing the College Dream: Access, Equal Opportunity and Justice for Taxpayers*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014. 263 pp. \$32.95 (pb). ISBN 978-1-4214-1578-9. Web site: [www.press.jhu.edu](http://www.press.jhu.edu).

A comprehensive discussion of financing undergraduate education in the United States, this book discusses the challenge of access from the perspective of how it can be funded. Funding is analyzed over the past half century in the United States. Suggestions are made concerning how access can be expanded and the fiscal problems involved.

Stolker, Carel. *Rethinking the Law School: Education, Research, Outreach, and Governance*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2014. 454 pp. (hb). ISBN 978-1-107-07389. Web site: [www.Cambridge.org](http://www.Cambridge.org).

One of the few studies of legal education in global perspective, this book focuses on such themes as the role of the law school in a university, law schools in a range of countries, governance of law, schools, publishing in the legal profession, teaching issues, and others. The author has been head of a Dutch law school and is now rector of Leiden University.

Tierney, William G., and Julia C. Duncheon, eds. *The Problem of College Readiness*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2015. 222 pp. (hb). ISBN: 978-1-4384-5723-9. Web site: [www.sunypress.edu](http://www.sunypress.edu).

This US-based volume focuses on the internationally relevant of student readiness for postsecondary study. The authors argue that readiness is a longstanding problem and is linked to socioeconomic status and other factors. Programs such as early assessment and others are discussed.

UNESCO Institute of Statistics. *Higher Education in Asia: Expanding Out, Expanding Up*. Montreal, Canada: UNESCO Institute of Statistics, 2014. 162 pp. (pb). ISBN 978-92-9189-147-4. Web site: [www.uis.unesco.org](http://www.uis.unesco.org).

The focus of this book is on the expansion of graduate education in Asia. Case studies of Malaysia and Thailand are provided, and broader trends in graduate education in the region are analyzed. Useful statistical material concerns trends in research, various subjects taught in Asia, and other themes.

Wechsler, Harold S. *The Qualified Student: A History of Selective College Admission in America*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2014. 404 pp. \$34.95 (pb). ISBN 978-14-1285360-6. Web site: [www.transactionpub.com](http://www.transactionpub.com).

A classic study of the development of selective college admissions in the United States, this book, which was originally published in 1977, has been updated for this edition. Mainly using four case studies, the book

shows how ideas and practices relating to selective admissions evolved over time. The author shows, among many other things, that admissions policies were used to discriminate against various population groups, and that ideas concerning the criteria for admission were varied and often in conflict.

Weis, Lois, Kristin Cipollone, and Heather Jenkins. *Class Warfare: Class, Race, and College Admissions in Top-Tier Secondary Schools*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014. 292 pp. \$30 (pb). ISBN 978-0-226-13492-5. Web site: [www.press.uchicago.edu](http://www.press.uchicago.edu).

The transition from high school to postsecondary study is a topic of considerable concern in the United States. High-ability students from working-class and ethnic minority families, who attend top high schools, often do not attend the best universities. This careful study examines the ways in which students from these backgrounds see education and their prospects and how their schools react to them.

Yonezawa, Akiyoshi, Yuto Kitamura, Arthur Meerman, and Kazuo Kuroda, eds. *Emerging International Dimensions in East Asian Higher Education*. Dordrecht, Springer, 2014. 261 pp. ISBN 978-94-017-8821-2. Web site: [www.springer.com](http://www.springer.com).

This book discusses emerging roles and functions of higher education and the implications for higher education as a public good, in a context of globalization and regionalization in East Asia. In 12 chapters, distinguished scholars from inside and outside the region, address the issues of higher education as a public good, research, cross-border delivery, harmonization, regional cooperation, and (sub)regionalization, student mobility, and other topics in the East Asian context. The editors place these issues in the context of pursuing regional and global development in East Asian higher education.

## NEWS OF THE CENTER

Hans de Wit officially takes up his position as director of CIHE as of September 1, 2015. Welcome, Hans! Philip G. Altbach remains founding director and will be actively engaged in Center projects.

The Center has nearly completed its cooperative project with the National Research University–Higher School of Economics (HSE) in Moscow, looking at the impact of global rankings on universities around the world. The resulting book will be published by Routledge in early 2016, under the title *The Global Academic Rankings Game: Changing Institutional Policies, Practice, and Academic Life*. We are also in the midst of yet another project with our HSE colleagues, which will provide an 11-country analysis of the experiences of international faculty.

Philip G. Altbach is working with Jamil Salmi, formerly of the World Bank and CIHE graduate assistant Georgiana Mihut on a research project on the role of International Advisory Councils worldwide.

In May, Hans de Wit, along with CIHE founding director Philip G. Altbach, and CIHE associate director Laura E. Rumbley all participated in various sessions of the annual conference of NAFSA: Association of International Educators, held in Boston. On May 28, 2015 the Center hosted an event to mark the 20th anniversary of the founding of the Center. Featured speakers included Francisco Marmolejo (lead of the Global Solutions Group on Higher Education at the World Bank) and Eva Egron-Polak (secretary-general of the International Association of Universities). A video of the event can be accessed online at <http://frontrow.bc.edu/program/cihe>.

Founding director Philip G. Altbach participated in the Russian government's "5-100 excellence committee" meeting in Tomsk, Siberia in March, as an international member of the committee. He also gave a presentation at a conference of rectors of Saudi Arabian universities in Riyadh in April. Altbach's new book, *Global Perspectives on Higher Education*, will be published by Johns Hopkins University Press in early 2016. His book *The International Imperative in Higher Education* was published by Sense Publishers in English and by Shanghai Jiao Tong University Press in Chinese.

In June, Hans de Wit and Laura E. Rumbley presented at the annual conference of the Academic Cooperation Association (ACA) in Brussels. Hans also spoke in June at various events at the University of Costa Rica, to mark the 40th anniversary of the founding of that institution's international office, while Laura E. Rumbley spoke at the University of Costa Rica in August, during festivities marking the university's 75th anniversary. In July, Hans de Wit participated in a review of the internationalization strategy and activities of the Autonomous University of Puebla (Mexico).

Hans de Wit and Laura E. Rumbley both attended the International Education Association of South Africa's (IEASA) annual conference, held in Port Elizabeth, South Africa, in August, followed by meetings at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in Durban, South Africa, with Damtew Teferra, founder and director of the International Network for Higher Education in Africa (INHEA). CIHE and INHEA are jointly supported by funds from the Carnegie Corporation to enhance various activities focused on African higher education issues and developments.

Doctoral research assistant Georgiana Mihut attended the kick-off event of the Erasmus+ Students and Alumni Association (ESAA) in Brussels in June. She was there in her capacity as a board member of the Organization for Cooperation and Networking among Students, and as the chair of the Course Quality Advisory Board of the Erasmus Mundus Students and Alumni Association. Doctoral research assistant Ariane de Gayardon is spending the summer at the Vrije Universiteit (Free University) in Amsterdam, assisting with research and activities related to the "Mastermind Europe" project, a European Commission-funded initiative exploring admissions needs and good practices in master's programs across Europe.

The Center is advancing its plans to launch a new master's degree in international higher education in 2016/2017. More information on this program will soon be forthcoming.

In September, the Center is launching a new project with the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile's (PUC) Center for Research on Educational Policy and Practice, under the direction of Prof. Andrés Bernasconi, on identity and internationalization issues in relation to Catholic universities.

In December 2015 or January 2016, we expect to release our second special issue of *IHE* focused exclusively on internationalization in higher education, in collaboration with the Centre for Higher Education Internationalisation (CHEI) at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, in Milan, Italy. The first special issue was released in December 2014.

Our summer 2015 roster of visiting scholars included Daniel Kontowski (University of Warsaw, Poland), Suaad Al-Harhi (Princess Nora University, Saudi Arabia), Armagan Erdogan (Social Sciences University of Ankara, Turkey), and Bie Dunrong (Xiamen University, China). During fall 2015, Kara Godwin remains affiliated with CIHE as a research fellow, as does Kai Jiang (Peking University, China) as a visiting scholar. We also warmly welcome Liu Jin of the Beijing Institute of Technology, who joins us as a visiting scholar as of September 2015.



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### THE CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION (CIHE)

The Boston College Center for International Higher Education brings an international consciousness to the analysis of higher education. We believe that an international perspective will contribute to enlightened policy and practice. To serve this goal, the Center publishes the International Higher Education quarterly newsletter, a book series, and other publications; sponsors conferences; and welcomes visiting scholars. We have a special concern for academic institutions in the Jesuit tradition worldwide and, more broadly, with Catholic universities.

The Center promotes dialogue and cooperation among academic institutions throughout the world. We believe that the future depends on effective collaboration and the creation of an international community focused on the improvement of higher education in the public interest.

### CIHE WEB SITE

The different sections of the Center Web site support the work of scholars and professionals in international higher education, with links to key resources in the field. All issues of International Higher Education are available online, with a searchable archive. In addition, the International Higher Education Clearinghouse (IHEC) is a source of articles, reports, trends, databases, online newsletters, announcements of

upcoming international conferences, links to professional associations, and resources on developments in the Bologna Process and the GATS. The Higher Education Corruption Monitor provides information from sources around the world, including a selection of news articles, a bibliography, and links to other agencies. The International Network for Higher Education in Africa (INHEA), is an information clearinghouse on research, development, and advocacy activities related to postsecondary education in Africa.

### THE PROGRAM IN HIGHER EDUCATION AT THE LYNCH SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, BOSTON COLLEGE

The Center is closely related to the graduate program in higher education at Boston College. The program offers master's and doctoral degrees that feature a social science-based approach to the study of higher education. The Administrative Fellows initiative provides financial assistance as well as work experience in a variety of administrative settings. Specializations are offered in higher education administration, student affairs and development, and international education. For additional information, please contact Dr. Karen Arnold ([arnoldk@bc.edu](mailto:arnoldk@bc.edu)) or visit our Web site: <http://www.bc.edu/schools/lsoe/>.

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