

Unica Student Conference

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Europe Through Student Eyes

# ABSTRACT BOOK

Preliminary draft

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## 1. Internationalisation at universities: challenges and problems.

### **Austria**

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#### *Julia Bartl*

**Introduction.** The climate at universities is increasingly becoming more international due to globalization as a key feature of our time. On the one hand this nurtures a strong academic exchange across national borders. On the other hand it causes challenges and problems which need to be actively addressed. A fruitful and constructive international academic exchange does not just self-evidently work but in fact needs an accordingly platform and social space and the necessary financial and structural means.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** Having been trained in different academic cultures, international and local students and teachers bring with them various diverse expectations and understandings of what university means, how to accomplish their role as a teacher or a student in such an institution and how to communicate and interact with their colleagues. At first glance such questions seem simple to answer but once you experience foreign academic contexts yourself these answers can be completely blown apart. Nothing works “naturally“ the same everywhere. Moreover the value and benefit of international research and collaboration has to be transmitted through curricula and among staff, students and teachers.

**Analysis.** There is nothing new about the need to facilitate cross-cultural awareness when facing an international institutional context, however, universities seem to have paid less attention to this need. I would suggest that this might have to do with perceiving the field of science still as something more objective than for example the field of business. Yet we have to keep in mind that the academic culture is as well embedded into a larger set of social values and norms. Therefore we need to address not only the diverse academic contexts of people (different understandings of how to accomplish the academic path) but also the social and cultural background of people, especially in terms of communication and interaction.

**Conclusions.** It is necessary to implement international curricula, support and facilitate research partnerships and create an environment where international collaboration and exchange do not mainly depend on individual efforts but become an essential part of university life and culture. Spending one year abroad at another university should not lengthen the study period but should instead be considered a very valuable asset in academic achievement.

**Recommendations.** International initiatives and collaborations should be increasingly supported by facilitating and valuing international study and practical work experience (internships as part of the curriculum). An infrastructure needs to be provided to include students with disabilities. Workshops, trainings in cross-cultural awareness for the teachers, staff and students but also informal possibilities of meeting each other can be helpful tools in order to profit from the great benefits of the internationalisation of universities. Small conferences for international researchers and students can help to build networks and create contacts for future careers and projects. Enhancing language and study support can motivate more students to take the opportunity of studying one year abroad.

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## **Croatia**

### ***University of Zagreb, Zagreb***

***Introduction.*** Cross-cultural influences have always been with us, but today they are more powerful because of their immediacy. These developments create tremendous opportunities for the universities of the world. And universities are responding. Internationalizing the university is also a revolutionary development - signaling the need for transformational changes in modern university and the flow of students across borders.

#### ***Aims.***

1. Recognition of foreign academic and professional qualifications and diplomas.
2. Standardize the ECTS-point system at universities in whole Europe.
3. Increase internationally oriented programmes and foreign language programmes, especially programmes in English.
4. Provide compatible curricula across Europe.
5. Financial support for students with disabilities.
- 6.. Increase institutions with references to the international dimension in strategic plans and secure more institutional resources. to support international activities.

***Analysis.*** The successful internationalisation needs mechanisms that recognize the academic and professional qualifications gained through domestic or international delivery of education for purposes of employment or further study. That mechanisms must be national, regional or international to accommodate the mobility of students and professional labour.

The Bologna process forces the higher education institutions to restructure their degrees but they are moving at different speed which is not conveniently for the process of internationalisation.

Policies concerning the cost of tuition and fees for visas and other documents may effect international initiatives.

The growing use of English as a medium of research and instruction may stimulate interest in international programmes, offered by universities with programmes in English.

Students may find international programmes useful as curricula move towards internationalized models.

Quality assurance is a major concern within countries, but it is a greater problem internationally. Observers criticize many international higher education programmes for low standards but fail to identify measures of quality.

**Conclusions.** Continued recognition of the importance of providing students with international and intercultural skills, increasing mobility within Europe, improving academic quality, being more responsive to labour market by providing more employable skills, trusting and understanding among higher education institutions even in this time of competition, and in the same time maintaining cultural diversity, can successfully bring higher education to internationalisation.

**Recommendations.**

1. Establish mechanisms for recognition of foreign academic and professional qualifications.
2. Organize and revise study programmes, make study programmes easier to read and compare
3. Establish effective European international relations office.
4. Develop institution promotion abroad, develop marketing and recruitment strategies.
5. Make European higher education more attractive.

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**Cyprus**

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*Theodoros Ioannou*

Internationalisation is one of the most important factors in our contemporary society. Therefore, it is essential for all countries to develop a common culture, an internationalized culture, in order to cooperate and accept each other so that they may grow. For this new culture to be successful and be accepted by the citizens of these countries, it has to be developed throughout the institution of the university. However, in order to involve Universities with the process of internationalisation, we will be confronted with challenges and problems.

The internationalisation at universities could be defined as “the awareness and operation of interactions within and between cultures through its teaching, research and service functions, with the ultimate aim of achieving mutual understanding across cultural borders” (YANG, 2002, p. 83). In this process it is possible to identify some challenges and problems about the collaboration, communication between the universities and sustainable support for professors, researches and students.

Some challenges and problems we can identify are:

- a) There is a difficulty to select the partnerships, to develop a high relationship and when there are several of them, we may run the risk of not identifying the works and benefits of partners
- b) To recruit world-class and international researchers. We have to train researchers with a common program in a collaborative logic for a strong communication and create a strategy to increase research
- c) To develop a specific audit where it can prepare an international curriculum that includes both studying and working experience
- d) It is necessary to improve the students' support (language, curriculum, etc) and specifically to make some changes on infrastructure for servicing students with disabilities

In order to overcome these challenges, to strengthen the relations between Universities and help them develop a common culture, we can make some suggestions that will lead to Internationalisation at Universities, such as:

- a) Increase international initiatives and communications
- b) Focus on the teaching collaboration between universities
- c) Audit to prepare international curriculum that is needed in order to facilitate international study or work experience (internship) for students during their programs of study
- d) Conferences and symposiums organized in a different European country each year
- e) Develop a tutorial system for incoming international students at the various departments (language, culture and study support)
- f) Value international collaborative partnerships, for example, offering scholarships to the respective researchers participating in such collaborations
- g) Articulate efficacy infrastructures (accessibility, curriculum and culture of social inclusion) for students with disabilities at universities and improve the support in the internationalization process (target increased funds and assign volunteers to help them)

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## **Czech Republic**

*Charles University, Prague*

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**Introduction.** Internationalisation at universities is a long term process that has been taking place not only in European Higher Education Area for more than decade. European countries got a possibility of taking advantage of their education systems uniqueness and establishing a European system.

**Hypothesis.** Process leading to internationalisation can succeed only if all the participating countries and individual universities will communicate and collaborate in making a common program.

**Questions.** How far should internationalisation go? Should it be inside Europe, EU, European Higher Education Area or worldwide?

**Aims.** Making a common program of internationalisation based on already existing strategies of different universities. Identifying the obstacles to the process of internationalisation.

**Analysis.** There is couple of conditions that are crucial for facilitating the process of internationalisation: comparable curriculum, methodology, system of assessment and degrees. All of these conditions are already in the practice but there are still problems in this area that needs to be revealed and solved.

Internationalisation might imply many questionable elements such as destroying cultural heritage, diminishing language diversity, reducing variety of academic cultures and structures, quality decline. But so far it seems that internationalisation opens up more desirable opportunities than it produces dangers.

**Conclusions.** Universities need to be given the opportunity to keep the essential of their uniqueness inside the international system.

**Recommendations.** The steps leading to internationalisation should be done in close contact with participating universities, teachers, students and administrative. The policy should react on the suggestions of reality.

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## **Finland**

*University of Helsinki*

*Riina Koivunen*

**Introduction.** Most of the traditional functions of universities were taken on within national environments. Nowadays universities have a dual role as a regional as well as an international institutions, still dependent on national governments and their budgets, and therefore on political legislation within the national context. There is still a long way to reach truly international system of higher education. The internalisation model prevailing in Europe is characterized by confidence in quality of the partners involved, even though there can be differentiation among higher education institutions on the quality dimension. Problems exist with university diplomas, degrees and credits in spite of the ETCS system, which is not itself without limitations in the complex issue of credit transfer and accumulation.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** In a wider concept, an important question is how to avoid student flows from becoming more a business or trade system, where regulation for tuition fees even within Europe vary considerably. Altbach and Knight also present an important question whether EU only protects its “European higher education space” by imposing tuition and other fees only those coming outside EU borders, and how the Bologna initiatives affect international patterns both

within EU and between the EU and the rest of the world. Programs and practices must ensure that higher education benefits the public instead of becoming a profit centre.

**Analysis.** Despite the fairly successful functioning of SOCRATES/ERASMUS, the changing academic, societal and economic conditions worldwide must be considered to avoid relying merely on established practices. As higher education is increasingly seen as a central element in the economic future, the links between the current trends and the broader world economy must be recognized.

**Conclusions.** There is general need for further development of clear procedures and transparent evaluation, and not to fall into illusion of true equivalence of programs, credits or qualifications in different educational and cultural environments. Also the dual role of universities as regional and international institutions must be considered.

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### **Hungary**

**EÖTVÖS LORÁND TUDOMÁNYEGYETEM / EÖTVÖS LORÁND**

**SCIENCE UNIVERISTY (ELTE), BUDAPEST**

**Szilvia Hornyák**

**Introduction.** I'm Szilvia Hornyák from Hungary, Eötvös Loránd Science University, I study there environmental science. Since 2007 I'm member of the Student Union, I was the headmentor of ELTE Nature Faculty ESN mentorsystem till July 2010. At this time I write my thesis, and work for a Foundation on the University. I'm 24, live with my family in Budapest.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.**

- 1, How can we increase the number of the courses in foreign languages?
- 2, How can we inspire the teachers to edify in foreign languages?
- 3, How can we help the integration of the foreign students?

**Analysis.** More courses taught in foreign languages have extraordinary importance in the international relations. For those teachers who edify in foreign languages the University should have to generate a kind of scholarship or give them some extra money. I think in our University its the biggest problem, that the foreign students haven't got variety from foreign courses...

**Integration.** In our University work now a really good mentorsystem. Hungarian students help for foreign students. Its a really good chance for us to use or practise foreign language, and for a foreign student its a big help to make out the University. We organise a lot of common program for them, to know each other, to know more and more culture. All European University should join to ESN or found these kind of system.

**Conclusions.** It would be very important for all hungarian Univeristy to appear prepared in the European Higher Education Area. The main aim is to maintain and strengthen existing international relations as well as to develop new ones, to take part in international networks and to establish joint programs that provide the students with a double or a joint degree.

Mentorsystems would help to get more and more [experience](#) and work out a much more better profile for the University.

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### **Italy**

**Universities of Rome “Foro Italico”, “Tor Vergata” and “Roma Tre”**

**Leonardo Santos Amâncio Cabral; Francesco di Tommaso and Fabio Giallanza**

**Introduction.** The internationalisation at the universities means “the awareness and operation of interactions within and between cultures through its teaching, research and service functions, with the ultimate aim of achieving mutual understanding across cultural borders” (YANG, 2002, p. 83). In this process is possible to identify some challenges and problems about the collaboration, communication between the universities and sustainable support for the teachers, researches and students.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** In front at this realty, and with the opportunity of the Unica Students Conference Rome 2010, we can to ask: how the universities of the European Union can to increase the collaboration between all of involved in this process? Gathering the various studies about this theme, this study sought to know the strategies of the different universities to promote the internationalisation with a common program; to identify the problems that the universities, teachers and students face in this process; and to recommend some strategies to Rectors, European commissioners and others, to improve the actual realty.

**Analysis.** Between the different challenges and problems identified, we can to expose some difficulties: a) to select the partnerships, to develop a high relation and when there are various of them, can run the risk of don't identify the works and benefits of partners; b) to recruit world-class and international researches; c) to teach researchers with a common program in a collaborative logic for a strong communication and create a strategy for increase the research; d) to develop a specific audit where it can prepare a international curriculum that it includes studying and work experience; e) to improve the students support (language, curriculum, etc) and, specifically, to make some changes about the infrastructure for the assessment to the foreign students with disabilities.

**Conclusions.** In the internationalisation at universities, some strategies call for implementing and fitting culture between universities and involve them in everything fields.

**Recommendations.** Our recommendations for the Rome Declaration, after to expose this reality, is to increase international initiatives and communications; put focus on the teaching collaboration between the universities; audit for prepare international curriculum

## **The Netherlands**

*University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam*

*Raphaël Hoogvliets*

Internationalization, globalization, or in the context of this conference, perhaps 'Europeanization' are terms that are used more and more frequently. To discuss internationalization at universities in Europe and around the world we must clearly establish what an internationalized university is. It seems to me that there are three different levels at work at a University in which we can promote or develop an international character. Firstly, there is the university leadership who can try to make the university more international both on levels of research and curriculum. Secondly there are the faculties who can promote international research, but not in all cases are able to present their curriculum to more than a national body of students. Thirdly, there are the students themselves who study and do research in their respective home countries or opt to travel abroad for part of their degree, finish a whole degree across the border or do research in their non-native countries.

The foundations for an international academic society can be laid in the third level. If younger generations are stimulated to study and live abroad now, the bonds created today will pay dividends in the future. I strongly believe that by making European students more internationally mobile will result in a more international character at the universities. Some of these young academics will go on to study and will eventually be concerned with academic policy making. If they can speak from experience, rather than from project planning and research based results, change will be set in motion. This constitutes a bottom up approach to academic reform, an approach that will take time, but if we want to reform the European academic society we must have patience. All that has to be done now is make it even more easier to give students an opportunity to study abroad. This need not be done through more scholarships, but I think universities should invest more in making their programs more accessible internationally through practical means.

Once students have become more mobile, universities will be able to specialize more. Not every city or even country should necessarily have to offer a wide variety of programs. By specializing in just a few programs per city the variety of courses and scholars within one program could be improved and in turn the quality of education. For this a lingua franca is of course required, establishing one worldwide or even just across Europe would require more than only the universities to reform.

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## **Poland**

*University of Warsaw*

*Katarzyna Klimowicz*

**Introduction.** The topic of the internationalisation at universities is a very up-to-date and important one; taking into consideration the progress of integration among European countries and also numerous opportunities to take part in academic exchanges all over the world. However, with the

development of integration and exchange possibilities the contemporary universities have to face with a lot of new challenges and problems.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** It is crucial to ask what do cultural and educational exchanges provide. What should be their aim and in what direction should they develop? Do we have a common, universal heritage as human beings or only as separate nations and small groups of people? How strong is the interdependence among our nations? How should the cross-cultural communication look like? How should the universities, faculties and academical staff be prepared for the international exchanges? How should the process of sending and receiving students proceed?

**Analysis.** There are different approaches and perspectives from which internationalisation can be analysed. How we view international relations among universities to a large degree depends on how we understand the terms like: internationalisation, culture, education, knowledge. Another important factor having impact on the internationalization is the matter of language. Should we accept English as an international language, that would break down communication barriers? Would this make all information and knowledge accessible to everyone?

**Conclusions.** There is an increasing need not only to promote the internationalisation of higher education but also to discuss how it should proceed. There is clearly no overall consensus regarding the concept of internationalisation but it should be clarified, with the ideas of caring, sharing, altruism, cooperation and collaboration being its part.

#### **Recommendations..**

To create a common programme for universities' internationalisation development, in which common objectives and methods of internationalisation will be clarified.

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#### **Portugal**

*Universidade de Lisboa (UL), Lisbon and Universidade Nova de Lisboa (UNL), Lisbon*

*Ana Abreu (UNL), André Machado (UL)*

**Introduction.** Internationalization is a global process that has been intensified since the eighties. Today it's used as a barometer of economic, social, cultural and academic value of higher education institutions worldwide. The homeostasis and social cohesion in present societies are difficult to maintain if the inter-cultural skills of citizens and institutions are not strengthened. Through internationalization and inter-cultural educational actions, higher education can also play a key role in the development of multicultural societies as well as on the coexistence of international and inter-cultural cooperation. The difficulties, risks and challenges of internationalization are significant, and the response given to these issues by the institutions is crucial for its future development.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** The main questions regarding academic internationalization are: i) academic mobility of both students and teachers; ii) research and the development of projects involving international teams; iii) internationalization of the curriculum; iv) standardization of procedures, structures and evaluation systems; v) use of common quality criteria; vi) recruitment of foreign students and foreign teachers



### ***Analysis.***

It is difficult to speak about student's reception without taking into account the linguistic, intercultural and educational skills of teachers and non-teaching staff;

-It is also difficult to promote the internationalization of the curriculum without taking into account the political and educational philosophies behind the mission established by the school;

-Finally, in order to motivate and adequate teaching practices towards internationalization it is necessary to evaluate the total costs of internationalization. This includes costs of international relation offices, international projects, web and leaflet translations, as well as teachers and non-teachers training.

***Conclusions.*** We stand for internationalization but not a rampant one. This means, guided by humanistic values promoting contact, learning and intercultural cooperation. This is a big challenge, at both institutional and individual level. Without the will and the efforts of staff personnel (teaching and non-teaching staff) there is no internationalization.

***Recommendations.*** Promote: (i) curriculum internationalization; (ii) international weeks; (iii) peer tutoring (conversation partners programmes and buddy system); (iv) academic integration and promotion of Erasmus students success (teacher tutor and orientation week) and (v) foreign Erasmus teachers mobility.

### ***References***

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### **Russian Federation**

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***Introduction.*** Inherently universities are the educational and culture centers. Process of internationalisation at universities can have beneficial influence in both areas. Therefore before us there are problems of maintenance of this effect, a finding of ways of its expansion and search of ways of the decision of arising problems.

***Hypotheses, questions, aims.*** Today in Europe there is a considerable quantity of various schemes of students and teachers exchange. Therefore we could pursue the following aims:

- 1) Understanding of strategy of the different universities in the course of internationalisation;
- 2) Revealing of the basic problems which universities, students and teachers thought in the process; Search of possible ways of their overcoming.

***Analysis.*** Internationalisation at universities is the complex process involving variety of questions. We would like to designate among them the following:

- 1) Individual exchanges occur more often, thus the mass ones represent greater interest and bring the greater results;
- 2) The problem of attraction of students and teachers to an exchange: insufficiency of the information and motivation;
- 3) Complexity of the curriculum changing: university has to be flexible enough, but it isn't always achievable;

4) Support of the student from the point of view of studying of a modern language and distinction in educational programs between the countries. Teachers often have the same problem too.

**Conclusions.** Process of internationalisation of universities is very complex: it depends on not only a situation at the universities directly interested in internationalisation, but also on a situation in the country as a whole. However despite this complexity, we can stimulate this process and support its course, entering new programmes, improving old experiences and involving in it more students and teachers.

## **Slovakia**

### ***Comenius University in Bratislava***

#### ***Terézia Lajčáková***

The European Union is a multicultural society itself and if we want to grow stronger in this society, we need to find a way how to coexist and tolerate each other. A university has a responsibility to provide international education so that the students will be able to work in an international environment. Opening the borders of education to other countries isn't just about giving the opportunity to study abroad but it is also about opening our minds to people of different culture, thinking, believes.

What is the real aim of internationalisation? At this year's Going Global conference several speakers pointed out their concern that internationalisation programmes are becoming more of Eurocentrism than international. In Mr. Razaki's own words the European Union's Erasmus Mundus programme in reality "promotes the European university as a centre of excellence in learning around the world". How true are his provocative ideas? The fact is that the Erasmus Mundus programme provides a large number of scholarships for non-European students to spend part of their studies at a European university. This, of course, is good but what is essential, is not to try to change who the student is including his cultural or religious views but to enrich him, widen his views and also let the student to enrich the environment he or she came to. I fully agree with Mr. Macley saying "internationalisation must be culture-sensitive."

Another very important issue for many students deciding to study abroad for a semester or two is how to arrange study abroad without prolonging the study. It is a topic which needs a lot of discussion and cooperating between universities and looking for a solution that will attract more students because there won't be the disadvantage of losing a year which often is the reason that discourage a lot of them.

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## **Spain**

### ***Universidad Complutense de Madrid***

#### ***M<sup>a</sup> Victoria Rodríguez Prieto.***

**Introduction.** Nowadays, we live in an interconnected world owing to the latest technology. In this context, the internationalism has become one of the prior aims for a large number of actors like companies, governs or even educational institutions since it let them play a relevant role in our society. With regard to the EU universities, we can observe the launch and implementation of several initiatives focused on this goal, such as the Erasmus programs or the European Association for International Education (EAIE).

**Aims and analysis.** The study of the internationalism at the higher educational institutions rises up several questions. The present piece of work will focus on answering the following: what is internationalism? Which are the most relevant problems and challenges in the EU universities?. Furthermore, we will wonder about other initiatives that could be suitable for getting this goal. In order to respond them in detail, firstly the present research will study the concept of internationalism. Secondly, we will analyse its problems and challenges in the European Union (EU).

**Conclusions and recommendations.** Lastly, we will suggest some recommendations and ideas that we consider highly advantageous, like setting up Tutor networks or specializing forums. On the other hand, we have to insist on the fact that the present research will take into account only the internationalisation at the EU universities, in accordance with the nature of UNICA.

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## **Sweden**

**University of: Stockholm**  
**Samia El Kadiry**

**Introduction.** Over the last decades higher education has become more and more international. This is, to a certain extent, believed to be caused as a reaction to globalisation. By internationalizing, the universities have been preparing their students for working in an increasingly borderless world.

Even though there are a lot of different definitions of the concept of internationalisation there's one commonly recognized definition made by one of the most eminent scholars in the field, Jane Knight;

”internationalisation at the national, sector and institutional levels is defined as the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of postsecondary education” (Jane Knight, Journal och International Higher Education, no 33, fall 2003)

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** An internationalized university clearly has its benefits; student mobility, more internationally oriented staff and students, improved academic quality, international research and collaboration, curriculum development, a more diversified source of students and teacher etcetera, so, since there are problems and challenges to face in internationalizing a university, one wonders: how does the institutions handle the issues that may arise to successfully maintain and develop the implemented internationalisation? And how do these problems and challenges really affect the outcome of internationalisation?

**Analysis.** According to a report made by the International Association of Universities (IAU) there are several obstacles facing the sustainable implementation of internationalisation. For example: lack of financial support, lack of policy/strategy to facilitate the process, administrative inertia or difficulties, lack of reliable and comprehensive information, issue of non-recognition of work done

abroad and insufficiently trained or qualified staff to guide the process. Swedish universities have also experienced obstacles in form of lack of student accommodation and government regulations.

Most of these obstacles are also linked with one of the most important aspect of internationalisation - student mobility. So by solving these problems and challenges rapidly and effectively the flow of outgoing and incoming students stays undisturbed or can even ameliorate.

In recent year there has been a decrease of swedish student going abroad. This is believed to be caused by lack of information for the students and a poor internationalisation strategy plan. So the solution is simply to learn from the mistakes and review the strategy and information that has been provided. The lack of student accommodation can also, as mentioned earlier, be an obstacle for internationalisation. It prevents incoming exchange students from coming to the country, and can be a really big problem in the future if not dealt with. It does not only affect the student mobility, but also the international environment at "home". One of the big challenges in the future though is the government regulations and financial aspect of internationalisation, To further develop internationalisation, promote international research and collaboration and to maintain a high international standard there is a need for a lot of funding. In many of the countries in the world today a fee for studying in their university is normal, but for countries like Sweden there's a ban on charging fees for international students. This is a good idea to attract international students to Sweden – but will this financial form of government funding be enough to "keep up" with tomorrows internationalisation of universities?

**Conclusion.** There are many key elements to successfully internationalize a university. One of them is by correcting, discussing and learning from the problems and challenges of internationalisation which will hopefully make the process of internationalisation easier and the collaboration between universities even stronger - this way we can truly exploit the full capacity of what internationalisation has to offer.

**Recommendations.** Although the Bologna Process, the Lisbon convention and organisations such as UNESCO and the OECD are involved in providing the framework for internationalisation, universities need explicit guidelines for internationalisation. Since this is a concept that has various interpretations and explanations, the universities need to know in what way they can achieve successful internationalisation. This can be obtained by an annual update of various important aspects of internationalisation and universities should then be followed up and evaluated to get some feedback and evolve from their achievements and/or mistakes they've made. Internationalisation should (to begin with) be made top priority of all the universities in Europe and integrated in the overall educational plans of the universities.

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## **Switzerland**

*University of Lausanne*

*Idun Strand*

**Introduction.** The internationalization of universities and education in general has brought on several new and, so far, unfamiliar challenges. More or less everyone connected to the educational system can today notice these changes and the differences they make. This is why it is crucial to create awareness around these issues and try to come up with good and relevant solutions. In this abstract I will briefly mention what has been discussed in the Unica forum and also provide some topics I personally find relevant in regard to the internationalization challenges.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** I have chosen to focus on the following questions from the students point of view:

how can we better facilitate mobility among students/teachers/researchers? What are the main barriers?

How can we assure positive and effective international relationships between universities?

**Analysis.** Being international has become increasingly important and it should be reasonably uncomplicated for people within the university system to cooperate with or study at a partner university. For this to happen we need one clear strategy on internationalization and a somewhat common understanding of the goals. For instance, language support and acknowledgement is a crucial point. Another would be the standardization of the ECTS system, which can vary between universities. Furthermore, more practical issues like housing, sponsorship and “student mentoring” are all important ones and could be addressed. To me it is difficult to imagine good communication between such a massive amount of universities without having some sort of common platform where problems can be discussed, plans be made and discoveries and information shared. However, how this can be achieved efficiently is a very difficult issue.

**Conclusions.** Internationalization is a major topic and not one that can be addressed all at once. However, it is my hope that many issues can be addressed and discussed at the Rome conference and that personal experiences mixed with solid **References.** can help build some advice and recommendations for the future.

**Recommendations.** Internationalisation is part of everyday life and needs to be addressed as it is an issue we are all preoccupied with and something which, when progress is made, we can all benefit from. That is why I hope the conclusions from the Unica conference 2010 will be taken into account when future reforms, strategies and decisions are made.

## 2.The European mobility programmes (Erasmus, Erasmus placement, Erasmus Mundus, Leonardo da Vinci, Marie Curie, doctoral programmes, etc.): toward the 20% mobility by the year 2020?

### **Austria**

*Universität Wien – Universität Wien/University of Vienna*

*Thomas Lichtenwöhrer*

**Introduction.** As a former ERASMUS-Student and volunteer at the International Day 2009 of the University of Vienna, I'm aware of the importance of personal as well as scientific international experience. Especially regarding the process of European integration, young people should naturally complete at least a short part of their formation abroad, where they are able to practice their foreign language skills.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** Why do, despite the huge amount of pros, so few students benefit from the offer of European mobility?

**Analysis.** Due to my personal experience and the experience of the other members of the forum on topic 2, the bureaucratic, financial and linguistic obstacles are relatively high, which excludes a lot of students at the outset.

**Conclusions.** In my opinion the relation between the integration of the European Union and the international experience of young Europeans would be an interesting subject of discussion at the conference – because it's first of all people who spent a period of their lives in foreign countries and cultures who could be ambassadors of mutual acceptance and trans-cultural understanding. This point has to be seen also as political capital in the history of European unification which could help to overcome the actual crisis. In addition to this, I would like to talk about the profits both for the students undergoing an international exchange, and the scientific communities which do also profit from the amounting exchange of scientific knowledge.

**Recommendations.** To motivate young people to study abroad, the key-points of European mobility will have to be ameliorated: Better financial aid, less bureaucratic obstacles (high discrepancy in ECTS-points,...) and better language training before the stay abroad.

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## **Belgium**

*Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Brussels:*

*Fred Janssens*

**Introduction.** Europe has lots of different countries, languages and cultures. It's important that as many citizens as possible exchange their cultural identities among each other in order to get aware of our European identity. The European Commission has already developed some instruments to support educational mobility and allow them to fully exploit the potential of the European lifelong learning area and the E-wide labour market.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** Because it has already been proven that mobility programmes create lots of benefits and opportunities for the participant and his/her future (both in terms of professional experience as in terms of life experience), it is important to encourage mobility programmes. Therefore, we should think how to increase the number of people participating in mobility programmes.

**Analysis.** A problem students face all across Europe is that they can't see the wood for trees concerning all the information that is distributed by all different channels. Furthermore, the application to go on Erasmus exchange is still very bureaucratic and time consuming. Although many students are eligible and willing to go on Erasmus exchange, a lot of them drop out because of this time consuming procedure. Additionally, credits and grades, obtained at foreign universities, seem often not to be fully accepted and are often corrected at the home university of the Erasmus student. A student is less willing to go on exchange if he/she knows in advance that whatever their transcript of records or grades will look like, their home universities will adapt these grades to their requirements.

**Conclusions.** An equal and fully convertible transcript of records or grades from university to university who are participating in the Erasmus mobility programme are necessary, as well as a new, clear and fully integrated application system.

**Recommendations.** A proposal of myself to fight these obstacles is to create and launch a joint website, set up by the European Commission, where all universities gather and assemble their information and where students can easily get information about every aspect of their application (like accommodation, cultural life, what to do in your spare-time, etc...) and also the possibility to edit online the application. This would stimulate and make things easier for the student to go on exchange.

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## **Cyprus**

*University of Cyprus, Nicosia*

*Eleftherios Savva*

The European Union gives a lot of emphasis on education. In particular, after the adoption of the Lisbon Strategy in 2000, the EU has taken many steps in integrating the educational system of all member-states. The key means to achieve this educational integration are the mobility programmes, through which people all over Europe can exchange ideas, cooperate, learn from others, gain knowledge and achieve mutual progress.

The EU has many mobility programmes (Erasmus/Erasmus Placement, Erasmus Mundus, Leonardo da Vinci, Comenius, Grundtvig, Marie Curie Actions, Jean Monnet), each one serving a different purpose.

There are numerous advantages for people (especially the youth) who participate in mobility programmes:

- opportunity to live in a foreign country and learn a foreign language
- meet people from different cultural backgrounds and become familiar with their culture
- embrace the diversity
- make friends all over Europe
- enrich their study programme
- being taught in new teaching methods (different from their home institution)
- become more social (they meet new people and they try to get to know them)
- become independent

However, there are problems that currently have negative effects on the total amount of students participating in mobility programmes:

- visa obstacles
- financial barriers – lack of funding
- lack of recognition of the credits earned in the foreign institution
- incompatibility of the study-programmes between universities in different countries
- lack of information or misinformation regarding the mobility programmes provided to students by universities

The challenges that the EU has to overcome in order to increase mobility are:

- overcome visa obstacles
- increase the funds towards these mobility programmes



- recognition of the credits earned in the foreign institution without insoluble obstacles
- compatibility of courses and degrees of universities in all member-states
- universities should facilitate students to participate in mobility programmes
- universities should promote and inform students regarding the European mobility programmes

These are the crucial matters, in my opinion, that the EU has to cope with in order to achieve the 20% mobility target by 2020.

## **Czech Republic (1)**

*Charles University Prague*

*Marie Kudrnová*

**Introduction.** I chose the topic of the European mobility programmes as I consider them a great asset to all students in Europe. Not only is the opportunity to study in another country contributive from the academic point of view but it also helps to develop the language, creativity or independence. Moreover, the international experience is priceless. I suppose it is valuable for a student as well as for his/her country and other people the student will later influence. I would approve the idea of every student being given the opportunity of studying abroad. It is understandable that not all of them would take the full advantage of it, but it would not decrease the prestige of programmes, which enable it.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** In my abstract I would like to discuss some suggestions on increasing the accessibility of those programmes to a greater number of students.

**Analysis.** First of all, I suppose, we should better concentrate on ways of attracting students to these programmes than setting a concrete goal of 20% mobility by the year 2020. No disappointment will come in case that this number will not be achieved. What if we promoted the advantages and informed more about the programmes instead? It could be predicted that informed students will go out to study abroad more often than those who do not know about the possibilities they have. It would therefore be conducive to concentrate on informing the students about the possibilities the programmes offer. I believe various informational sessions for interested students are held at all universities, information websites or handouts are available and those who want to find the information will always find it. On the other hand, there are students who have not heard of these opportunities and who might be interested if they had. It could be efficient to use the experience of students who spent some time studying abroad. I believe that the advice of students' coevals is the most powerful motivation to try it on their own.

The other point is the credit systems which are quite complicated and cause many problems in the international exchanges (my personal experience). At this point I would particularly highlight the importance of unification or simplification of the credit transfer. This should not be a problem according to the Erasmus University Charter but it is extremely difficult to be undertaken as the systems in different countries vary a lot. I am sure it is extremely difficult to unify internationally the approach to the credit systems but I am sure it would be worth doing it. I do not wonder that there are students who decide not to study abroad because of this, which is a pity. Furthermore, I would recommend simplifying all the administration around the scholarship as much as possible as this is often the biggest obstacle in the process.

**Conclusions.** In conclusion I would like to highlight the asset of the mobility programmes to European educational system. Although there are some complications in the process of going and studying abroad, those who are interested will always manage it. The challenge is to enable this opportunity also to those who are not that ambitious.

**Recommendations.**

I would recommend concentrating on simplifying the administration around exchanges, credit transfer and promoting the contributions of the mobility programmes.

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**Czech Republic (2)**

*Charles University of Prague*

*Tereza Petranova*

**Introduction.** I would like to introduce my topic by description of my studies in Berlin in Erasmus program. Followed by a short discussion on: What are your experiences with studying abroad in Erasmus, Erasmus placement, Erasmus Mundus, Leonardo da Vinci, Marie Curie, etc. That will cover next questions for following hypotheses and conclusions.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.**

Essential questions tied with this topic: Are students still interested in these EU programs?

Why is it important from student/teacher perspective to go abroad?

Have students still got enough information about these programs?

And why is the return to your main university harder?

**Conclusions.** In my opinion it's really important to convey information about European mobility to students. Students who underwent internship should not keep the information to themselves but share with the others (questionnaires, photos, information portal within university-country-Europe etc.) Teachers should encourage their students to participate (not everywhere they do), be helpful as their faculty coordinators etc.

**Recommendations.** I would direct my efforts towards creating information web portal (or some social network), where you could get information from coordinators, offers from universities from Europe/whole world, experiences of students with live abroad (both pros and cons) and many other information concerning student mobilities.

Unify terms of acceptance, recognition of passed courses, credit system etc.

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[www.thestudentroom.co.uk/](http://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/)

## **Finland**

*University of Helsinki, Helsinki*

*Eveliina Kuvaja*

**Introduction.** Europe has over 19 million students in its` 4000 higher education institutions (European Commission 2010). The European mobility programmes have a goal to reach the 20% mobility rate by the year 2020. High mobility rate will mean millions of people movement in Europe, which requires great investments and support from EU`s educational institutions. Where is this willingness to increase and promote movement coming from? This abstract aims to find out how Europe will benefit from the greater student mobility rate.

### ***Hypotheses, questions, aims.***

This abstract aims to find out how future Europe can benefit from the European student mobility.

The question is why is it important to aim towards higher mobility rate?

Hypothesis is that European student mobility programmes are bringing future Europeans closer to each others. That is beneficial for Europe in several ways politically, economically, educationally, environmentally.

**Analysis.** The mobility programmes in the European Universities are offering students an ability to learn, share knowledge and broaden one`s mind in several ways. To be united is a necessity for Europe dealing with political, economical, educational and environmental aspects. The mobility programmes are the ground work done for future`s more united Europe.

Motives to reach toward the higher mobility rate are several and can differ between different institutional fields. Mobility is not only the goal for the educational institutions, but also for all the institutional elements in Europe. Benefits from the higher mobility rate can be seen as investments for future cooperations in different fields of life. But what is common to all, is that the higher mobility rate is seen as a benefit increasing factor in future Europe.

**Conclusions.** Increasing the mobility rate in higher educational institutions in Europe will provide large investment, organizational changes and willingness to commit the promotion of the internationalisation. The true benefits reached from the increased mobility can only be seen in the future. Because of the globalisation strong alliances and cooperations are needed in any fields of science and life. Student mobility programs are part of building more powerful, more unite and more active Europe.

**Recommendations.** Erasmus Student Network aims to provide cultural understanding and self-development by student helping student (ESN 2010).

According to the Council of European Union the goal is to increase the competitiveness in the global knowledge economy. That includes the promotion of internationalisation in higher educational institutions. The council has also listed to its declaration that the international cooperation is important and should be supported both in national and in EU level. (EU 2010, C135/13).

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## **Germany**

### ***Freie Universität Berlin***

#### ***Konrad Traupe***

**Introduction.** In the past decade, Europe has been trying to offer more mobility to its students. In 1999, in the declaration of Bologna, the necessity of international comparability of academic degrees and student's work load was agreed upon and the "European Higher Education Area" was introduced. The Lisbon Agenda from 2000 established the plan of modernizing the European educational system. Based on these ideas, exchange programs such as Erasmus, Marie Curie, Leonardo da Vinci or European Doctoral Programs (EDP) evolved. According to the resolution of Kopenhagen (11/30/2002), these European mobility programs are one of the key elements for an efficient and integrative European labour market. In December 2004, the 32 ministers of education, social partners and the European Commission got together in Maastricht in order to analyze the progress of the plans from Lisbon and Kopenhagen. They drew a positive balance and agreed upon further steps in the Maastricht-Communique. Key indicator for the assessment of how these planned integrative European educational reforms are developing, are the exchange programs. By observing and analyzing how they are realized, trends, advantages and disadvantages can be pointed out.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** 20% percent of mobility until 2020 are possible, focusing on numbers and statistics. Comparing the participating countries, the question of who is actually mobile comes up. There exists a discrepancy between single countries of the EU. Mobility depends on your home country.

**Analysis.** Reaching the goal of 20% mobility until 2020 seen in real numbers seems quite possible. But: Who benefits from the mobility and in what way. Exchange programs like Erasmus support participants with up to 160 € per month max. This amount does not cover living costs in most of the "Erasmus-Countries". Students with a better socio-economic, financial background have better chance to participate than students coming from poorer families and/or countries.

**Conclusions.** Comparing the chances of mobility of students from different European countries, shows an inequality. While students from richer countries such as Germany, the Netherlands or France have better perspectives, the option of going abroad is less promising for students from poorer countries with lower income and no government support. Talking about mobility also means talking about who is mobile and who not.

**Recommendations.**

Subsidies for students with a lower socio-economic background (private/public background)

Governmental support for students/graduates coming from poorer families in ALL countries (e.g. in Germany there exists a financial support for students in foreign countries called foreign Bafög, in Spain the Beca works just inside the country)

More money per month for Erasmus students.

(relate single departments of the potential exchange universities in a better way)

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### **Hungary**

***Eötvös Loránd University***

***Kamiran Aaron Hamow***

***Introduction.*** I'm Kamiran Aaron Hamow, from Hungary, ELTE. I'm a last year bachelor student in environmental studies at the faculty of science. I also work at SU, where I'm the commissioner of foreign affairs for my faculty, and coordinator of environmental students in educational affairs. I enjoy different sports, like cycling, hike, swimming. I also love poetry, music, and painting. I'm looking forward to participate in this event, so I can extend my views, and build relations with other countries.

***Hypotheses, questions, aims.*** 20% mobility by 2020 you say, and I say that based on current data, it can't be achieved. Why? What walls should we break down? What tasks should universities focus on for the 20%? Where can we cooperate, how can we help each other out, towards a common goal?

***Analysis.*** It is easy to see, that currently the mobility is getting better, thanks to Erasmus mainly. But it's a slow progress. There're dozens of programs, scholarships, voluntary services, and more. Problem is that people don't know about them. In my country, we try to advertise, and tell people, but it's a local start. Citizens of Europe should know about their options. It would be crucial, to start spreading the idea of learning abroad in secondary school. Another problem, the allowed number of participants, and the ton of administration they must do. Most institutions don't have the human resource to meddle deep in foreign affairs, or the staff is unmotivated to do so. Teachers have their own classes, research, and don't want to care about scholarships, or teach in a different language, because they see it as a burden. People don't think globally, only locally, and in short terms.

**Conclusions.** Lot of programs, few used at good efficiency

More scholarships should be given to hard working persons, with average abilities

Scholarships must be hyped, to inform people, especially in higher education

Simplify the administration and scholarship terms

To the end of secondary schools, students got to know about their options concerning life, learning, working in the European community.

Motivate universities, to improve their international programs

Motivate teachers and university staff, to build beyond border relations

**Recommendations.**

1. Make advertising campaigns all over the community, encourage abroad learning for less fortunate
2. Encourage universities, and their employees to start thinking beyond borders and personal gain, if necessary by financial means
3. Try to simplify the administration, and terms of scholarships
4. Plant the thoughts of abroad working, voluntarity, or learning starting at secondary school

**Italy**

**University of Rome “ Tor Vergata”**

**Simona La Scala**

**Introduction.** The European Commission promotes a wide range of mobility programmes which enable students at higher education institutions to spend a period of study, (i.e. Erasmus programme), or a placement period abroad, (i.e. Leonardo), in another country. Thanks to these programmes over the past 15 years hundreds of thousands of university students have had a ‘mobility experience’. However, even though the Bologna Process (1999) has certainly pushed positively student mobility, much remains to be done to increase the percentage of mobile students.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** The main objective of this project is to propose solutions to increase the percentage of students involved with a wide range of mobility programmes. However in order to understand what Governments, Institutions and Universities can do to improve the present situation, it is necessary to study the peculiarities of each mobility programme and to answer to the following questions: Which students are migrating? Are the mobile students an elite group of more privileged students?

**Analysis.** The possibility for students to study abroad has been recognized as an essential element of European integration since the foundation of the Council of Europe in 1949. Then during the Lisbon Recognition Convention (1997) has been stipulated that degrees and periods of study must be recognized unless substantial differences. A further step in European integration was taken during the

Bologna Process(1999), with the creation of the European Higher Education Area by making academic degree standards and quality assurance standards more comparable.

**Conclusion.** There is still a small number of countries and institutions which attract most of the mobile students and mobility still remains inaccessible for many students due to: administrative (i.e. access restriction to certain studies), financial (lack of efficient financial incentives, grants or loans) and institutional obstacles (visa, work permit, residence permit ).

**Recommendations.** To increase the number of mobile students: Governors, European Commissioners , Rectors etc. : should be aware about the special need of immigrants and mobile student (i.e.making up of effective student information points), should Increase financial incentive under mobility programmes, (i.e grants according to the cost of living of the hosting county), should promote Universities all over Europe (welcome weeks, opening days), should facilitate the use of documents (visa, i.d cards) and should favour the portability of grants and loans

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### **Latvia**

**University of Latvia, Riga**

**Inguna Zariņa**

**Introduction.** The European mobility programmes are great opportunity for students to learn abroad but the amount of students who are able to use this opportunity is little because of several reasons: language problems, limited choice, schools policy, government policy, other restrictions, etc.

### **Hypotheses, questions, aims.**

It is almost impossible to reach 20 % mobility by the year 2020 in every European country.

**Analysis.** The law in Latvia permits to have only up to 20 % of courses in other European language that is not Latvian language except studies with purpose to learn language and culture of other country. There are very many studies in Latvia were all courses are only in Latvian language therefore it is really difficult for students from other country to find studies and courses they would be able to learn here.

Students who have at least one failed course are not allowed to participate in European mobility programmes competition even if no one else is participating and there is free space left.

The possibility for student to choose mobility programmes school is very limited, sometimes students are able to choose only one school, because of schools policy.

**Conclusions.** There are some problems that are not so easy to resolve in Latvia, especially language problems and problems with schools restrictions because it depends on schools policy and capacity of

lecturers. Not all lecturers are interested in increasing mobility in their school and country because it also means more unpaid work for them.

### ***Recommendations.***

It is necessary to pay more attention to mobility of lecturers to increase their potential and involvement in mobility programmes.

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## **Lithuania**

***Vilnius University, Vilnius***

***Raminta Šakinytė***

***Introduction.*** Mobility of staff and students is one of the core element of the Bologna Process. It has become like litmus for all the entire reforma success. Mobility is important for personal development and employability, it fosters tolerance and respect for diversity at the social level and a capacity to deal with other cultures. It encourages linguistic pluralism, thus underpinning the multilingual tradition of the European Higher Education Area and it increases cooperation and competition between higher education institutions.

### ***Hypotheses, questions, aims.***

Every fifth student should be mobile in an academically meaningful way during the study period by the year 2020, is it possible?

Obstacles that students deal with if they want to be mobile.

***Analysis.*** Not every country could reach such number of mobile students till 2020. One of the main reason is financial limitation. A lack of money has significant impact on the motivation of students to be mobile. Lingering problems with the full loans and grants for all forms of mobility is reported by most countries. Sometimes government is afraid of brain drain and this impact national mobility policy. Also students deal with fear of recognition difficulties, language barrier, credits system inadequacy which decreases number of mobile students as well.

***Conclusions.*** Mobility has significant benefit for European Higher Education Area, National Higer Education Area and for each mobile student personaly. But still, there are a lot of problems and obstacles, that need to deal with.

***Recommendations.*** For mobile students better sponsorship, more flexible and available funding system, available language training before departure.

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## **The Netherlands**

*Universiteit van Amsterdam, Amsterdam*

*Emile Smits*

**Introduction.** With Europe becoming more and more a unity, one can speak – optimistically, - of the upcoming of a generation of European youth. There is more and more exchange between cultures: more people are able to travel through Europa, different cultures get to know each other through internet and it was never easier for students to travel abroad. Or is it?

Although studying abroad is indeed - thanks to the multiple exchange programmes - easier than ever, not too many students actually go and study in a foreign country. This is, ofcourse, a terribly sad thing since there's so much to gain here. In an Europe in which it's countries are more and more depended upon one another there is need for an intellectual vanguard that makes the economical and intellectual integration of Europa possible.

Of course, working with other nationalities also requires knowledge of the others' cultural background. And it's a truism; there is no better way of getting to know a culture than by actually living in that country. One learns a new language, comes up with new ideas and enriches oneself and his home country. Because of the huge cultural and economical benefits, students exchange within Europe should be promoted.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** Of course there are a lot of possible hypotheses concerning the low number of students attending at foreign universities: some people have a fear of the new, others problems with learning a foreign language and ofcourse there are the problems with money, since studying abroad can be quite expensive. Even the more so since studying abroad most of time also means delaying your study's progress, because subjects attended at a foreign university are not recognized at one's home university. And this results in making the foreign experience even more costly. A lot of of these problems can be easily solved by handing students and universities more money, by educating students about studying abroad and by smoothing down the inter-universitarian differences in subject matter and recognition. But what really interests me about these solutions is their concrete feasibility. How much is possible within the various Mobility Programmes? How much help from politicians/governments is needed? How can cultural differences between universities be overcome? That is what I'll be focusing on.

**Analysis.** In order to attain the 20% mobility rate - as was demanded by the Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education's resolution – there a few things that need to happen. I think the place to start are the relatively affordable solutions as better information and free or cheap language courses. Ofcourse it is also a question of money. One has to see how governments can allocate more money to Mobility Programmes. There also might be a need to force unwilling universities to accept more foreign students, which might be done through the EU parlement.

**Conclusions.** The problem with the Mobility Programmes is partly a cultural one and partly an organisatorian one. Changing people and making them more open to go and travel is a long process that takes time. More information should be available. On the organisatorial side one must see how more money can be directed to the students studying abroad and how the process of studying abroad can be smoothed out. Subjects taken should be acknowledged at the home university and learning a foreign language should be made easy (and rewarded). Universities should be forced to accept students and take care of them.

**Recommendations.**

1. Start an Europe-wide programmes with agreements on subject recognition at different universities so that students can see which subjects they can study abroad that are recognized by there own universities.
2. See how rules can made that force universities to accept foreign students and take care of them.
3. Make a taskgroup set general guidelines of how studying abroad should be promoted and what is expected from both the hosting university and the home university.

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**Poland**

*Warsaw University*

*Paula Wychowaniec*

**Introduction.** It's known that traveling develops. Studying abroad is also a travel, and not only one. Going to foreign country gives us opportunity to visit all the country, not only part that we are living in. We can get know new people from all over the world. Erasmus mobility programs are very good experience for all students who are taking part in them. Me, I have been already in Germany as Erasmus student and now I'm in France taking part in Erasmus placement. If I could, I would take part again in some program like this. But we have also to remember that Erasmus program is not only wonderful adventure, but it's a big challenge and there is also lot of problems. I will write about my personal experience and my own point of view. This is how I see this program in a perspective of my faculty and my own stay in Germany.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.**

20% of mobility is a very realistic number. It's just a question of better promotion and we should start from the level of faculties.

How to increase student's mobility?

Why students don't want to participate in Erasmus programs?

What does discourage them?

What problems students can head studying / working abroad as Erasmus' students?

Is a problem in sending or receiving universities? Or maybe both?

**Analysis.** To increase students mobility till 20% it's necessary to start with our home universities. In my opinion promotion of Erasmus program is not enough. There is no good information and good organization of procedure of recruitment. I'm sure that it depends of co-ordinator. Maybe this is a problem. Maybe we should start from good selection of people responsible of recruitment procedure. I mean people in faculties (because our International Office works very well) who are in charge of information and selection of students.

Next issue is a question of student communication. I remember that before leaving I had thousands of questions and there was nobody who could answer me. Network of Erasmus students works well only in case of big universities in big and popular cities. I had an impression that I was left alone.

I have also to say that our impression and memories depend on the country of receiving university, but also on university in itself. I was lucky, because in Germany everything was prepared including a single-room in student dormitory. But lot of students from another university in the town didn't have that comfort. They had to head since the beginning of their stay the problem of finding apartment. And it was also not so cheap for them. I think this is one of the most important thing: organization of accommodation. If there is lot of problems with that, if the room is too expensive or it's very difficult to find something in good location, it's the issue which can discourage students. If we want to increase the mobility, we have to assure students, that it will be possible to find accurate accommodation in a rational price.

**Conclusions.** I think these are the most important problems which can be faced by Erasmus students. There is also lot of advantages, but this short abstract does not let me space to write about everything. In my opinion the way to increase student's mobility is to solve those problems. Of course it's not one and only one good solution, but step by step we can realize our goal.

#### **Recommendations.**

1. Is there any key of choosing co-ordinators of Erasmus programs or it's random? (On a faculty, I do not mean international office, but single persons)
2. Do you think that promotion of Erasmus programs is enough well organized? Are there any ways of controlling that? (excepting statistics)
3. Is it possible to increase a financial help for students? Especially for students going to the countries of Western Europe?

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## **Portugal**

*Universidade de Lisboa (UL), Lisbon and Universidade Nova de Lisboa (UNL), Lisbon*

*Rui Camelo (UL), Luis Coelho (UNL)*

**Introduction.** Nowadays, spending a year in a university of a different country is quite common in Europe and usually one of the most memorable experiences for students. This is due to a consolidated European Union (EU) programme called «ERASMUS». A more recent EU programme called «ERASMUS MUNDUS» offers a framework for exchange and dialogue between cultures, by supporting inter-continental mobility of students and academics, especially at post-graduate level.

**Hypotheses, questions, aim.** Are the programmes suitable for student goals and is the financial support adequate to achieve the goal of mobility increase in 20% by the year 2020? How to increase international academic cooperation and learning mobility for the next ten years? How to foster interaction between EU HE institutions?

**Analysis.** In a brief analysis, we have perceived that the student mobility depends on social background. Most students involved in mobility programs belong to families with highly educated parents. Some other students, more preoccupied with finishing their degrees and joining the labour market are reluctant to participate in mobility programs, for fear that their Home institutions might not credit the courses taken in other European schools or that some extra requirements for graduation might be imposed. Funding is, however, a very relevant factor, if not the most relevant one in dissuading students: it does not come cheap for students to have the «Erasmus» experience.

Although Language is still a barrier, English has quickly become the Lingua Franca of Higher Education, making it possible for students of different parts of Europe, stepping out of different traditions and linguistic backgrounds, to sit in class together. Concerning the balance between incoming and outgoing students it is clear that we have more incoming than outgoing Portuguese students, which seems typical of southern European countries. It was also perceived that the student's mobility is higher among humanities and arts courses, rather than sciences and engineering.

**Conclusions.** Much emphasis is put in the concept of a European citizenship and identity in the discourse of EU institutions and governments. A Single Market and a single currency were achieved. Freedom of movement of people is paramount. Nevertheless, the ambition for university mobility in the "EU 2020" Agenda is to have only 20% of European students involved in Erasmus or similar programs. In order to build a stronger Europe and a European Area of HE, 80% of a generation ought not to be excluded from mobility programs.

**Recommendations.** : More cooperation between academic institutions, more information and better funding and financial aid to make EU mobility programmes more equitable.

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## **Russian Federation**

*Lomonosov Moscow State University*

*Sergey Tikhonov*

**Introduction.** Nowadays there are a lot of mobility programs and nearly every student has a possibility to visit another European University. But the part of students who really want to do it is smaller than 20%. And we should think about reasons of this small percentage and make conclusions how to change it.

Hypothesis, questions, aims:

Why so few students, who want to take a part in mobility programs?

How to increase the percentage?

How students who have already been in other universities can influence on this situation?

What administration of university should do to draw students' attention to mobility programs?

**Analysis.** We asked our students why they don't take a part in mobility programs and the most popular answers are: "I didn't know about such possibility", "I'm afraid to live in unknown country" and "I think it isn't interesting". These answers tell us about three main problems:

No enough information.

Students don't know conditions of living in another country.

Some students think a process of exchanging uninteresting.

If we find methods how to solve the problems, we will increase the percentage.

### **Conclusions.**

Universities should inform students about possibility of exchanging.

Universities should give information about conditions of living for incoming students.

Universities should explain to students why exchanging is very interesting and useful.

**Recommendations.** We recommend Rectors to develop special system of student's informing about mobility programs and organize lectures where everybody can ask students with experience about exchanging. In our opinion, European Commissioners should develop a single base of universities, which take a part in mobility programmes with full conditions of living and getting education.

## **Slovakia**

*Comenius University, Bratislava*

## ***Kristína Muránska***

The European mobility programmes (Erasmus, Erasmus placement, Erasmus Mundus, Leonardo da Vinci, Marie Curie, doctoral programmes, etc.): toward the 20% mobility by the year 2020?

As validity of Bologna Process regulations is finishing this year, the authorities have to commit themselves to the new reforms, that would implement as many advantages as possible for following 10 years. Not only would there be advantages for students but also for university employees taking into account the university system and economic situation of all universities participating at Bologna Process. One of the main goals of European Student Union is to increase mobility in European Union. And thus, will it be possible gift 20 percent of all European Union students without observing social-economic background by grant determined for European mobility programs?

Certainly, it would be a delightful fact if every fifth student could have use the opportunity of mobility abroad. Each student who went for mobility program knows that having experience like this is irreplaceable not only for those who want to brush up their language skills, it is useful for students from the broadest range of faculties. Without any doubt getting known new people, country, culture and whole university system contributes to improvement of education in whole old continent and thereafter to improvement of whole society.

## **Spain (1)**

***Universidad Autonoma de Madrid***

***Javier Lorente y Agustín Serrano de Haro***

***Introduction.*** The European mobility programmes were originally conceived in the eighties as an appropriate way to achieve not only an effective exchange of workers and students through the Union, but also an improvement of the academic knowledge and professional skills of the students, as well as their own conception of belonging to a shared project: the European Union. At the current moment, the global assessment of the programmes is highly satisfactory; the academic, personal and cultural experience that taking part in a mobility programme supposes is usually regarded as unforgettable and extremely useful.

***Aims and analysis.*** In fact, the number of students who have spent an academic course abroad has regularly increased year by year, reaching nowadays impressive levels of more than 150,000 students participating for instance in the Erasmus programme. However, reaching a height of 20% of mobility in ten years seems to us a perhaps too ambitious goal. There are several challenges that have to be seriously taken into account before trying to make such kind of prediction. We would like to underline the two we consider more relevant.

Firstly, in the last years the European Union has articulated a new undergraduate programme of studies: The Bologna programme. It is our fear that this new programme could negatively interfere in the amount of students that each year decide to take part in a mobility programme. In fact, as long as the programmes of studies are now quite carefully predetermined for each degree and even for each subject of the degree, this could discourage a student to study abroad, if he knows that then he will have to face with much more problems to curse the subjects he has not done at his/her European destiny country. Secondly, the economic crisis might also have negative effects in the European mobility. It is well known that a common complain of the mobility students is the low amount of public money that they receive to finance their studies abroad. In the next years, such amount will not rise; actually it will be a good new if the European Commission decides to at least freeze the current budget allocations.

**Conclusions and recommendations.** Although it is our desire to witness a strengthening of the European mobility in the next years, we have to be cautious, and wait to see how both the recent implementation of the Bologna programme and the economic crisis develop.

## **Spain (2)**

**Universidad Autonoma de Madrid**

**Jorge Manuel Zamalloa Serrano**

**Introduction.** At the present time, the European Union has twenty-seven member countries, twenty-three official languages and a few more of five thousand million of people. With that colossal data, education must have a priority significance into the policies to promote economic growth and cohesion. Since the beginning of the program, the participation has steadily increased as we can see in the Eurostat data. Although into the framework of the current economic crisis participation keeps growing up, the growth rate is slowing down.

**Aims and analysis.** Adding the 198,568 participants during the 2008/2009 course plus the approximately 1,846,600 during the period from 1987 to 2008, the Erasmus program has exceeded two millions of Erasmus students. Furthermore, about 4% of European students follow at least a semester in a foreign country. It must not be forgotten that the program includes mobility initiatives directed to teachers and university staff and practical workshops for postgraduates students. The solid health of the Erasmus program may be reflected in many other angles. In addition to the twenty-seven members of the Union, the program includes Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Turkey and since 2009 Croatia and the Republic of Macedonia.

The students taking part in mobility programs share residence and experiences not only with the home citizens of the host country but with partakers of other European countries. In such a way, the student experience reaches not a single culture but the whole of Europe. Summing up, mobility programs educate and go far beyond, propping up European citizenship while promoting the understanding of foreign cultures and languages.

## **Sweden**

**Stockholm University, Stockholm**

**Magnus Lindqvist**

**Introduction.** Solving practical issues surrounding European Mobility Programmes (EMP) especially within the Erasmus programme, could highly increase the mobility and help fulfill a 20% mobility goal until the year 2020. Unspecified criteria and information with regard to, e.g. accommodation, Erasmus Intensive Language Course (EILC), Intensive-Program etc. hinders the students from challenging the eventual obstacles and challenges that they need to overcome before they can undertake an exchange to a university in another country. Increasing the quality of the EMPs will also increase the student mobility.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** In the European Commission's, Erasmus University Charter (EUC), some specific paragraphs should be included as to compliment the general guidelines and principles. These should mainly cover and focus on more practical circumstances concerning the smoothness for each student, to apply for, and receive, adequate practical support when wanting to go abroad on an exchange program. This would enable more students to feel motivated to apply and complete the commitments in the European Mobility Program.

**Analysis.** Today each university needs to state in their Erasmus Policy Statement (EPS) their overall goals and guidelines, for evaluation and future admittance to the EUC. Though the EPS works as a proposal for acceptance to the EUC it is not in itself a future commitment. Therefore, any cogent principles that will apply to all national higher education institutions need to be enforced within the EUC.

This is an important task. As the European Mobility Programmes have developed and increased in intensity, practical shortcomings and concerns about the fairness and equality of the programs could be questioned.

Within areas such as access to, accommodation, language courses, and information, the terms and conditions vary considerably between different countries as well as between specific higher institutions. In coherence with the objectives expressed by the European Parliament in charter No 1720/2006/EC, establishing an action program in the field of lifelong learning, chapter II, article 21; quality, cooperation, and fair mobility, between institutions and countries need to be transparent and enhanced.

**Conclusions.** Today the accreditation and acceptance of a higher education institution into the EUC is selected by the European Commission, but coordinated and later evaluated mostly on a national level, by a national authority. However, in the broad outlines stated in the EUC a lot of practical shortcomings arise that hinders and deters not only the mobility of the Erasmus and EMPs, but threatens the quality of all programs and projects within the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP). This is particularly evident for students with less financial means, as well as for higher education institutions in poorer or smaller countries where the language of instruction could be less familiar for the larger part of the European population. These obstacles directly work against the objectives of the LLP and EMP, decided by the European Parliament in charter No 1720/2006/EC.

**Recommendations.** Establishing practical outlines and paragraphs in the EUC. These will direct, and control, the implementation and outcome of specific goals that can help to increase the efficiency and quality of the EMPs. If not adequate in the EUC charter, the goals should at least be stated as key activities in the Transversal Programs, created under the LLP to monitor and ensure the best results of the four sub-programmes under the LLP.

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### **Switzerland**

**Université de Lausanne**

**Amélie Vouardoux**

**Introduction.** In a communiqué of the Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education, this declaration has been made: "In 2020, at least 20% of those graduating in the European Higher Education Area should have had a study or training period abroad". This is a very noble aim but reaching it requires a lot of work as many problems remain in the field of mobility.



**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** The first thing to do to encourage students to be mobile is to find out why they are not, or why they hesitate. This would indicate the main problems. Removing the different barriers would not only increase the number of mobile students, but also the quality of stays abroad and their results.

**Analysis.** Financial concerns are the problems mentioned most often. Grants awarded to students vary from one country to the other, but they are very often quite low, not even enough to pay for accommodation. The second main worry of students is organisational. Doing a stay abroad raises many problems such as language and accommodation. Studying and living with a foreign tongue and finding accommodation as a foreigner and for a limited period tend to be difficult. The third area of concern is academic. The recognition of credits obtained abroad is still problematic: students are afraid of losing time in their formation because of mobility.

**Conclusions.** Students willing to undertake a mobility program during their studies are faced with a sum of questions and problems that universities and the mobility system should be able to solve if they want to increase the quantity and the quality of their exchange programs.

Recommendations to Rectors, European Commissioners, etc.

1. Financially assist students according to their destinations. Some cities cost a lot more than others.
2. Guarantee free language courses before the departure and during the stay.
3. Encourage and promote tandem programs.
4. Guarantee a decent accommodation in the host city.
5. Provide better information for IN and OUT mobility students, before and during their stay.
6. Generalise the study agreement and facilitate equivalences for a better integration of mobility in the formation of students.

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<http://www.unil.ch/ri> + other documents on mobility (reports, questionnaires).

### 3. What is the role of the university in contemporary society?

**Austria**

*University of Vienna*

*Jan Müller*

**Introduction.** Modern-day universities face numerous have to fulfill multiple roles in contemporary society, with the main task still being the academic formation of their students. But a society can also benefit from a university in other ways, which will be discussed in this abstract.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** Universities should convey philosophical and ethical education to their students as well. For example in my own field of molecular medicine an ethical background is crucial to carry out responsible research, however, I feel like the emphasis of teaching is being shifted towards research skills and ‘hard facts’ only.

**Analysis.** Modern day universities still have to provide excellent teaching as the highest level of education as well as undertake research to add to our body of knowledge. These core responsibilities have to be met by the universities of a country in order to stay competitive in our contemporary information age, where know-how and technology are key factors. Furthermore universities should teach soft skills as well, for example the ever-important communication and presentation skills. Although these skills vital for preparing the students for the job market of the future, I believe the role of an ideal contemporary university should also involve conveying moral principles and guidelines to its students. It may sound banal, but I believe a university in the best sense of the word should educate its students to be responsible, humble, critical and tolerant human beings – if not at the university, many young people could not get this kind of education anywhere else. New institutions, called ‘Fachhochschule’ in German offer a similar scientific education to universities, but in less time and without much philosophical formation of the students. While I acknowledge the need for a solid scientific skill set, I do see the risk of those institutions becoming just a recruitment camp for the industry.

**Conclusions.** In this context a good, all-embracing education is the best protection against violence and extremist ideas. A high percentage of university graduates will therefore not only benefit a country by providing an able and highly qualified workforce but also keep society as a whole from following dangerous ideologies.

**Recommendations.** My advice to European policy-makers would be to not neglect the ‘soft skills’ taught by our universities and invest, however tedious it might be, in internationalization and getting-to-know-each-other of European students to form a responsible, connected and tolerant generation of European academics.

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## **Belgium**

### ***Vrije Universiteit Brussel***

#### ***Ilse van Dorp***

**Introduction.** University, teaching and knowledge are keywords in our modern society. Bachelor and master programs give students the opportunity to prepare themselves theoretically and practically for a promising career. With a degree and their gained knowledge, students can earn a living and will probably find themselves in well paid jobs. In most countries access to the university is still a prerogative for a particular segment of the population. The challenge of equal opportunities and the realization of a genuine meritocracy often remains a challenge. In most cases government invests in a considerable way in higher education, so it is a legitimate question to ask what university students can give back to society. How can well educated people use their academic expertise to help build a better world?

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** What is the current role of the university in contemporary society? What does society need from universities? Do universities contribute to a better economical situation and equal opportunities? And if so, in what way? Is this situation equal in all European countries? If not, how can we try to reduce these differences?

**Analysis.** Although the international system of bachelor and master creates a lot of possibilities for students, there still are many inequalities between European countries concerning the role of university. There is a huge gap in college fees, therefore not everyone is in the position to study. This has a direct influence on society, as fewer people are able to get a higher education. In most educational systems, even if tuition fees are low, access to university remains sociologically determined. Middle class and upper class students tend to be overrepresented. Students should perhaps have a better understanding of their privileged position. In my opinion, the encouragement of internships is important, because they allow students to gain practical experience. Students learn how to prepare for their future jobs and they can use this experience as they contribute to society. It is not only from books that we learn, but also from society itself. University is not only an institution of teaching and research, but also one of social-economical importance. Good universities create knowledge, and this knowledge can be very helpful to society. It might be interesting to make students more aware of their future role in society, as not every student may realize it. It is toward a main goal that we are working: a united Europe and the improvement of education. As there are a lot of countries, there are a lot of differences. European governments have a lot of different policies about education. It would be easier if there would be one system, which creates equal opportunities for all students.

**Conclusions.** The main focus of the discussion should be on the way that universities can contribute to society. How can we as students help our society? It is important to produce knowledge, but it is also important that we create equal opportunities for every student in order to focus on the role of university, but also the role of the individual in contemporary society.

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## **Cyprus**

### ***University of Cyprus, Nicosia***

#### ***Kleanthis Ioannou***

Universities, in my opinion, have an important and essential role to play in contemporary society. They offer a high level of education and they prepare students for their professional career, as well as, their life as a whole. Therefore, universities have to be well-prepared and organized to both offer and combine a theoretical and practical knowledge as needed in contemporary education and society. In addition, universities need to teach students to have an open mind, view the world in a creative way and offer innovative solutions to already existing problems. University graduates are the future of the planet.

There are a lot of things that universities must do in order to be as contemporary as our society:

- Produce new knowledge and technology
- Qualify their students with the necessary scientific and technical potentials
- Be prepared for the increasing numbers of incoming students
- Offer differentiated programs and focus on how to accommodate the youth
- Develop new institutions within universities but in society as a whole
- Change the conservative mentality of today's society
- Abolish departments which are not beneficial in contemporary society
- Create new departments to meet the continuously updated needs of society
- Extend the spectrum of postgraduate studies (more and more students seek postgraduate studies so that they specialize in particular fields)

However, there are some barriers in the treatment of the above challenges

- incumbent attitudes (both at universities and places of employment)
- rigidity against change
- (lack of) independent funds
- skill shortages in all categories

I believe that the EU can help our universities by providing them with the necessary motivation through funds for improvement in research, teaching and community service, in this order; access to knowledge through participation in academic networks and EU-funded programs; qualified staff through increased mobility across universities and countries. All these are very important and help set a common ground for university professors to act on.

## **Czech Republic**

### ***Charles University of Prague***

#### ***Jaroslava Lojdová***

**Introduction.** The role of universities in contemporary society is irreplaceable in the following ways: it should develop all three human dimensions: the physical, mental and spiritual one. The author wants to elaborate on physical human development as well as the impact of universities on human psyché and spirit.

**Analysis.** The author will focus on the following areas:

1. Reflection of practice: Universities should reflect current state and needs of society. University graduates should provide universities with reflection of practice – this could give an impulse for introduction of new university curricula. On the other side, universities should guarantee programs of lifelong learning to its graduates and the public.
2. Universities should provide the world with specialists and experts in specific fields.
3. Universities should move the boundaries of knowledge forwards.
4. Universities should be open and provide society with discussions, lectures, seminars or workshops on expert areas (such as: Why is music education important for pupils at lower secondary schools?). Universities should give new stimuli for discussions and new ways of thinking. Universities don't earn their own living, they are supported by society and that's why they should pay it back by inviting the public into their closed communities.
5. The spiritual mission of universities. Universities should provide the platform for spreading the good in society and produce intelligentsia who could serve and use their knowledge for the development of society (world peace, politics, culture, etc...).

**Conclusion.** Today's universities should reflect practice and they should provide their graduates and the public with programs of lifelong learning. They should provide the world with specialists and experts in specific fields. Universities should move the boundaries of knowledge forwards, they should be open to the public and they should produce intelligentsia who could serve and use their knowledge for the development of society.

All five pillars are interconnected. If one of them improves, it can provide the others with new stimuli. That is how society and universities are closely interrelated.

Recommendation: Academic freedom is the sign of a democratic nation. Universities should support a new way of thinking and give new stimuli for discussions by being open and providing the public with various projects, workshops, lectures and seminars on expert areas.

## **Finland**

### ***University of Helsinki***

#### ***Jaakko Lindfors***

Why do we need universities nowadays? How should the universities be related to a contemporary society? To the latter question I offer three possible answers.

Mentally - The highest education offers a wide number of possibilities for the society: the education has constantly an influence on national customs in sciences, arts, philosophies, religions and policies. And it does not affect just the way of thinking of the society - but also the way of thinking of an individual.

Physically - the universities work also as material milieus - legitimate institutions - which allow people deliberate, learn and discuss. Thus it continues the tradition of Platonic Academy.

Socially - the universities gather along individuals having common interests in analysis, research and knowledge. The role of universities is not just to raise top level eremites but, if anything, motivated and active people who are mature for a continuous public discourse.

## **Germany**

### ***Freie Universität Berlin***

#### ***Tim Sontheimer***

**Introduction.** European Higher Education Landscape has been shaped by a fundamental (neoliberal) process of restructuring, that started in the Netherlands in the early 80s, culminated with the Bologna Declaration and its direct effects, and moved into the public eye again during the student protests in fall and winter of 2009. "Employability", one of the key words of this process describes one aspect of the reorientation of university science and education towards the needs of Europe's economy. The purpose of this abstract is to present the restructuring process as one economic option among at least two, to specify its (narrow) underlying assumptions about the purpose of education, to name marginalized understandings of education, and to make an argument for their continuing value for our society.

**Question/Hypothesis.** The ongoing process of restructuring is only one solution to one of the most central problems of European societies: A flexible, capitalist economy is constantly altering the demand of certain qualifications. The production of these qualifications at universities is speculation. To this problem, I argue, exist mainly two possible solutions: The first option is to save money during the education process, so over-, or underproduction of demanded qualifications can be produced cheaply and fast. The second option is to invest in the education process, so individuals are empowered to adjust themselves to the altering needs of the economy. Promoting the Bologna-Process, governments have embraced the first option. Tied to these options are differing understandings of the purpose of education in general. The following lines will shed some light on this aspect.

**Argument.** What purpose does education serve? What aspects of education are to be emphasized? The two presented options are tied to differing answers to these questions.

The first option puts great emphasis on the importance of education to serve societies material needs. Europe, with close to all natural resources. already exploited, relies mainly on human capital in order to generate surplus value. Consequently, less emphasis is put on the value of education for the production of a vibrant civil society and the value of university education to enhance public debate and produce a counterweight to societal trends.

The second option emphasizes to a degree all the above named alternative values of education while possibly making losses on the material level. However, an active civil society is crucial to democracies. It contains individuals that are able to think autonomously, that are educated in a wide spectre of scientific disciplines enabling them to cope with a wide range of problems. In short: A university saving time educating cannot fulfill the challenges of the production of civil society.

**Recommendations.** Instead of focusing on restricting students' time at university, policy makers should think university as a room of self empowerment and consequently dismantle barriers to free exchange of ideas and open space for student political engagement.

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## **Italy**

### **University of Rome “Roma Tre”**

#### **Donatella Ortenzi and Valerio Venturi**

**Introduction.** The needs of the contemporary society, the changes that the scientific and technological progress are requiring, and the creation of new professional figures, are pushing the academic system to develop a professional and useful education. If we erroneously relegate the university only in the didactic field we might not take into account all the profusion that is a peculiar characteristic of the academic system. Moreover, the target of “professionalization” is not often achievable due to the huge difficulties the students have to face when they approach the labor market. We will try to illustrate how and in which way the university can interact with the contemporary society and how this society could take part to process of improving the academic system within a framework of mutual dialogue and reciprocal enrichment.

**Aims and Analysis.** Inspiring ourselves to a great theologian of the XIX century, John Henry Newman, with whom we share several reformation instances of the university system and the promotion of an “education to the knowledge”, we will try to propose our idea of university in the contemporary society starting from a reflection about the approach to the study and on the legal claim of centrality of the students seen as citizens. If we try to imagine the study also as a service towards civil society, we will understand that the growth of abilities and intellect of the citizens is a good tool to improve a new way of political participation, a way to develop new technologies for a slow but sure progress. From such a perspective it is interesting to underline how in some of the so called “developing countries” the embedding presence of academic institutions has played a key role in the shaping of a common and stable civil conscience. As Newman wrote <<If then a practical end must be assigned to a University course, I say it is that of training good members of society. Its art is the art of social life, and its end is fitness for the world [...]University training is the great ordinary means to a great but ordinary end; it aims at raising the intellectual tone of society, at cultivating the public mind, at purifying the national taste, at supplying true principles to popular enthusiasm and fixed aims to popular aspiration, at giving enlargement and sobriety to the ideas of the age, at facilitating the exercise of political power, and refining the intercourse of private life. >> Within a social system based on profit in which the intellectual self-awareness of the individual is irrelevant, since it cannot be rapidly translated into an practical and functional knowledge, it is hardly going to be possible neither to achieve concrete progress in any discipline nor to enable the workers to face the challenges that reality puts in front of them. Convergence is therefore needed between the so called hard and soft skills otherwise the university system, instead of forming fully conscious members of the society as it should, will only be capable of providing highly trained specialists and professionals.

**Conclusions and recommendations.** We would like to imagine the university as a social laboratory in which the students, following the instances of the Bologna process, could express themselves and

cooperate together in order to play an active role in both the contemporary and future society. Our global society, in fact, tends to become more and more impersonal and, in this scenario, the university seems to be one of the few if not the only environment in which people can interact and compare their ideas. Such a university would be capable of transforming students into active and conscious citizens.

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### **Lithuania**

#### ***Vilnius University***

##### ***Agnė Miliūtė***

When we talk about University in contemporary society we think about modernisation and innovation in higher education and everything what is related to it. We cannot argue the fact that modern Universities changed a lot from the first higher educational institutions. The first Universities were linked with Christian faith, strongly influenced by religious. Nowadays this feature disappeared and Universities became more independent. It means that studying at the University gives freedom to make choices; it is the place, where people try to find answers, solve problems. It is the place for self – studies, which are the challenge for the students, those who want graduate not only with diploma in their hands, but with full baggage of new experience and knowledge.

We often assume, that Universities are the cradle of sciences and research, but we cannot forget, that in the contemporary society it is the place where the creativity, the new emotional attitude are born. Universities should develop intellectual, tolerant and social responsible persons. People who study at the University should be the example for the other society. They have to increase the level not only of the subject they are studying, but also of economy, politics, health and etc. University gives a chance to see more comprehensive view of life. So one of the most important role of Universities is to form leaders and generate new ideas, which can help to improve the world we live in.

In conclusion, universities should not be isolated from society, it is important that higher education institution would be respectable. We cannot forget that in the modern Universities students are the most important part of academic community, so their opinion to various questions should be considered all the time. All in all, Universities are the gate to the future, but not everybody can open them. Modern University in contemporary society must be the place for talented people, who know that without education you are weaponless in the battleground.

### **Poland (1)**

#### ***University of Warsaw, Warsaw***

##### ***Marcin Zgiej***

**Introduction.** To many contemporary thinkers, politicians and scholars the crisis of university is one of the major problems of Western civilization. But is it really a crisis? In the statement I am going to



present here I perceive it rather as a challenge, an obstacle which must be overcome in order to get out of the current impasse. My point of view tries to combine two perspectives which are often separated and on this basis show that only through the integrated approach we can identify the possible blockages and find a cure to the dilemma caused by them.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** The role and status of university changes as the ongoing processes of globalization, democratization and commercialization penetrate deeply European (Western) societies. I call these processes the “social context” of university’s organization and functioning.

The crisis of university caused by them is rooted in the normative view of the whole idea of university developing from its beginning in the Medieval Ages to the current moment. The normative role requires to see the university as independent and autonomous institution governed (within) by the “elite of reason” uninfluenced by anyone.

**Analysis.** The role of the university in contemporary society is quite ambiguous. On the one hand studies which expand in many different faculties and specializations provide necessary skills in order to compete on the market. Universities are crucial for the whole service sector, management of industry or even agriculture. Simultaneously it creates space for meritocracy and gives great opportunity for large group of people to advance socially and economically. But on the other hand university becomes more and more a profit-oriented company, kind of factory producing year by year thousands of brand new lawyers, economists, sociologists, biologists, physicians etc., changing knowledge into ready-to-sell market goods. And with this perspective its functioning is seen very narrowly. It eventually culminates in the devaluation of diplomas (from bachelor to doctor) and deterioration of level of studies.

Using the above ambiguity as an exemplification of more general problem I would like then to propose a dualistic approach to the description of contemporary role of university in modern society. One is called empirical, or factual which means that it tries to define the real position of the university in the social context. The other is normative, or postulative, emerging from a critical point of view of the present situation and at the same time becoming a positive answer to it.

**Conclusions.** These two roles – empirical and normative – should not be treated as antagonistic, but complementary, which means that the normative view of the role of the university in contemporary society should be preceded by the empirical view of its real functioning in the concrete circumstances.

Finally we should not perceive university – both as an idea and its realization – as totally determined by the social context or – on the contrary – as independent entity. Rather the realistic or optimistic (in the sense of “Pareto optimum”) perspective should take into account the fact that it is a kind of dialectic of different factors which at the same time block and stimulate the activity of university’s scholars and students.

### **Recommendations.**

1. The best way to avoid dangers coming from different political, social and economical forces (internal and external) is to regard them as potential allies and tie them to the process of building so-called Open University: open not only to scientists, students etc. but to progressively-thinking politicians, social activists, entrepreneurs. Thanks to this we don’t treat them as enemies and oppose in a somewhat unconscious way their real existence and impact, but try conscientiously to coordinate our plans with their intentions.
2. Moreover, to deepen the sense of this “openness”, we can use every idea, opinion, suggestion etc. that can help to enhance its functioning seen in very different ways (not only purely

scientific, but also economico-financial, administrative etc.). This means that the university must be a place of dialogue and debate, a space of inclusive participation, a kind of citizens' forum. The Open University must be Deliberative too.

3. Taking all this into consideration I think that both local and national authorities and international powers (first of all EU) must support or even be initiative in a policy which will integrate universities and their administrative bodies with external to them groups of people and institutions. We all must see university as independent, but relevant to the society. If we ignore that fact, we lose the crucial social dimension of the institution.

## **Poland (2)**

*University of Warsaw, Warszawa*

*Anna Dąbrowska*

**Introduction.** Because of the growing role of intellectual capitals and the high tempo of implementing innovations, more and more attention in the discussion about knowledge based economy is given to the knowledge-producing institution, especially to universities. University takes up a new role in economic and social development along with educational and research missions. According to the Triple Helix Model (Etzkowitz, Leydesdorff 1995) university is an influential actor and an equal partner in building a knowledge society and a knowledge based economy within industry and government.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** What is the role of the university in contemporary society? Do the universities (traditional institutions for centuries) need to redefine their own role in the contemporary society? What does it mean exactly? Isn't the consideration of universities as an integral part of economy and a factor of regional development a symptom of instrumental treatment of educational institutions and thereby – human mind? What threats it may cause for the universities as well as for society?

**Analysis.** There are different approaches and perspectives from which the new role of the universities can be analysed. 'The entrepreneurial university' (Clark 1998), 'the third generation university' (Wissema 1995) or 'the learning organisation' (Senge 1990) are only a few examples of terms describing the new model of the university. The common feature of all these concepts is definitely openness of universities at surrounding environment, cooperation with it and active reaction to changing conditions.

**Conclusions.** Universities, which have been the traditional institutions for centuries, need to redefine their own role in the contemporary society. They should be open for changes, but don't forget, that the most important thing is educational and research mission.

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## **Portugal**

*Universidade de Lisboa (UL), Lisbon and Universidade Nova de Lisboa (UNL), Lisbon*

*Marlon Francisco (UNL), André Caldas (UL)*

**Introduction.** Since the implementation of the Bologna Treaty, the typical concept of University has shifted away from what used to be common sense: graduation would be a sufficient qualification to enter the labour market; post-graduation was only to those specifically interested in investing in academic/research careers. Nowadays,, one cannot truly step into the job market simply as a graduate. Post-graduation may have started as an option, but became an indispensable step.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** To pursue a critical reflection regarding the role of the University in contemporary society and unveil, through discussion, policies congruent with the ascertained roles.

**Analysis.** First of all, one should abandon the general idea that having a diploma means a well-paid job or improving one's career. Therefore, when discussing European-level policies for the role of university in contemporary society the following aspects need to be taken into consideration: The profile of "typical" universities as research institutes, pursuing a scientific excellence is becoming more attractive. Obviously, that does not mean they should not be able to provide the analytical and practical tools required for better-qualified jobs, or to teach technical skills. However, the main burden would be the pursuit of knowledge per se, leaving career building as a secondary aim. A strong promotion (or creation) of technical and/or polytechnic courses and degrees, aimed at the acquisition of competencies directly related to employment, is imperative in today's society.

Also Universities face different demands from students and from society itself. In fact, Universities should not turn away from student-athletes, from working-students, from mature students who decide to return to school and other cases that stray from the relative majority of students. In the same way, University is bound to play an important social role, promoting both social turnover and local/national development. University is also better placed to give meaningful consultancy or other services, for it encompasses a variety of arts and sciences.

**Conclusions.** Universities have multiple roles to play in Society for students come out of High School with different goals and aspirations. Universities play an important role in social turnover, in R&D, in local development and in public policy and private consultancy. Therefore, different projects must be accommodated and developed in Universities throughout Europe. The proper institutional framework must be identified and implemented through benchmarking.

**Recommendations.** Europe must pay close attention to the different roles played by Higher Education in Society and draw the proper institutional layout for its development.

## **Slovakia**

*Comenius University, Bratislava:*

*Ivan Pribicko*

Do universities have any roles in contemporary society? If yes, then what are they? Ministers of 47 countries participating in the Bologna Process adopted the Budapest-Vienna Declaration and officially launched the European Higher Education Area. As a matter of fact, they have intended to make Europe of knowledge, which is highly creative and innovative. So, are creativity and innovation the key roles of universities in the 21st century? On the other hand, universities are also important due to the opportunity of lifelong learning, widening access to higher education and mobility.

Actually, universities on the whole have an indisputable place in our society. They offer higher education to talented students and scholars; provide institutes and departments for science and research; combine theoretical knowledge with practical usage; cooperate with governments and representatives of ministries responsible for education; ensure exchange students' or teachers' programs; and etc.

What I have mentioned above, is only the secondary or tertiary role of universities. As a delegate of UNICA conference, I will focus on the main/primary role according to my point of view: intellectual and ideological contribution to students' own opinions and attitudes to the societal discourse. The crucial role of universities consists of bringing a young generation up, providing the relevant resources. for their academic progress, making a suitable place for creativity and self-realization, preparing the future intelligent class based on discussion and cooperation with more experienced tutors and external co-workers.

A university as an institution is the only educational organization, which might dramatically change students' lives. While graduates leave a university with their diplomas and degrees, they should be well-prepared for their professional career, both personally, and theoretically/practically. Nowadays, almost everyone is worried about the economic and financial crisis, business in general. But a university should emphasize its function of morality, ethics, or basic values. Therefore, I disagree with the theory: as many students at universities or colleges as possible. Why so? To sum up, the most important role of universities is to show students and future professionals ideological streams, which they are allowed to think about and subsequently change their mindset.

## **Russian Federation**

### ***Lomonosov Moscow State University***

#### ***Tatiana Labuzova***

***Introduction.*** The role of the university is changing in step with the society. Nowadays the most developed counties in the world are coming to the knowledge society. And the university is going to be the keystone component of this kind of society. It means that the university will have more functions and more responsibilities. For centuries its essential roles have been education and research. Now in addition to these ones there are some new extremely important roles such as “service to society” and “critical inquiry”.

***Hypotheses, questions, aims.*** The dilemma which the university faces in the contemporary society is how to be: Accessible and elitist? Challenging and fair? Autonomous and accountable? Public and private? Innovative and conservative? Engaged and secluded? Critical and respectful? Demanding and supportive? Creative and precise? Local and international? Specialised and interdisciplinary? Rational in the face of irrationality? Attract funds without losing credibility? Do more with less?

The answers to these questions determine the place of the university in the society. But there are no answers which can be universal.

**Analysis.** The modern university play an extremely important role in nowadays world which is more interdependent and instable one: increased inequality, migration, energy crisis, depletion of natural resources. , highly turbulent world economy, financial instability, global epidemics, exacerbated identities, renewed religious and spiritual quests, global trafficking, terrorism.

It is the university which is the most important stage in building the personality of future generation, future politicians, economists, etc. That is why it is the right place to make the basis to solve most of the problems in the contemporary society.

**Conclusions.** “In today’s chaotic, complex, changing and unpredictable world, there is only one certainty: we are facing uncertainty.”<sup>1</sup> And the University has a fundamental role in this world and in the contemporary society:

- Equip the students to deal with uncertainty,
- Through research, transform uncertainty into innovation,
- Manage the institutions to be adaptive enough to deal with uncertainty,
- In society, provide a forum to turn uncertainty into a brighter future for all.

#### ***Recommendations.***

- Support universities politically and financially,
- Involve universities in the decision-making process in the country,
- Develop student mobility programs,
- Cooperate with universities to solve national and global problems,
- Support university networks such as UNICA and take into consideration its opinions and resolutions.

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#### **Spain (1)**

***Universidad Complutense de Madrid***

***Carlos Nieto Sánchez***

**Introduction.** This paper analyzes the role that universities play in today's society. It aims to point out the main function of University, which is that teaching, research, creation and cultural development, integrate and enhance in order to produce, at the same time, higher education, scientific research and cultural development. All that processed in a common environment lets high-level personnel to educate, thanks to the result of academic research.

**Aims and analysis.** For us, the implementation of the Bologna Process can be considered the starting point for any reflection. In Spain, as in many other European countries, the debate has been centered in giving University a pasive role of submission to external economic and productive interests or being an independent institution in which scientific, social and humanistic interest must take root and prevail over any others. Of course, this second role does not mean that other interests have no place. To enhance the debate about possible solutions to the University challenges in the 21st century we will gather information from other recent congresses papers, reports, articles and monographs on the role of universities in contemporary society.

**Conclusions and recommendations.** Without doubt, to answer what is the role of the university in contemporary society we must have in mind that education and culture must be accesible to all the people without exception and they must have the opportunity of access to university level education. Once this first goal is achieved we have to find a balance between a University thatkeeps its freedom and independence while is able to fullfil other social and economic goals.

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## **Spain (2)**

### ***Universidad Autonoma de Madrid***

#### ***Borja Andrino Turón***

**Introduction.** Nowadays, with this horrible economic situation, we must think about what are the things that will solve this situation. I think this solution must be the education, specially at the universities.

**Aims and analysis.** The universities must create future experts, future engines of our economy, our economy will be supported in a strong base. In fact, the role of the universities is capital to the contemporary society development. In my country, Spain, we have discussed for several months, what is the way to change the production system, and I think the way is clear, invest in education. We have a very good base, we must focus how the change is going to be, but it is clear this change must happen. Our governs must invest in scholarships, to study in your country or in other countries, must convert the universities in modern places with all the resources. for the students, a university where the student receives the best preparation to overcome the challenge that now overcomes us.

## **Sweden**

### ***Stockholm University***

#### ***Christoffer Lewinowitz***

The university without doubt is an institution with numerous functions. In combining my domestic knowledge with that of fellow European students' viewpoints, I hope to formulate a global perspective of a university's role in contemporary society. Free tuition is given to Swedish university students as a result of our welfare model. Education grants and student loans are available as financing options from the state. In particular, interest rates for student loans are relatively low. Therefore Universities in Sweden perpetrate the image as a popular and open education organizer with a diversity of students.

Which roles do universities shoulder today? Are these correct ones? How are they prioritized among the universities? Are there any additional roles that they should take on?

According to Swedish law, the universities shall carry the role as:

1. Educator - to pass on knowledge to students.
2. Researcher - to conduct research congruent to the university's academic mission statement
3. Collaborator - to inform the public of the universities activities and research achievements. Furthermore, the universities also shoulder the role of an exercisor of public authority such as for grading standards and also act as an employer for many.

As universities provide the opportunity for students to interact with one another, cultural and social forums start to arise. What is interesting is how these roles should be exercised and maintained. Such as with what resources, and tools? With what priority? And what should be encouraged and what should not?

In my mind, the role of modern day universities and their traditions is clear. What is worth discussing is whether there are more roles to take on but also take a look at the roles universities have assumed in the face of changing societies.

The Swedish higher education act translated in English

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## 4. Unity and diversity in future of Europe: the challenge of multiculturalism.

### Austria

#### *University of Vienna*

#### *Angelika Schwingshackl*

**Introduction.** Over decades, indeed over centuries, pain and suffering emanated from the European continent: during the Colonial Wars, the two World Wars, the period of decolonisation – just to mention some examples. However, we Europeans found a way out of this time of mistakes and violence to come together in peace and harmony. The European Union embodies thus the idea of lasting peace and stands for equal opportunities for all nations.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** However, the utopian idea of a multicultural Europe where every nationality gets the same chances is far from being reached. At the one hand, Europeans claim to be in favour of a multicultural society, at the other hand, many complain about the high immigration rate. So what exactly means multiculturalism? Is it a good or a bad thing? And why is it so difficult for people with different cultural backgrounds and beliefs to live together?

**Analysis.** By analyzing the phenomenon of multiculturalism, it is interesting that – even though everyone speaks about multiculturalism and it seems as if it were a topic of high importance – it is not an official aim of most countries' policy of integration. On the contrary, multiculturalism is often considered as scapegoat for high unemployment rates or for the decreasing level of knowledge acquired in education. So it can be seen that the concept of bringing together different nations is not without problems. Each nation has different points of view, different cultural values and different customs which may seem strange to people with other cultural backgrounds. The misinterpretation of cultural customs of one country by another may also be disastrous: agreements could fail, dealings could be discontinued and collaborations are stopped – without considering that brilliant ideas could have sprung from their cooperation. It is a fact that multicultural teams come to better and multifaceted results, even though the team-members face more conflicts in the beginning.

**Conclusions.** However, by opening one's mind for other nations and by accepting cultural differences, stumbling blocks will be overcome and new ways of understanding will be developed. Multiculturalism is not an obstacle, but a great chance which we should not let slip away. Being a member of the European Union, other cultures are knocking at our door. Now it is up to us to open it.

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## Belgium

*ULB, Brussels*

*Mehmet SAYGIN*

**Introduction.** The debate over multiculturalism (or multiculturality, which is different) in Europe (or in the European Union, which is also different) is in my opinion a biased debate because it is already a reality and we can only live with it. Moreover, I believe that the argument that says “yes to multiculturality but only if we respect a common basis of values” is also biased because our constitutional systems prevent any kind of imposition or violation of human rights. Therefore, I would like to offer an alternate point of view by asking another question, which is for me the true critical question we must solve when it comes to unity and diversity in Europe/the European Union.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** My question is: “How consistent are European public authorities in the fight against discriminations and for equal opportunities when it comes to dealing with “new” European citizens?” In other words, are our authorities, especially in Western Europe, fully respectful of our fundamental texts over human rights when dealing with “new” European citizens (people from immigrant origins, such as Turkish and Maghrebis, most of them Muslims)?

**Analysis.** In the debate over multiculturalism, we often hear talking about “our values”. I believe there is a huge confusion between “values” and “choices”. “Our” values are written in our national constitutions and international conventions on human rights: liberty, equality, justice, dignity, freedom of speech, etc. So, when we talk about a “common basis of values”, we rather mean “a certain way of life”, and everybody is free to choose his/her own way of life, as long as it doesn’t violate other people’s free choices. What I observe is a lack of consistency from European public authorities about the respect of the “new” Europeans’ free choices and a way of legitimating several discriminations they face by non-implementing effectively the needed tools. The debate on secularism is also vital in our case.

**Conclusions.** Ergo, my point of view is that the real challenge is the fight against all discriminations and that consistency in this fight (which clearly lacks today) will by itself bring unity among European citizens in respect of their already existing diversity. On the contrary, the discourse over a so called synthesis between religious/cultural diversity and a common basis of “values” must be fought if its result is a non-democratic limitation of fundamental human rights.

Recommendations to Rectors, European Commissioners, etc.: I would recommend that public authorities facilitate the debate over secularism and pluralism, conceived not as opponents to diversity (especially religious freedom) but as a factor of equality. In particular, I would recommend the adoption of new legislations to strengthen the existing public institutions fighting against discriminations and for equality of chances (such as the Centre for Equal Opportunities and Opposition to Racism in Belgium) in order to make those truly transparent and fully consistent in the implementation of their mission.

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## **Cyprus**

*University of Cyprus, Nicosia*

*Eliza Papaki*

Within the borders of Europe, there coexist various and unique cultures of different origins, religions and languages, which now, due to mobility as well as immigration, shape the multicultural landscape of the European Union. To achieve and ensure the harmonious coexistence of diverse cultures in European society, the European Union has proceeded to adopt treaties, such as the Amsterdam Treaty in 1997 and the Lisbon Treaty in 2009. The treaties promoted freedom, security, justice and the elimination of discrimination and racism. On the other hand, these actions of the European Union do not alleviate the core of existing problems related to multiculturalism in societies?

Indeed, the majority of European countries that have to deal with the phenomenon of multiculturalism are facing many problems, which are also reflected in their universities. Therefore, a significant amount of people who fight against multiculturalism and diversity in societies has gradually arisen. Some of their arguments are:

- The fear that the acceptance of cultural diversity will lead to the underestimation of the major culture of the host country
- The threat to the national economy; foreigners are considered as a burden placed on locals
- Apart from that, a multicultural society has to deal with far more serious challenges, like:
- Hostility towards foreigners: enemies of national culture and economy
- Inequality between minorities and major ethnic groups
- Negative elements of racism, xenophobia and discrimination
- Isolation of minorities

The universities, as part of these societies, have inevitably been influenced by this policy. In this way, the vast majority of students tend to associate mostly with people of the same nationality or who speak the same language; they create isolated ethnic groups and have no interaction with the various cultures, religions and lifestyles. Consequently, the difficulties that European and other international organizations have to overcome in order to improve multiculturalism in their universities are numerous. For this reason, as a young student of a diverse society, I suggest:

- To promote and inform students regarding the mobility programs (Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci, Comenius, etc)
- To establish English-speaking programs and/or courses in universities in every European country
- To develop, through education, principles such as respect, acceptance of diversity, tolerance

- To organize international week/month festivals, on which each ethnic group of students will present some of their national elements and will have the opportunity to discover different cultures
- To introduce courses on religious studies at universities

I strongly believe that unity and diversity can be achieved in European society as long as we integrate multiculturalism in our countries and in our lives. Universities, and their student body, can be the guide to these efforts, through trying to promote ideas and convictions of multiculturalism in order to influence younger and older people alike.

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## **Czech Republic**

*Charles University of Prague*

*Nina Horakova*

**Introduction.** There is no doubt about Europe being a multicultural environment. During the past decades the European nations have become closer and closer and because of the surrounding globalization also more and more similar.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** During the conferences I would like to focus on discussing what does multiculturalism actually mean in today's Europe, especially for young people who grew up with many cultures around them. I would be also interested in talking about how European universities provide and foster multiculturalism.

**Analysis.** Differences between European cultures will be less and less clear in future Europe and that is why universities and teachers should be focusing on this diversity we are surrounded by everyday. We should teach about both the similarities and differences that are there in European cultures.

**Conclusions.** It is important to foster the differences in cultures to provide the idea of who we are and what world we live in.

## **Estonia**

*Tallinn University of Technology (EST)*

*Maris Saaver*

**Introduction.** Multiculturalism is the most common way in which the ideology of cultural pluralism is put into practice in education, especially in today's education where student mobility inside Europe and also from outside Europe is increasing every year. The question is how this system really works in the interest of students, how are they treated in multicultural environments, are all the students and teachers, irrespective of their home country, religion and other factors treated fairly? Is it ensured that

the universities satisfy the students' expectations for good education, promote students' social life through different activities and make them feel that they belong to the community?

**Hypothesis, questions, aims:** It is important to raise the awareness of this issue in universities. If the importance and benefits of multiculturalism are clear, it is easier to move on to facing the challenges the whole process brings about. How to make the students themselves and the academic staff to promote unity and fellow feeling among the students with different cultural backgrounds? How to change the consequences of mobility programs and increasing number of multicultural universities even more positive? The universities have the great power of influencing the whole process of working and studying in a unity and accepting different cultures around us.

**Analysis.** As mentioned before, one way of changing the educational society more tolerant is to promote the mobility programs. Having been an exchange student, I know that people who go on an exchange are usually open-minded and ready to learn about other cultures in advance and they mingle quite easily with other exchange students. Often the problem is that the locals are those who are less tolerant and sometimes even reluctant to accept different nationalities "invading" to their home country. Therefore, the solution is to change the attitude of local society towards foreigners and help them to value the positive sides of the multicultural environment.

Promoting other forms of collaboration between for example neighboring countries could also be one possible way to deal with the issue of multiculturalism and attitudes towards it. The situation between neighboring countries is often not that friendly. As having taken part in a project of this kind by visiting our southern neighbors I can say that the outcome of the project was impressive as many of the participants including me changed their attitude towards our neighbors thanks to a pleasant experience in a short period of time.

**Conclusions.** The key solutions to challenges of multiculturalism brought out in the abstract are increasing the level of tolerance among local society towards foreigners and starting the collaboration between close-set countries to build a ground for wider tolerance towards foreigners as in the beginning it is easy to accept cultures with a more similar background.

**Recommendations.** Firstly, connection between the locals and international students/teachers can be built through projects involving both target groups. Even smaller projects like regular discussion groups or speaking clubs in universities could be a solution. Therefore, the universities are responsible for finding promoters for these projects and also for providing financial support if needed. Also projects between neighboring countries should be promoted through universities.

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### **Finland**

*University of Helsinki, Helsinki*

## ***Hanna Telama***

***Introduction.*** European societies have always been multicultural. However, the increasing mobility of people in the past few decades has made cross-cultural communications ever more important. The integration of Europe has increased the internationalization of education. Increased student mobility has played a significant role in this process. At the same time, immigration into and within Europe has increased considerably. This has created new educational demands for European societies, as providing adult education for the immigrants is an important part of their rehabilitation into society.

***Hypotheses, questions, aims.*** The increased cultural diversity of society has created new challenges for workplaces as well as educational and research institutions. Greater cross-cultural knowledge is needed to overcome the issues regarding cultural differences. Such knowledge concerns both the individual within the multicultural work environment as well as the administrative body of the organization.

***Analysis.*** A range of views regarding multiculturalism are represented in the various enterprises endorsing cross-cultural equality. Those promoting diverseness emphasize that each individual is different and that underlining the differences between cultural groups should be avoided. However the majority of research regarding multiculturalism concludes that the differences between cultures must be recognized. This view holds that for multicultural equality and functional communication to be possible in any operation, the cultural aspects of each activity must be acknowledged. This is based on the idea that one easily considers his or her model of thinking the only obvious and correct way, unless one has multicultural insight into the alternative viewpoints.

Culture itself is a broad concept. Besides national and ethnic culture, the status of each individual is determined by factors such as age, gender, academic and professional skills, among others. Each reference category is composed of people with unique personalities and personal histories. When assessing multiculturalism we must be careful not resort to stereotyping diverse identities.

***Conclusions.*** Education is the key to overcoming the challenges of multiculturalism. Multiculturalism must be integrated into the curriculum at all levels of education. It should also be provided as a part of post-graduate training and adult education for those working in potentially multicultural environments. Pedagogues responsible for teaching multicultural groups should also be given appropriate instruction for handling issues related to multiculturalism.

## ***Recommendations.***

Firsthand experience of cultural diversity is important and can be promoted through increased student and teacher mobility at university and lower levels, as well as through work experience abroad and within local multicultural work environments. All citizens should have the opportunity to study languages regardless of their economic and occupational status.

Adequate education must be provided in English and where possible, other languages. Immigrants and other internationals must be aware of their rights at work and socially. They must have a forum for bringing forth their concerns and a possibility to give feedback. They should be provided the opportunity to study the national language of the society they belong to. Well fare, equality, social integration and other aspects regarding international individuals must be researched and assessed. Social and educational infrastructure must be flexible and meet the new demands of an increasingly multicultural society.

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## **Germany**

*Humboldt-Universität, Berlin*

*Anna Volivach*

**Introduction.** Multiculturalism is the promotion of cultures and cultural diversities which is based on fairness and tolerance. I want to focus my attention on such aspects of multiculturalism as migration and integration. Multicultural policies vary in Europe from country to country. In Germany there are 6, 7 million (2010) foreigners. They are people with different nationalities, cultures and religions. There are still social differences between foreigners and natives. The chance to get an education is not equal. The presence of pupils from different cultural backgrounds is a challenge for school education: teachers are often overtaxed, peers don't like to integrate, parents are afraid for their children. People have a lot of prejudices and anxieties towards foreigners. Multiculturalism has just begun to be realized in Germany.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** European education must better carry out its role in society and in the integration of migrants. Education must shape an open-minded personality, one which meets new cultures inquisitively and with empathy. How can schools and universities in Europe help to develop such qualities? How can young Europeans learn to take an active part in the life of multicultural society and meet each other as equal citizens? Can a multicultural consciousness be taught?

**Analysis.** Schools should prepare pupils for the life in a multicultural society. Children must learn as soon as possible to contact and to make a friendship with their peers who have different nationalities and religions. Well-trained teachers must help to integrate, for example, Muslim pupils with a migrant background with their Christian peers and to promote dialogue between teenagers. The achievement level of migrant children must be improved and it can be only realised if there is no culture clash in class.

In my opinion, the promotion of foreign languages belongs to the main tasks for European universities. This promotion will help to preserve the European multilingualism and to strengthen the intercultural competence of Europeans. There must be a rich offering of foreign languages at every European university. The students must have an opportunity to learn these languages by paying favourable prices for the language courses. The achievement of Berlin's universities, regarding to this issue, is an excellent one.

Also, the political education of young Europeans must be encouraged, including for people with migrant background. By political education I mean the sensibility and the interest in current social debates, and also the development of the ability to form their own opinions about politics.

**Conclusions.** Multiculturalism is a challenge for Europe, which is growing together. The role of education is increasing and universities have to find good solutions for social problems. This can

happen, for example, by promoting multilingualism and by encouraging political education. At the same time, European education must shape an open-minded character and teach people such qualities as responsibility, helpfulness and tolerance.

Recommendations to Rectors, European Commissioners, etc.: To Rectors (1) promote multilingualism and mobility at universities, (2) educate well-trained teachers with intercultural competence, To European Commissioners (1) every student has to have the possibility to see how the European institutions in Brussels work – it is an essential part of political education, (2) to organise international student conferences in Brussels.

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## **Hungary**

*ELTE, Budapest*

*Dora Ignácz*

**Introduction.** During the ages of history, multiculturalism gained a huge role the humanity. Usually in a society, especially in bigger cities, many different cultures, religious belief and skin colors live together. In these metropolitans (like NYC, LA, Berlin, London), the nationalities usually live in small areas. For instant, in many bigger cites Chinatown is called where the Chinese restaurants and shops are concentrated.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** During the conference I would like find how the countries in Europe think about multiculturalism. Anyone may find countries where people from different nations can live together easily. How the different countries try to accept the differencies of people from different cultures? How people from different countries live in those society where many cultures live together?

**Analysis.** In my opinion there isn't unity in the question of multiculturalism, because some countries are different idea how to handle that situation.

**Conclusions.** In my point of view multiculturalism a big opportunity to learn about other cultures, languages, traditions, music, habits and cuisine. It is important to be opened to other nations.

**Recommendations.**

It would be great if the nations and nationalities could live in peace. Hopefully we could find a solution how we can tolerate the other nationalities, and teach this at the universities.

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## **Lithuania**

*University of Vilnius*

*Arminas Varanauskas*

**Introduction.** One of EU policy pillar is unsealing borders between different countries among Europe. This leads us to more and more diverse society. Citizens migrate from one country to another searching the better place to live. It makes different cultures, religions, attitudes (etc.) merge at different levels.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.**

There's no doubt that diverse Europe already exist, but will it ever be united?

Is it about the choice between the national and European identity or is it question of finding the right balance?

**Analysis.** There are loads of various researches on topic of multicultural society, on topic of tolerance among different people. It is sad that results often shows us that we hate our neighbors, that we are afraid of other race people (and there's no need to add about situation in Lithuania speaking about LGBTQ rights), we are even suspicious about those who behave themselves not stereotypically or have different point of view. European identity is mystic. There's no agreement on one definition of it. We shouldn't talk about unity, when everyone thinks the same, we should focus on diverse society in which you have all possibilities to live and to express yourself.

**Conclusions.** United Europe is pop. "Think globally, act locally" – and here we should state, that Europe is a local level. We should think about unity of the whole globe and try to make this planet the better place to live for all of us, no matter what's your race, gender, thoughts, religion... And it is possible, because the future belongs to us.

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## **The Netherlands**

*University of Amsterdam*

*Simone van Saarloos*

It won't be questioned when one says that the issue (implying a problem already) of multiculturalism is very much part of the contemporary debate. Europe is a very varying unity, but especially holds different laws and opinions about immigration. It seems however, that a certain uncertainty about our position in world economics, politics and ideology, is making us less and less approachable towards immigrants and immigration. I strongly believe that with globalization, one should also embrace a multiculturalist society. Though I understand the anxieties people have towards other cultures - history has quite obviously shown us that people always at first fear that which they don't know or recognize - I strongly believe that Europe should be sure of itself enough, to accept others to encounter the great opportunities that Europe offers.



For my analysis of multiculturalism in Europe I will read Multiculturalism and the politics of recognition from the philosopher Charles Taylor. His main claim is that one should not blindly accept other cultures, as this would only neglect the worth of the culture since we would not understand or respect certain habits or traditions but simply let them exist. Taylor conveys that it's better to really get to know a culture different from our own. Only when we really understand a culture, we can judge each other. A question that rises now is: can we really understand a different culture? Are we not too subjective and drenched in our own cultural habits and traditions?

## **Poland**

*University of Warsaw, Warsaw*

*Maja Wellenger*

**Introduction.** Reports published generally show negative prospects regarding the demographic situation in the EU, with an increasing aging population, an eventual steady decrease in the labour force, and a desperate need to change it; thus the only option being that of using immigrant workers. Even with the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty, the EU had not anticipated that multiculturalism would play a big role in the coming years leaving a lack of ideas and solutions in this respect.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** The EU does not have an effective method of tackling and handling the increase of multiculturalism.

Another problem lies with cultural and traditional differences of immigrants upon arriving to their destination of choice.

How to help the immigrants to become a factor to make the UE stronger and more solid.

**Analysis.** The problem lies in the lack of control in checking and dealing with educational and technical skills and abilities of immigrants; leading to a large percentage of immigrants being poorly educated and a burden on the economy and the welfare system.

Rather than deciding on assimilating into the given society, they often create their own small and sometimes isolated societies, disconnected from the overall one. These small societies portray the intensity of which different cultures can be so widely diverse. Here one can use the example of immigrants in France and in the UK, where the respective governments used different methods (comparable to methods used during colonialism) resulting in completely different results.

**Conclusions.** With the enlargement of the EU, this problem is getting more serious with time, and there is still much to be discussed and observed. For now we are still limited to cultures relatively known to us, yet this will not be the case for much longer. Much effort is needed to try and come up with an effective method of tackling this problem, for multiculturalism should make us stronger and not weaker.

**Recommendations.** The member states and european institutions should redefine their policies towards immigration and adaptation of foreigners in a way that the issues of chauvinism and not being open enough could be excluded, and at the same time would prove a rational process of receiving immigrants only where it is needed and necessary, more precisely in those sectors of economy in which there's an actual lack of labour. There is a big need of more detailed knowledge about the situation on the home and international work markets and more attention needs to be given to social policies in the aim to reinforce european society and its integration.

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## **Portugal**

*Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Universidade de Lisboa, Lisbon*

*Marina Gallo Sarmiento (UNL), Álvaro Ribeiro Esteves (UL)*

**Introduction.** As European countries got closer, borders got more and more blurred and the rise of a political structure standing at a supranational level seemed to be justifiable. So did an ever expanding body of Pan-European legislation capable of affecting and thus linking citizens all through the Old Continent. Migration, like in the Portuguese Discoveries, made different cultures more aware of each other. New borders, resulting from 20th Century conflicts, as well as media and faster transportation made people of different cultures drawn together in increasingly crowded spaces, enriching peoples' lives but also bringing about anxiety and some, probably unjustified fears.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** Is a common European identity possible? And does the concept of "multiculturalism" travel well through the continent? Does the word multiculturalism mean the same in Portugal, in Germany, or France? Is our society ready to accept others' cultures? And how to deal with the co-existence of different values in crowded places like cities?

**Analysis.** The idea of a common European identity should not be confused with multiculturalism, even though these two concepts might be pretty much linked. The European Union shelters 27 national identities, encompassing many more nationalities. The many rights conferred by the European Union treaties brought closer citizens of different nationalities. To say that a common European identity exists is to say that there are common features, beliefs and principles that are particular to Europeans and somehow exclusive. One can think of two issues: (i) that migration and enlargement might erode the already faint idea of a common European citizenship or even of a national identity; (ii) that the possibility of migration is intrinsic to European thought and culture; we have seen that through History. We argue that multiculturalism is intrinsic to Europe: Europe was a continent of competing differences but also common features; it was also a continent that sought and colonize other continents; a migration outwards, but also of migration inwards, as badly destroyed countries by the War sought to rebuild themselves within the spirit of "East civilization". Decolonization, the other face of the discoveries, brought to Europe the Peoples whom we once visited, to put it mildly. Integration is a tough task. But Higher Education is an important tool. A two-way strategy can be pursued. Here, we present a long time example developed by the Institute for Legal Cooperation of the University of Lisbon Law School. The Institute has, simultaneously, contributed to educate people and to establish the higher education system and Public Administration in Portuguese-speaking countries while welcoming students from those countries in Lisbon.

**Conclusions.** However, hard to accommodate, the presence of different cultures within what we feel as our own, enlarges our horizons, enhances our perception of others. To be European might indeed mean to be of African ancestry, to have Turkish ancestors. To have Charlemagne as a distant ancestor or to

be Muslim. A European Area of Higher Education must recognize these key aspects in order to put aside the fears, but do so in a rational, well-thought manner.

**Recommendations.** : To adopt public policy that promotes the expression of different cultures in the European Area, simultaneously making the peoples of Europe aware of a European identity and the welcoming of different experiences by:

- 1) promoting studying abroad, which is now much easier due to the existence of an European HE Area.
- 2) spreading information more efficiently as to assure that everyone of legislation on the subject such as the requisites regarding visas and other permits;
- 3) promoting multilingualism and the teaching of cultural diversity.

## **Russian Federation**

*Lomonosov Moscow State University*

*Valeriya Verkhovyykh*

The problem of organizing the dialogue of different cultures within a national framework is facing today not only countries that initially relied on an influx of immigrants from different parts of the world, but also the Old World, as the ethno-cultural composition of modern national states every day almost everywhere loses its uniformity .

Multiculturalism has its own morality called tolerance. But this morality does not come from the soul, but rather from the mind (here is very important issue of education of young people).

Multiculturalism raises the problem of interaction between the majority culture and the culture brought by the outside (the problem of immigrants and minorities), the problem of complex collective identities, the problem of cultural tolerance and cultural dialogue in the context of globalization.

The experience of multinational countries such as Russia, shows that being tolerant to all cultural traditions is quite possible.

The problems of multiculturalism should be governed by the European (because now we are talking about Europe, although the issue affects the entire globe) laws and treaties.

## **Slovakia**

*Comenius University, Bratislava*

*Peter Weisenbacher*

Our continent is changing more rapidly than most of its inhabitants are able to comprehend. Mass immigration, urbanization and global climate change are just a few examples. I face in my daily work challenges such as the role of higher education in a society dominated by the narrow professionalism, treating ethnic and other minorities in a country which was extremely homogeneous for centuries.

I have built a profound understanding of multiculturalism during my almost decade long active engagement with Amnesty International. Not only have I acquired a comprehensive insight into the workings of a global organisation, I also became acquainted with specific aspects of bringing together

people with extremely different backgrounds to work on a common goal, share the same basic values and principles while not losing own identity and diversity in the team and this is something universities in nowadays Europe have to learn.

## **Spain**

*Universidad Complutense de Madrid*

*Miriam Olombrada Sacristán*

**Introduction.** Europe is formed by many different cultures among all the countries. We can consider Europe as a pluricultural society, but the challenge of achieving a real multicultural situation is still an unsolved issue. Multiculturalism has to be tackled by the European Union as a whole, but also by every country member of the Union in particular.

**Aims and analysis.** In this context, the Spanish Autonomic Model would stand as a good system to achieve that desirable multiculturalism, as it recognizes the cultural diversity inside the own country, trying to provide each region with a self-government to develop any cultural aspects in the way they consider the best. This could help us to think of a model that would favour the achievement of a multicultural society because it means that other cultures are positively valued and it is possible to be socialized not only in the dominant culture, but also into an ethnic one. However, it is not perfect, as the model of autonomous regions can lead in some situations to exalting their own culture or values over the other regions, rejecting what is different, which is the opposite of multiculturalism.

**Conclusions and recommendations:** In this conference, we will try to discuss about the different ways in which European Universities can contribute to build the idea of multiculturalism in Europe, studying other initiatives proposed by governments, the European Union, etc. If there is a conclusion to extract from the many studies on cultural diversity it can be summarized as that there is no a perfect model, and the main problem is finding a balance between enhancing the expressions of ethnic identities while keeping the sense of belonging to a wider community which is both, the guarantor of the cultural diversity, and also of the integration of the parts in a whole, without missing their uniqueness.

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## **Sweden**

*Stockholm University, Stockholm*

*Tove Larsson*

**Introduction.** There is a need for examples of positive ways to deal with the challenges of multiculturalism at universities and countries in average in order to overcome the difficulties a multicultural society can face. In many Swedish schools, for instance, the teachers and staff are struggling to make use of students' multicultural experiences and backgrounds, but often fail due to

scarcity of money and knowledge etc. – so how can we facilitate for multicultural students in a diverse society?

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** One of the best ways to overcome difficulties and attain unity is through education and increased knowledge of the benefits of multiculturalism and diversity. So how can we, at our schools and universities, increase the awareness of and display the advantages of unity? Can the universities and its students actually make a difference in regards of uniting people from different backgrounds? I believe we can and that it is of major importance that we aim to succeed in doing so.

**Analysis.** One key solution ought to be to try to change people's sometimes negative or hesitant attitudes towards multiculturalism. This can, at least partly, be achieved through education and increased awareness of the benefits of multiculturalism not only at schools and universities, but also all throughout society. So how can this be attained in practice? Starting at a young age is advantageous, perhaps through making certain that pupils of different neighborhoods and backgrounds meet and get to know each other. Can the students of Europe's universities make this happen? Even the smallest collaboration projects between schools and universities ought to be useful when working towards increased awareness. This can either be in the form of a single evening with lectures and discussions or be achieved, on a larger scale, through arranging arenas where people with different backgrounds can meet, such as annual festivals at each university/school dedicated to multiculturalism and unity.

Furthermore, student exchange programs ought to be used in the process of increasing awareness of the benefits of diversity. The exchange students themselves can be spokespersons and share their experiences from other countries and universities with younger pupils, university students, teachers and the University Board. However, it is important to acknowledge the fact that a multicultural classroom can also be problematic – so how can universities work to better utilize students' different backgrounds in tuition? One solution might be to choose student representatives to attend university board meetings and look after their fellow students' interests. The university could also supply foreign students and students with a different background with tutors or mentors.

**Conclusion.** Through changing people's attitudes towards multiculturalism, challenges of a diverse society can be overcome. In practice this means working towards bringing people of different backgrounds together and increasing their knowledge of the subject matter. This can, for example, be done with the help of social events and/or with exchange students sharing their experiences as the key word is "education".

Recommendations to Rectors, European Commissioners, etc: Through starting projects (and supporting already existing projects) aiming to educate people on the benefits of diversity, plenty can be won in the process of unifying Europe. Such projects can constitute of collaboration between junior schools and universities and/or of utilization of the knowledge of, for example, exchange students. Teachers at universities and junior schools alike furthermore need to be encouraged to use students' different backgrounds in tuition in order to be able to face the challenges of multiculturalism in a positive way.

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## **Switzerland**

*UNIL - Université de Lausanne*

*Sonia da Silva*

**Introduction.** Nowadays the concept of multiculturalism became an important debate in modern societies especially in Europe. With the integration of different countries within the European Union, questions of multiculturalism became important due to cultural differences inherent to each country and mobility of European people in the Schengen Area. But beyond the argument of “shared values” and “common basis” in European Union constitutional systems the debate should first focus on how to define the concept of multiculturalism in Europe. Only a clear definition of what is meant by the word “multiculturalism” can lead, in my opinion, to the right answers on how to respect different European member values without violating human rights and falling into biased debates.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** How can we define multiculturalism? Are we talking about the coexistence of several cultures in one country and the way we should integrate foreign citizens? Or do we talk about the valorization and the promotion of cultural pluralism within a larger community? In both cases we should address the question on how coherent European states are when it comes to respecting international and national norms on human rights and how they respect others differences.

**Analysis.** Whether we speak of multiculturalism within a single European state or a multicultural community the important thing for the European public authorities and entities is to design and improve the existent standard norms about integration and respect of Human Rights in a way that appreciates the different visions of the world. Beyond the legal aspects involved in the creation of new norms and the enforcement of existing international laws this debate acquires a political dimension that includes the valorization of a European identity which respects the particularities of each Nation’s identity, the recognition of “Other” values and the right to diversity in European space. So the great challenge for the future will be the acceptance of the difference only then we can expect a better European cohesion.

**Conclusions.** In my opinion, as mentioned above, the challenge for the future of the European Community will be the acceptance of differences and the promotion of new norms which should strengthen the fight against discrimination and the acceptance of different visions of the world. Seeing the existing diversity across European countries’ cultural aspects and mobility of its citizens we should start trying to explore and learn those differences, if any. The acceptance of multiculturalism in a society goes, from my point of view, towards the recognition of the fundamental liberties for each European citizen. The best way to do it is by trying to learn about other cultures of our continent. I personally feel that these differences are more a strength than a weakness and should be utilized in the future.

**Recommendations.** : I think the best way to find some recommendations that we could formulate to European Commissioners is by debating about how people from different countries define multiculturalism. Therefore the Unica Conference is a good way to find out what students from different countries think about “multiculturalism”. It is going to be an important meeting since we will discuss our points of view which enables us to make some recommendations all together.

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## 5. Innovation, formal and informal education: can universities nurture the creativity of students?

### Cyprus

*University of Cyprus, Nicosia*

*Zacharopoulos George*

“Creativity is the process of having original ideas that have value” (Ken Robinson, leader in the field of creativity). It is a process, not an event (that happens occasionally), therefore, it is something that can be learned. It is something very practical, an applied imagination. Creativity can be applied in everything; some people believe that creativity is restricted only in the arts and humanities.

Universities are the beacons of society; university education should certainly be cultivating the creativity of students. It is worthwhile to mention that most students, even before entering the university, lose their capacity to be creative. This is due to the nature of the educational system (elementary school but mostly high-school) which primarily send the following message to students: the most important thing that they can gain from their education is to enter university (university entrance exams most of the times are not evaluating the creativity of students).

Climate crisis (natural resources) - ecological crisis (human resources)

The critical question: can universities nurture the creativity of students?

Various obstacles of creativity:

- Obsession with standardised tests (TOEFL, GRE, IELTS) - all university students are compared in the same model (no place for diversity)
- Previous years in the educational system

Possible ways in which universities can cultivate the creativity of students:

- Reduce these standardised models which are pervasive in university education
- Universities can add extra courses for students complementary to the existing ones, which will have a different evaluation system that emphasizes the diversity of students rather than compare all the students with the same model (e.g. multiple choice questions).

Goal: We need to make innovation a habit; we need to make it systematic in University education.

### Czech Republic

*Charles University*

*Jana Korabova*

**Introduction.** Creativity is considered part of intelligence. Creative students have greater self-motivation. This is why they need universities to support the. But what kind of support is appropriate?



Formal education offer to students intellectual assistance, but creativity can also be tapped into a free environment. Students need enough leeway to allow self-actualization.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** The Keller Plan as a modality of students' s creativity evolution.

1. Do creative students prefer this form of education?
2. Are universities open to the Personalized System of Instruction that is the Keller Plan?
3. Is creativity work on in the condition of freedom?

The aim is to find a way to offer individual support to all student during his university studies to that they creativity is fostered.

**Analysis.** The Keller Plan was developed by [Fred S. Keller](#) and is based on [Skinner's](#) theories of [behaviourism](#). It is also known as the Personalized System of Instruction "PSI".

**Conclusions.** Students need from the university a highbrow support based on their own requirements as well as leeway to develop their creativity. As students are able to acquire some academic knowledge by lessons, university can be turned into a place to discuss.

**Recommendations.** To create conditions for individual support of each student on the university.

**References** [The Keller Plan Handbook: Essays on a Personalised System of Instruction \(the Benjamin Psi Series\), Softcover \(1974\)](#)

## Germany

### *Freie Universität Berlin*

#### *Indra Karklytė*

**Introduction.** A lot of students suffer from psychosomatic complaints which in some cases lead to severe problems like abuse of psychotropics, eating disorders, depression and burn-outs. All that worsens quality of students life and cause lost of motivation. But it must not be so. In most cases it is not the lack of interest or ability to study the chosen course, but rather inappropriate way of learning and/ or teaching that impedes the academical progress. So what can be done in order to treat students as creative individuals rather than learning machines?

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** Creativity is human's ability to find new solutions, new problems or to create something new. For all kinds of experiments to take place, courage, time and space is needed. Unfortunately, the mental overload at university makes it difficult to even feel able to manage the obligatory stuff, let alone to create something. How can universities help to develop the creative potential of the students?

**Analysis.** Most of the time students spend sitting and engaging in linguistical or logical activities like listening, reading, counting etc. Sunk in abstract thinking, they alienate from mundane world. Constantly being under pressure to perform, students usually skip the pauses, ignore their body signs and neglect social contacts. That is common, especially if they feel they are unsuccessful or incompetent.

Yet it is known that monotony and too much stress deminishes the ability to come up with original ideas whereas variety and self-confidence stimulates it. The problem is, that some types of intelligence

(e.g. linguistic, logical) are generally emphasized at universities while others (like visual, musical, kinesthetic) are ignored and left for artistic courses only. Students who have various preferences but use only one of them get bored.

At this point some of students take a free semester, consider giving up studies or they seek out an informal education center. Concepts like Vera Birkenbihl's and RechtSchnell are good examples of multimedia teaching. They present material combining visual, aural and linguistic stimuli and make it interactive.

**Conclusions.** Even if the study object itself demands accomplishments in strongly predefined tasks rather than creativity, it is still possible to arrange an inspiring environment for students at university and it is beneficial to do so.

Recommendations to Rectors and European Commissioners: Students health and quality of life should be seen as important and measures in means of reducing requirements (obligatory courses, exams, and papers) according to length of study should be undertaken. Teaching should be modernised by creating multimedia material; different personalities and learning types should be acknowledged by encouraging various forms of participating in the classes and exams. Students' awareness of learning methods based on neuroscience should be raised. Lastly, a link should be built with informal education centers.

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## **Hungary**

***Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE), Budapest***

***Barbara Nyircsák***

**Introduction.** I find my topic very exciting because our profession requires creativity and innovative thinking to satisfy the needs of the children we teach. We can develop these both through formal and informal education. Unfortunately we do not have enough opportunities to develop these skills in formal education as there are too many students in each class, we do not have too many opportunities to express ourselves in the lessons, and the tasks that we have to do are not very challenging.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** Changes in the structure of the lessons and the whole system of our education may be able to give more opportunities to develop the skills mentioned above. Student exchange could also help as exchange students could share their experiences and ideas.

How to develop creativity and innovative thinking through formal education?

What changes are needed to be made to get more tasks that are challenging, need innovative thinking, creativity and individualism?

How to develop student exchange program?

**Conclusions.** I expect to exchange ideas with other students and to get answers to my questions during the UNICA Meeting 2010.

## **Italy**

**Sapienza University of Rome**

**Lorenzo Pizzuti, Carlotta Rossi**

**Introduction and Hypotheses, questions, aims.** Our topic is focused on the way in which formal and informal education can affect either students' university life and their creativity. What we would like to point out is how these main aspects, combined together, are able to improve our university life and our future, giving to the students not only different points of view but most of all the capability of problem solving by considering creative and non official solutions. Our task includes also the consideration of what the job market is seeking among the new generation of young workers: flexibility, multilingualism, communication skills, work in team and many others "new" soft and hard skills.

**Analysis.** We may explain what informal and formal educations are: on one side formal education is a process of training and developing people in knowledge, skills, mind and character in a structured and certified program; on the other side what we mean as informal education is something we acquire during lifetime, not involving school books, but personal and social experiences from daily life. Informal and formal educations help to nurture our creativity; what we're questioning about is: how universities can help during this process? First of all, we asked to ourselves to give a definition of creativity, finding many different ways to define it, since everyone has their own idea of what creativity is: for some people creativity is the ability to generate innovative ideas and manifest them from thought into reality, for others creativity is a natural part of informal education, and most of the students agree on the fact that an idea that is not implemented in a successful way is still creative.

**Conclusions.** We agree that creativity can help to develop the self-identity of students, and that higher education can play an important role helping students to improve their creative abilities and their self-consciousness through life. How to do that? The first step we can move is to analyze and collect information from our university and foreign universities, make a comparison and accordingly to the students' needs it will be possible to suggest programmes, activities and actions which can be seriously considered in order to become an important asset of the last generation of universities' profile around Europe.

**Recommendations.** What we recommend is to activate programs built on flexibility. Increasing informal ways of education is fundamental to get students involved in the education process based on experience and the major aim should be to get them ready for the job market, keeping the theoretical side but most of all increasing the practical training. So, how is it possible to nurture creativity? We think the best solution is the one which makes "students not only students" but includes, in the formation process, various activities recognized by the universities and inserted in the curricula of every faculty/department according to the major subjects. The focal point is to build an international environment, so should be advertised and made more operative the possibility for student to study abroad by implementing English courses everywhere. (Workshops, collaboration with companies, team projects among students, trips around the world in order to understand and consider the "foreign point of view", artistic competitions, problem solving courses, English courses, funds for R&D... are just few of the many examples we could find in order to make the general asset more effective) .

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Hans J. Eysenck

Race, Intelligence and Education (in the US: The IQ Argument)

## **Lithuania**

*Vilnius University, Vilnius*

*Agnė Čepelytė*

**Introduction.** The formal education refers to the form of education that is accomplished by university, school or training institution and leads to a diploma or certificate. While non-formal learning can be defined as courses that are open to everyone, with no examination at the end, do not result in a degree award. The informal education includes personal development, acquire some practical skills, intellectual fulfillment. This kind of education can be taken anywhere, event at home while reading a book. The informal learning is a way to induce creativity of the students of formal education.

### ***Hypotheses, questions, aims.***

What role should university take in informal education? Should the informal learning be integrated into study system? Should the informal learning be recognized of prior learning?

Is innovation significant in educational system? In what means can innovation be noticed in study process? In what sense it is related? How creativity is associated with formal and informal education? What sense creativity makes to study process and students?

**Analysis.** University is an institution of higher education forming intellectual, open-minded and universal personalities. The individual who study at university gets knowledge but usually lacks practical skills. The informal education could be a part of formal education as an opportunity for university to enhance the chances to students get necessary practical skills. Furthermore, it is necessary to induce non-formal learning. The means, in which students can be induced, vary from specific scholarships to recognition non-formal education as prior formal. The recognition of non-formal learning would be significant step to more liberal and innovative studies, taking into consideration that most of universities offer “theoretical studies” where students hardly have the space for practice, their own minds, ideas or interpretations, especially if individual studies technical sciences. What is more,

informal education is an opportunity to induce the creativity of students, to find new solutions to the problems, deal with challenges and prompt “thinking out of the box” . Moreover the informal education is an area of problem learning or project learning, discussion or other ways of innovative learning integration into study system that will help not only get knowledge but remember them and adapt into practice.

**Conclusions.** The role of university in stimulation of students’ creativity and the innovation of study process is essential. Furthermore, the formal and informal education should be related, giving and getting benefit from each other. The benefit could be defined as more liberal, flexible studies, when knowledge is used in practice, the creativity and other ways of learning, for example, problem-solving learning, projects, discussions or other means are induced.

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## **The Netherlands**

*Universiteit van Amsterdam*

*Frank Groot*

**Introduction.** Both the European ‘Education and Training 2010’- and the ‘Education and Training 2020’-programme emphasize the importance of life-long learning processes and a European economy that is knowledge-based. In order to obtain such a economy, exploring both the possibilities and limitations of formal, non-formal and informal learning remains important as ever, and poses questions to governments, social partners and institutions like universities.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** What are the gains that can be obtained by non-formal and informal learning processes? Do these processes foster lifelong learning for European citizens in addition to formal learning? If so, how to find legitimate standards for identification and validation of the obtained knowledge? Furthermore, in what way can technical innovations contribute to learning processes, and how can this be used by universities?

**Analysis.** Formal learning places the student in a setting that is discontinuous from normal life. Arguing that skills are taught ways of using individual capacities, formal learning equips the student with different skills than non-formal and informal learning do. In the latter two, study material is, in essence, put back into socially relevant action, and made more instrumental. In lifelong learning, it is clear these forms of learning offer great possibilities, in addition to formal learning.

However, a problem arises in the identification and validation of learning. Whereas there are already systems in place for the validation of formal learning, the validation of informal and non-formal learning is far more challenging. At the European level, the need for a set of Common principles is set out by Ministers of education and the Commission. In finding these, a bottom up approach appears best in keeping existing principles in member states in place. Recent and long existing validation methods could be used to find a generalized set of Common principles.

New technology offers a wide range of possibilities for informal and non-formal learning. As for now, the computer solely has a supportive role in learning, and not yet all of its advantages are being used. Learning via (computer) games still runs into lack of acceptance and integration problems. However, recent progress in the field shows the major benefits that learning via games can have. Furthermore, mobile learning, however not yet very advanced, seems a valuable tool for distance learning that is worth investigating.

**Conclusion.** It is evident informal and non-formal learning offer the development of different skills than formal learning does. Essential is that at a European level problems in identification and validation are being solved, preferably via a bottom up approach to maintain existing national principles. In the development of informal learning methods, technology like mobile smart phones and games can play an important role.

Recommendations to Rectors, European Commissioners, etc: In order to expand the use of non-formal and informal learning methods, it is important that incentives for the development of technology as aid to learning methods be supported, possibly in cooperation with social partners and private institutions and companies. Accompanied by a bottom-up approach to form European Common principles for identification and validation, this should foster life-long learning.

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## **Poland**

*University of Warsaw*

*Daniel Kontowski*

**Introduction.** Let the students be creative: award them with money, declare contents on best essays, create a funds for allowing the best to learn really for free, open the walls for their works. Don't try to change the person (creativity workshops) – but rather give them the devices and **References**. allowing their creativity to spring out. I became clear during the communism period in Eastern Europe that overcoming obstacles is the best school of creativity.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** I believe that most students on the university are oriented on job-market – so even creativity in learning means for them not restructuring the personality, but rather a way to reach something a potential employer will be happy to find in him/her. The university in its policy should not focus on such a people, (rather make their way desk-smooth); who really counts are those few, who wish to somehow find their way of sincere life – only those could recreate the energy of university education that should make us a free people (once it was called a purpose of artes liberales).

**Analysis.** Informal education for me can only be based on a master-disciple basis, if it has to be a thriving one. University could encourage students and staff to create such pairs, but one should not believe that there will be many students that want to take advantage of such an option. A student must be creative to get something really valuable from the institution, but nobody can make him/her want it. Probably most of them are not in his/her place at the university, that is nothing to struggle with. If we want to keep the formative function of the university, we should orient our action on some top 5%. Let students compete to be a part of it (like honors programme in the U.S.) – from Latin studentes means 'those, who try hard'.

**Conclusions.** Creativity is the energy that makes the world different – you cannot learn it, knowing the present one. The only thing the university can do is opening their rules for those, who suffocate while wishing that their anger will have less effects pervers than technocratic solutions prepared in the ministries of higher education.

### **Recommendations.**

English courses? Only by foreigners, not only academics – meeting different scientific culture broaden horizons even in your country. Translation classes? One person from target language, the other from a source one. But generally, the university has the obligation to learn us to think wisely, and most of us do it better in his/her own language. Think of other language as a device of communication, not as a school subject.

Student exchanges? Let's get abroad to learn, not for work&fun: less people, but in better conditions (bilateral contracts between universities, programmes of inviting students from other countries, not only inside the EU, but also on the East and USA to begin with). I don't see the point in going abroad to learn without taking an in-depth look into the academic culture and university, triangulating one's own experiences and new views from abroad. It may be just O.K., but this rather won't help in bringing up student's creativity as a member of scientific community.

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## **Portugal**

Universidade de Lisboa (UL), Lisbon

Universidade Nova de Lisboa (UNL), Lisbon

Inês Cisneiros (UL), Filipa Corrêa Mendes (UNL)

**Introduction.** The Bologna Process brought new perspectives to the learning/teaching process: globalization imposes some adjustments to the 21st century. In how many ways can we teach? In how many ways can we learn? Are they all equally effective? We cannot rely exclusively on books. Life is more than theory and students need to learn how to be practical. Need to learn how to solve daily life problems, in order to have a better scientifically and professionally awareness and understanding. All this requires students to be creative, to think out of the box, to dare.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** How to face the lack of encouragement of personal creativity on students? And moreover, how to make students embrace their creative side? Do professors have these concerns? How do students, who study in different areas of education, benefit from being more creative? How to avoid teachers/students resistance to innovation?

**Analysis.** Many interesting jobs and careers combine two or more areas of knowledge. Political science, for example, requires students to be well versed in philosophy but also statistics. Civil servants in higher positions need not only to know the law, but also have more than one analytical framework: the science of law and sociology might go together. Classical books teach us about ways to live, to enjoy life; they prepare us for challenges that lay far ahead, unknown to us. There are even examples in Chinese higher education that considers ways to broaden its scope, making Humanities compulsory to engineer and hard sciences students. Portuguese colleges tend to neglect informal education, evaluating students almost exclusively by their hard skills (specific, teachable abilities that can be quantified). On the other hand, learning technologies are now diversified: teaching presence – VLE (Virtual Learning Environment); teaching without attending - Distance Education, Education Online; technological support Education - E-learning.

**Conclusions.** Education must not be focused only on hard skills, as the creative spirit of students allows them to develop a more complete and balanced mind. Universities should prepare students for their future life, for they will not only be workers but citizens. An informal education develops soft skills (i.e. communication, reaction, global perspective) on students who will grow up to become complete as individuals and competent in their future chosen career. Therefore, universities need to monitor the evolution of the society and the new technologies that can enhance and improve teaching methods and interaction with students.

**Recommendations.** : Make teaching with creative methods compulsory. Periodically assess the quality of teaching methods and promote the dissemination of effective ones. Promote extra-curricular



activities, complementing formal education with informal education – innovating, by making them part of the curriculum and giving students meaningful ECTS.

## **Russian Federation**

*Lomonosov Moscow State University, Moscow*

*Andrey Bazovoy*

**Introduction.** Contemporary markets abide by the laws of the economy of knowledge what puts information in the first place as a resource and makes ability to create new knowledge the prior competitive advantage. This requires new abilities from the contemporary work force. Universities as the main supplier of the highly competitive work force should take this into account and nurture the creativity of students. So far there is no question ‘why’ or ‘what for’ - the only question is ‘how’.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** That brings us to the following aims of the contemporary educational process:

To develop courses and methods which would allow students to put their knowledge into practice and make students try to create new knowledge by facing incomprehensible tasks and situations.

To combine all of these courses into integral system aimed at improving skills required by the particular specialization.

Provide a “double loop” control over the educational process to provide its flexibility and viability.

**Analysis.** All of these aims can be achieved through introduction of the role-playing models, as it is done on the Faculty of Global Studies of Lomonosov Moscow State University. The Faculty is divided into 2 departments, one with specialization on politics and one - on economics. Accordingly, we have at least 2 role-playing models organized every year: imitation of the political processes (“Ukraine - 2010”, “Chile: 1970-1973”) and imitation of the open market (“Capital”). What is essential, students from both departments can take part in these games what allows them to get broader knowledge beyond their specialization. The success of this program (where participation is voluntary) is proved by the growing interest amongst the students and professors.

**Conclusions.** To conclude with I would like to answer to the question in the heading: yes, we can, and we must graduate creative and flexible students. That’s why I strongly recommend all of the Universities introduce role-playing models into their educational system. European Committee here might provide some support in a material and methodological fields.

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## **Slovakia (1)**

*Comenius University, Bratislava*

*Michal Benedik*

**Introduction.** The importance of education is indisputable. I think that human culture is based on learning. Category culture has its etymological origin in the Latin word "Colère" which means "to

cultivate the land." The concept of culture is an important determinant of the historical and philosophical perspectives on the importance of culture. Culture is based on the cultivation and education of all its members. At the turn of the 8th and 9th century British monk Alkuin of York, acting at the court of Charlemagne, understood education as an important part of human existence and culture. Alkuin claimed that "those cultural progresses towards perfection, the limitations remain illiterate." Cultivation of human skills was at the time of Charlemagne considered the peak of human culture. Alkuin was convinced that "it is difficult to learn, but the fruit is sweet." Education is a lifelong process for full humanization of man and culture, involving processes such as socialization, personalization and enculturation. As far as education is concerned, it gives you a wide range of opportunities to develop your personality. Alkuin already in his time knew that the process of cultivation through education is a long-term process that requires much patience and effort, but on the other hand, the result is significant. Francis Bacon said: "knowledge is a power", power to change the world for the better place.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** University education has a long history and tradition. Since the establishment of universities, mankind has made great progress in acquiring knowledge and its dissemination. However, do current students have access to information tailored to today? Can the present educational system encourage students to deepen knowledge? I think that the current education system is too "traditional." I believe that the traditional method of teaching through traditional lectures have no future. I see the future of education in modern information systems and their use in the learning process.

**Analysis.** Problems of implementing information systems in education is not new. Nowadays, however, there is no single concept of using these devices in practice. The importance of lectures and direct contact "professor - student" is indisputable. On the other hand, it creates a space for student's passivity and learning is only about memorizing information. Modern information systems give teachers the opportunity to analyze any problem graphically. Any problem can be graphically distributed under the sub-problems, so students quickly understand the problem. I think that the future of education is in e-learning technology with the use of traditional consultation. I believe that in addition to technology, education system also depends on the relationship "teacher - student". Students may feel fear and shame for their nescience, but they must enjoy learning. The teacher should be able to create a friendly atmosphere along the lines of Socratic education through dialogue.

**Conclusions.** Thanks to modern technologies with the using of the e – learning systems students will be able to get ,thanks to the Internet, a huge amount of information that can then be consulted with their teacher. Education needs to limit the need of memorizing information, on the other hand, thanks to technologies students should become more analytical and thus it gives students the opportunity to their own creative work and the ability to create their own professional opinion. I work as a teacher, so I know that it very much depends on the attitude towards students. I think that through the proper approach in a creative, not forcibly formal environment, teacher can easily motivate the student and bring him to knowledge. I believe that friendly and creative university environment can cultivate and prepare for human culture a huge number of creative and successful people. Recommendations to Rectors, European Commissioners, etc... Regular and targeted use of information technology, emphasis on individual student learning through the Internet and e-learning programs, creating a pleasant and friendly atmosphere in a relationship "teacher - student" will lead students to greater creativity and independence in thinking.

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## **Slovakia (2)**

### ***Comenius University in Bratislava, Bratislava***

#### ***Barbora Gallusova***

Children usually don't like school. School brings stress and failure and they are going to spend whole childhood and teen age there. Unfortunately, they don't have many options. One of them, creative form of education, can make the learning process less painful. Knowledge is better absorbed when served in interesting way.

Universities are different. Students attend universities because they want to. However, in these days, when obtaining information is very easy, universities must bring added value to learning process. Understanding is more important than memorizing. Some studies show that human person pays higher attention to abnormal situations or to unexpected events. So the informal educational process increases the student's impressibility and he is ready to absorb the new knowledge.

The creative learning promotes the creativity of students. To solve an unconventional task, the student has to be creative and to think unusually. Every good company or firm recognizes it, so the study prepares students to the real life. But to formulate an interesting problem is very difficult. And the question is: Are the teachers motivated to teach innovatively? Are they awarded for their effort to make their lessons popular? Maybe some teachers would like to teach informal and attractive, but they are not allowed because of bureaucracy.

I think the innovation in educational process – informal and popular lessons are not only possible, but they are desirable. The role of universities is to create good conditions for teachers and students to express their creativity and award them for it.

## **Spain (1)**

### ***Universidad Complutense de Madrid***

#### ***Paula Zumalacárregui.***

**Introduction.** Not only can universities nurture the creativity of students – I firmly believe they should do so. Higher education prepare us to become responsible professionals, but it should also be an important tool to help shape up those qualities which characterise us as human beings. Creativity holds one of the most important positions amongst these characteristic qualities. Furthermore, we can only call ourselves 'human beings' because of this characteristic –we managed to evolve from the ape to what we currently are due to our ability to create the devices we needed to better ourselves. Creativity stands together with the competitiveness necessary to outstand in any kind of job –and life in general. This is why it should be a complementary subject to be tackled one way or another throughout every stage of higher education.

***Aims and analysis.*** There are many ways in which the subject of creativity can be approached to at university, but the ones I am most interested in are those related to artistic creativity. This sort of creativity can –and, again, should– be exercised both within and outside the academic programme. First of all, it would be most helpful for students, even for economics or medicine students, to take courses in topics such as art, literature, music or film. Every discipline intertwines with the others to give shape to a more complete professional –a creative professional is one who’s intelligence has been enhanced and developed to achieve the best results possible.

Secondly, creativity at university can be trained by extracurricular activities. Drama or literary workshops, art exhibitions, competitions and so on can be organised at university, by and for students. This kind of activities have, among others, two benefits. On the one hand, they give students the opportunity to take a break from studying when actually making their brains work and improve. On the other, they help them develop those other areas of their personalities which are left aside by their actual subjects.

In conclusion, it seems clear that it is essential to nurture the creativity of students because it brings beneficial consequences to them both in the academic-professional sphere and in the personal sphere. And university can, and definitely must, find the most appropriate ways to do so.

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### **Spain (2)**

***Universidad Autonoma de Madrid***

***Daniel Díaz***

***Introduction.*** The introduction of the new technologies (less and less new) in a transverse way in the daily routine of the students has generated a new language of communication and a new way of sharing information, and has promoted the continuous learning of them.

***Aims and analysis.*** Currently, these tools not only offer us another channel of communication, but also generate new contents, structures of information, and different ways of drawing the interpretation of reality. Thus, the student's creativity stops limiting to the form to centre on the form: creativity is being used in the process, in the tools managed, and in how these structure our knowledge. In this way, 2.0 web facilitates creativity of the informal process, encouraging interaction between users, information flowing outside the external control, connecting process with the previous experiences of the apprentices, and, essentially, for starting from the direct practice of the users. (Hager, 2001) Therefore, University, in the last few years, is developing experiences helping the integral education of the student: we leave the idea of a teacher distributing his knowledge, and embrace learning as a team built on the schemes of members interconnected and, finally, the renovation of the own concept of education.

**Conclusions and recommendations.** Designing creativity as method, instead of result. However, it must be generated a coherent frame with this new approximation, and favor a participative, dynamic environment where new technologies are playing a nuclear role.

**Sweden**

**Stockholm University, Stockholm**

**Carolina Ordoñez Asenjo**

**Introduction.** Formal & informal education are both a crucial part of the academic world. Formal education here being the education students receive in class during seminars, lectures and such. Informal education on the other hand consists of the extracurriculars beyond the formal education such as involvement in the student body unions, student parliament and other similar groups on campus. The definitions of creativity and innovation were debated in our forum and my personal definition is that creativity includes all forms of way of thinking outside the box and improvisation. Innovation on the other hand is for me the kind of creative thinking and solutions that are profitable, officially new and unique, business oriented and that innovation therefore would be the more structured part of creativity.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** My hypothesis is that HEIs are able to increase or at least develop their students' creativity either by using different methods of formal education such as e.g. debates, presentation and group projects. Or else the HEIs can do so by using informal methods for instance giving aid to the student body unions and other relevant groups on campus; or preferably by using both formal and informal methods.

**Analysis.** The analysis consists of comparing the information from the studies found below as my **References.** and comparing those to my own personal experiences of how my university works with its students; in ways that might help to develop the students' creativity.

**Conclusions.** My conclusion is that my university is using several of the methods that were recommended in the 2007 EUA report on creativity and that Stockholm as a city offers several of the factors that attract creative knowledge workers. And that the university by doing so is nurturing the students' creativity. However I do not believe that the use of a specific method of formal and/or informal education can guarantee innovation; considering that no matter the goal, a creative idea will not necessarily become a financially successful product or service.

**Recommendations.** My recommendation to Rectors and others involved in the universities decision process is to continue to support the student body unions and other organizations on campus by participating in the larger projects, informing new students of their existence during more formal seminars and such, and to continue helping them financially. It is also important to from an early age make critical thinking a part of the national school system because creativity at universities will never flourish if students can't think on their own or are afraid to do so if creative thinking might hurt their future careers.

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## **Switzerland**

### ***University of Lausanne***

#### ***Jean-Baptiste Oboni***

***Introduction.*** Creativity is becoming a new important resource for cities and regions economy. Thus, it give a competitive advantage. In that way, universities should nurture or improve the creativity of their students.

How universities could make flourish this creativity is the main purpose. Is it with innovation, formal or informal education ? Formal education is a process of training in a structured and certified program. Informal, on the other hand, is everything a student can do meanwhile studying in his university, i.e. associative lifes, faculty duties, student jobs, hobbies, sports, travels, arts,...

***Hypotheses, questions, aims.*** The main goal is to determine what universities should or have to do in order to promote the creativity of their students. Bringing together different points of view, we will discuss on how to achieve this goal.

***Analysis.*** To achieve their goal, universities have to sensibilize students how to develop their creativity. With formal education, universities have to teach students how to sharpen their critical sense, but obviously to help acquiring theoretic knowledge and practical know-how in their field, too. With informal education, they have to apply their knowledge, to extend their horizons... Group working is important, too, as a way of comparing the points of view. Innovations are useful to keep the teaching skills up-to-date. In my university, a lot of exchanges are made possible because of the neighboring polytechnic school (EPFL). A lot of infrastructures are shared and cursus in common such as specialized master exist for several years. This leads to interessant partnerships for students.

***Conclusions.*** Universities have a major role in nurturing the creativity of students. Moreover, in order to stay attractive and to offer a capital gain to the local economy, they have to do it. There are several ways of doing it, and none should be taken away. Perhaps creativity can only come from students. Nevertheless universities must allow them to fully develop their own skills.

#### ***Recommendations.***

1. To offer appropriate formal education
2. To offer resources. , such as library, sport center, other infrastructures, time,...
3. To promote social life, associative life, faculty duties, student jobs,...

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## 6. The Bologna process and the development of the European higher education: quality, employability and social issues.

Albania

*Polytechnic University of Tirana*

*Enik Shytermeja*

**Introduction.** The Bologna Process is one of the major challenges that Europe is facing as the European member states are preceding towards unification. This is a time for hope for students who dream of breaking down educational borders and creating a European Higher Education Area where learning is encouraged and enabled in an integrated way across the continent. Yet in Albania this process is in a phase where contradictions and difficulties rise every single day, mainly in economic, political and social aspects of student mobility rather than in academic aspects.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** Albania is not part of the European Union yet and so compared to the EU students, non EU students including me and 50000 more have to face long lines at the embassies of the country they want to continue their studies, preparing lots of papers and documents, fully stressed because of failure in finding scholarships and of course “fighting” in non-equal conditions as we are non EU students. So the question is: Why do Albanian students have to face the problem of visa issue? Why can't they get enrolled at a foreign university paying the same fees as the EU students? Why are we still getting diplomas which are not unified with those of the EU? Is there a way to stop this kind of non equal fees? How we as Albanians can get equal opportunities free from discrimination and obstacles?

**Analysis.** The hindrance to transfer the credits from an Albanian university to one in an EU country without additional equivaliation exams. Even though Albanian Universities are part of Bologna Process, the Ministry of Education has defined and applies a parallel system of graduation using these terms: Diploma of first level which implies Bachelor Degree equivalent to three year study period and the Diploma of Second Level which implies Master Degree that is two years of study of 120 credits. Another hindrance is the lack of proper agreements to arrange for the students to attend further studies abroad having the same opportunities as other students from EU countries. Here I refer to the fees for attending universities which are rather high for us that is 60-100% thus being unaffordable by us. So apart from additional exams we have to take, the problem of the high school fees prevent us from applying for further education abroad. The access to Erasmus Program is very limited because a student that wants to attend it should have a reference from a professor in the university he/she wants to go to. For students of other countries to attend the program they have sufficient access to apply directly while for the Albanian students the application has to go through the relevant department of the University. So it is a longer process and rather bureaucratic. Apart from that the visa issue is a problem. Another aspect which needs attention is the number of quotas for the students' enrolment in the universities of EU countries. The Non-EU students have almost half opportunities compared to EU students.

**Conclusions and Recommendations.** Equal students' flow across EU countries will ensure openness of higher education institutions, academic and social advancement and the cultural networking of



students. It will be testimony of a true European University Area. This can be done by creating national strategies to increase mobility numbers and providing the appropriate support to them.

The number of problems listed above referring to students' mobility require the attention of the Ministry of Education in Albania on the one hand as it has to establish the same diploma system as that of the EU countries. Apart from that the Ministry should consider the establishment of relations between Universities through exchange programs, students' internships and summer schools

On the other hand the EU commissioners covering the education area should consider the improvement of the accessibility for the Albanian Students so that they can have the same opportunities as the EU students. This is indispensable due to the process of integration of our country in the EU. Student's mobility will be one of the ways to accelerate the integration of our country and lead to the meeting of the EU standards by Albania.

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### **Austria**

***University of Vienna***

***Stefan Pierer***

***Introduction.*** The Bologna Process is the attempt to create an unified European area of higher education. The process started by the Ministers of Education of the 29 signatory countries in 1999 has had influence on not just the area of education since then. With the vehicles of

- a three-cycle structure for the higher educational system (Bachelor's, Master's and PhD degree)
- the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)
- the Diploma Supplement
- joint degree programmes and
- a Quality Assurance system

various measures, frameworks and benchmarks have been established and implemented.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** The documents and regulations of the Bologna Process often leave considerable space for interpretation and specific national implementation of measures and steps agreed on the European level. This is a sensible and sensitive way of implementation, just as a necessity in the creation of an unified European educational area. In line with other social trends (e.g. concerning public healthcare, pension systems etc.), this open space for manoeuvre leads increasingly to the establishment of an economic logic in education, in nationally diverse ways.

I would like to have a closer look on this trend, formulate sometimes fundamental critique on parts and concepts of the process, without losing track of the necessary reforms and improvements of the current state of the European educational systems.

**Analysis.** Topics playing an important role in all areas of reform and all steps conducted by the Bologna Process advocates are „Employability“, „Social Issues“ and „Quality Assurance“.

It is doubtless positive, when graduated students find working places quicker and are better prepared to fulfill employers' expectations and requirements, and when employers can communicate their requirements concerning their future workforce more clearly. Though, the increasing influence of businesses and industries on academic teaching and research has been a major factor in recent restructuring which found opponents both within the teaching staff and students.

Social issues are an important topic what concerns study fees and selection procedures. While it is clear that the amount of provided student-places has to be negotiated within a society, the reforms concerning those points lead towards a specific role model of university and abandon other historically grown, continental models of higher education.

**Conclusions.** Various progressive reforms and improvements have been addressed by the Bologna Process, making European educational systems fitter for the challenges of a globalising world. Though, in the mostly applied problem-oriented, „rational“ way of arguing aiming at win-win-situations, larger and deeper social trends are out of focus.

**Recommendations.** The Bologna Process has with the unification of the European educational areas an extremely high and difficult aim. Within the broad field of the various reforms, innovations and steps of restructuring, often weak points of educational systems are addressed and positive steps of reform are taken. But decision makers have to understand that a competition-oriented, economic logic can not fully be introduced in organically grown educational systems.

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## **Belgium**

*Vrije Universiteit Brussel/Université libre de Bruxelles – Brussels*

*Antoine Struelens/Katharina Hekele*

**Introduction.** Social issues, the quality of education, and the employability of students have already been a topic before Bologna, but Bologna has not ended the discussions. Are our universities not good enough? Do our studies really prepare us well for the job market? And is there social justice in our system?

**Hypotheses, questions, aim:** How can it be possible to combine a high quality of education (which might be rather costly, and maybe partly financed by rising study fees), a high employability of students (which is interconnected with – because based on - a high-quality education system) and attention for social issues, meaning first of all money issues. What can be the right balance between the quality of studies and universities on the one hand and relatively low fees in order to make higher education open to everyone on the other hand?

**Analysis.** Solving the questions above is crucial for the students of today and most likely even more so for future students: our governments seem to have every time less money for education, mainly due to the aging of our societies but as well caused by the financial crisis. But if we still want quality, what shall we do? We need to take care of the social dimension of studying. The study systems in Europe today are still excluding young people from poorer/non-academic households. This is automatically reducing the chances of those young people to lead a better life than their parents – they are not “employable”, or at least not for jobs requiring an academic education. This social injustice reflected by the education system is one of the major challenges in the future; Europe cannot risk losing many of those talented potential future students only because their parents are lacking the financial resources. . A crucial thing to do would be making study credits easily available to everyone and/or to have an extensive grant system – a lack of financial resources. should not cause a student to be highly indebted after his studies; that fear is one factor withholding many talented people from studying. This is an unacceptable loss to society, especially because the money invested in a good education system today will pay off tomorrow, when there are less people without the necessary qualifications for the job market and therefore less unemployed.

**Conclusions.** In order to combine quality and employability while at the same time avoiding social injustice, grants and cheap credits have to be available for students without sufficient resources. . It is unacceptable that money decides about who studies and who does not in Europe. More people studying means as well more highly qualified people available on the job market, which has a positive influence on the European economic performance since knowledge is our main asset. In order to keep study fees low while quality remains high, governments have to invest more and more public money in education.

**Recommendations.** The financial support for student has to be extended. Quality and employability are very important, but they should be in balance with socially acceptable costs for studying.

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## **Croatia**

*University of Zagreb*

**Introduction.** The Bologna process officially started in 1999, with the signing of the [Bologna Declaration](#). The Bologna Process involves 47 countries undertaking a series of reforms intended to create an integrated European higher education area by 2010. Signatories to the agreement have agreed to work towards greater consistency in areas such as degree structures, credit transfer and quality assurance systems.

**Aims.**

Quality assurance (the system of monitoring and guaranteeing the quality of work)

A three cycle system

European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)

Matching academic and professional degrees

Mobility of students and professors

Life Long Learning (LLL)

A European dimension to studies

Recognition of degrees and the duration of studies

**Analysis.** Main aim of the Bologna process is to create a strong united, competitive European [educational system](#) with great emphasis on social dimension (access, equity in student support, and affordability); international dimension (attractiveness and competitiveness) and mobility. Degrees are supposed to be sufficiently similar that they will be recognized from one country to the next, encouraging student mobility. Although three cycle organization intended to enable students to get quickly first (undergraduate) higher education qualification and get on labour market, problems occurred because of the lack of knowledge and „copy paste“ mentality (employers don't know what bachelor should do and insist on finishing graduate study). Another issue concerning Bologna process is how to respond to the rapidly changing environment and still be able to maintain good quality. Because of fast Bologna implementation, many inappropriate study programs were made that resulted in low employability.

**Conclusions.** Although Bologna's aims are well written on paper, practice showed that problems emerge during its implementation. Continuous improving of Bologna process during all time is necessary while life long analysis and evaluation are needed to efficiently deal with problems that occur.

**Recommendations**

1. Communication between future employers, students and University should be intensified. Meaning of bachelor in future work environment should be explained to all parties involved.

3. Effective quality systems should be established.

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## **Cyprus**

*University of Cyprus, Nicosia*

*Anastasia Georgouli*

**Introduction.** The adoption of the Bologna Declaration has stimulated the establishment of procedures through which to achieve the convergence of higher education in Europe, which will be completed in 2010. The establishment of Framework Laws has been imperative, as it has been a right balance between full self-government of universities and exhaustive regulation of university functions from central governments.

**Hypotheses, Questions, Aims.** Our goal is to utilize the opportunity given to us through this conference to express our views about the changes we consider to be important along the guidelines of the Bologna Declaration. We will build on the experience gained over the last decade in Cyprus and Greece, and on the basis of the Framework Laws that have been developed in these countries and the reactions of all parties involved.

**Analysis.** Quality Assurance – (1) Although widely recognized, objective criteria of quality assurance in higher education are used in each national system, they should be more specific. Private higher education has to operate under the basis of the standards of public higher education, in my opinion, regarding its quality characteristics, and be controlled through the established and entrenched state supervision and control that will not allow the commercialization of education. (2) The conditions for transferring students from one university to another should be specified, in order to prevent profiteering by certain private universities against the students. (3) Participation of students in the Senate, the Faculty Advisers and Departments Councils. (4) The members of the academic staff should retire at the end of the academic year in which they complete 60 years of age, in order to contribute to the continuous renewal of the academic staff. Employability Issues – 1) What about those students that are already studying at a university or college which is being abolished? What about the alumni? Social Issues – 1) Public free education is a paramount social good that should be preserved and strengthened, as it is the ideal means of providing equal opportunities to citizens. 2) The area of tuition at private universities should be a separate category in the Framework Laws.

**Conclusions.** The establishment of modern framework laws, which guarantee the different functions of a university in a reliable, meritocratic, flexible and transparent manner, while promoting academic freedom, autonomy, quality and excellence is essential. We are hopeful that the points we will highlight will find their way and their position on the amendments to the Declaration and the Framework Laws of the countries involved.

**Recommendations.** Quality Assurance – (1) The criteria for assessing the quality and effectiveness of higher education must be clear and specific (e.g. the effectiveness and quality of teaching and learning process, promoting research in the academic unit, the responsiveness of the curriculum objectives of the academic unit and the needs of society, the effectiveness of administrative services etc.) (2) Free public higher education provided must be constantly upgraded and expanded (increase of the variety of the provided curriculum, increase of the places available for attendance, improvement of the quality of content and maintenance of its public status. On the same time, we must ensure the non-profit status of

private universities. (3) Ensure the method for transferring courses of students (studying in order to acquire a second degree, assimilating a degree, transferring of a student from another university). (4) Academics, after completing the 60th year of age, can contribute to the academic community through other means. Employability Issues – (1) More specific provisions for cases of students or alumni of abolished universities/college should exist in order to avoid any negative impact on the quality of education and vocational rehabilitation of those students. Social Issues – (1) Enlargement of the obligation of institutions to provide housing for student dorms at a shorter distance from the premises of the University. (2) The law about tuition in private universities should be amended on the basis of stricter application of the procedure for review and approval of increases in fees and determination of the maximum allowable percentage increase in tuition fees.

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## **Denmark**

### ***University of Copenhagen***

#### ***Maja Halgren Olsen***

**Introduction.** The scarcity of specialized doctors in Denmark is so critical that recruiting from other countries is necessary. With a high demand, comparable academic degrees within the member countries and free movement of workforce, it should be easy for European doctors to get a job in Denmark – But are we there yet?

**Hypothesis, questions, aims:** Are all these reforms and changes in our old traditional degree- and credit-structure worth the effort? Is employability throughout Europe only a question of holding a comparable academic degree? Or which challenges are present?

**Analysis.** The last decade's work on making the European academic degrees more comparable has in theory made it remarkably easier (still bureaucratic, difficult and time-consuming – but easier) to be granted authorization to practice medicine in Denmark, though your medical training has been outside Denmark (1). In practice, medical employees from other member countries are exposed to intense public criticism: distrust of the validity of their degrees and qualifications, lacking language skills, cultural understanding and a large range of other social issues – each creating difficult conditions for the employability (2). This tells us, that the effort of making academic degree standards and quality assurance standards more comparable throughout Europe has been beneficial and is continuing necessary, in order to achieve and develop a specialized, strong (and healthy) workforce (in Denmark). It is however not sufficient. Employability does not only depend on the persons' (on paper) knowledge, skills and abilities – achieved at a university and translated into a standardized piece of "paper". Employability also depends on the labor market environment and the specific context – in this case not only the demand for labor, but also the employer's, co-worker's and patients/customers knowledge about and acceptance of the quality of this "paper".

**Conclusions and Recommendations.** The development of the European higher education – implicit the work of the Bologna Process – has had large implications for the individual countries' educational systems – but it has been beneficial. Not only in regard to improving the public health service in Denmark - but in Europe as a whole - as one way to realize its full potential and competitiveness as a

knowledge economy. The European countries are urged continuing to participate active in the work of making academic degrees more comparable throughout Europe. A common framework of qualifications has been developed and implemented, focus should however also be on how to facilitate employability - in practice – and how to address the social issues and lacking acceptance and understanding of the quality of an academic degree from another member country.

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### **Estonia**

***Tallinn University of Technology (EST)***

***Oliver Kiisler***

***Introduction.*** The original Bologna Declaration said that the creation of the European Higher Education Area was a key way to promote citizens' employability. Employability is defined as the ability to gain initial employment, to maintain employment and to be able to move around within the labour market. Increasing the employability of our people is also a key to improve the efficiency of our economies and the prospects for economic growth.

***Hypothesis, questions, aims:*** A fact is that a lack of attention to the skills requested by the employers has resulted in negative implications for curriculum development. It is extremely relevant to ascertain what types of skills are requested by the labour market. Are professional skills, which are associated with the speciality, sufficient for the employers? Or do they request the so-called soft skills and as well? Soft skills are a cluster of personality traits, social graces, communication, language, personal habits, friendliness and optimism that characterize relationships with other people.

***Analysis.*** In recent years progress has been made in strengthening the employability of graduates. Key to this has been improved dialogue and co-operation between employers and institutions: this allows institutions to be more responsive to employers' needs and allows employers to understand the educational perspective. There have been tangible benefits. For example, some countries' higher education institutions have begun to define their mission as more employer-facing, some have started to seek a closer match between curricula and the needs of employers, and others have improved the opportunities for work placements with employers.

But these have not become widespread or deeply embedded. Greater dialogue between higher education institutions and employers, improving employability skills and strengthening the provision of information, advice and guidance to prospective students as well as to those graduating, are all areas where more remains to be done.

The role of higher education is to equip students with skills and attributes (knowledge, attitudes and behaviours) that individuals need in the workplace and that employers require, and to ensure that people have the opportunities to maintain or renew those skills and attributes throughout their working lives. At the end of a course, students will thus have an in-depth knowledge of their subject as well as generic employability skills.

This is a shared responsibility between governments, government agencies, higher education institutions, employers and students. The rewards for success are great: a European Higher Education Area which maximises the talents of all its citizens and which contributes to the realisation of the Europe of knowledge.

**Conclusions.** The main key to guarantee sufficient employability is enhancing the quality of higher education. The enhanced quality of higher education can be achieved by putting a stress on the skills which are actually requested by the labour market. Modern society and labour market needs multi-skilled specialists, they can only be produced by universities which integrate soft skills into the teaching process and thereby enhance the quality of higher education. Innovation and continuous development of our economies is possible only with higher education where professional skills are supported by the soft skills.

**Recommendations.** With labour markets increasingly relying on higher skill levels and transversal competences, higher education should equip students with the advanced knowledge, skills and competences they need throughout their professional lives.

It is extremely relevant to acknowledge the importance of active learning in the teaching process. Group works, practical study classes, seminars, exercise classes, problem- and project-based learning – these are the means to guarantee the growth and development of multi-skilled specialists in our universities.

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## **Finland**

**University of Helsinki**

**Katja Tuokko**

**Introduction.** The Bologna Process aims to increase the academic degree and quality assurance standards in Europe at the same time making them more compatible and comparable. In addition, a central part of the Bologna Process, initiated in 1999, deals with social issues. The Bologna Process deals with dilemmas regarding economic issues, family and gender quality and selection procedures and taking people with disabilities into consideration. All over Europe, also in Finland, economic issues such as student fees and the right to free education are a hot topic. Organizations such as the



OECD have in their country report recommended that Finland should introduce study fees in order to better finance university level studies.

**Hypothesis, Questions.** In this abstract I will discuss the economic aspects of education, in particular student fees. What would be the best way to finance tertiary studies? What are the arguments for student fees? What, on the other hand, are the benefits of free university level education?

**Analysis.** In Finland where all education has traditionally been free of charge, public debate on introducing student fees to universities is intense. Organization such as the Confederation of Finnish Industries EK has suggested institutes for higher education could be financed with the help of term fees. According to EK even minor fees would bring tens of millions of Euros worth of income to universities. It is also suggested that indigent student could be supported with the help of scholarships. Many organization and political parties remain against the introduction of university term fees. Student organizations argue that free university level education guarantees equality in opportunities and with free education, society's skills and talents can better be put to use. Term fees put students from different economic-social classes to unequal position. According to the critics the option of student loan would not anyhow remove this problem. Also, term fees would direct student to well-paid fields of employment since paying for tertiary studies can be seen as an investment.

**Conclusions.** The main argument for term fees is to help finance university education and to improve the quality of tertiary education. The critics on the other hand say that fees would put students to unequal position. All in all, discussion of term fees in the end about values. I argue that equality in opportunities is a crucial value in Finnish society and giving up free education would be a major change in the principle of Nordic welfare society. The equal chance of putting ones skills and talents into use and gaining knowledge through university studies is one of most worthwhile right that a society can offer. This was also internationally valued when Finland scored the 1st place in Newsweek's study this August on the world's best countries.

**Recommendations.** I argue that quality tertiary education can be provided without the introduction of student fees – not only in my home country Finland but all over Europe. Making decisions on financing higher education institutions is about choices and values. In my opinion, maintaining equality of education opportunities is of such great significance that I would not be willing to give it up.

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**Germany**

**Humboldt University Berlin**

*Olga Pitkouskaya*

**Introduction.** As the aim of the Bologna Process is establishing a European Higher Education Area by 2010, is now the time to analyze what the result is and what we have today. The Bologna Declaration was done for a common higher education system, yet it has also been the cause of a lot of problems and questions from 1999 in different countries. The compatibility does not exist everywhere.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** The main objective is that the higher education systems in all the countries which joined the Bologna Declaration have a lot of common concepts, but there are still many discrepancies, e.g. ECTS – systems, Bachelor degree, Master degree and so on. This variety of definition is one of the biggest hindrances in the creation of a common Education Area.

**Analysis.** A lot of countries use the same concepts, but not in the same way. We can see the differences even within just one country. This is ironical as these differences make all the possibilities that the students got due to the Bologna Process are more difficult to realize. In the end, although one is using all the possibilities available to the student through the process ends up being nothing more than endless bureaucratic procedures. Sometimes the students don't have the opportunity to do what they want to do in their studies to become more professional, rather only the things they are allowed to do. E.g. even in Germany, different universities have different ideas what is the bachelor degree and when you can apply for a master program. Therefore the students don't choose the university and specialization they want to study in to continue their education, but the one they can "fit" with their current situation.

After the Bachelor degree, a student should to have the possibility to be enter the labor market, but this is not possible everywhere. Some employers don't want to hire candidates with only a bachelor degree, because this degree isn't seen as a sufficient one. In some cases this is fair enough, because the quality of the Bachelor degree differs in every country. The basic common definition of a Bachelor degree (goals, achievements and study plan) does not exist. We don't have the common definition of quality in every level of the three-cycle structure and it makes the mobility harder or even impossible.

**Conclusions.** The variety of definitions impedes the implementation of plenty of the opportunities giving by the Bologna Declaration. The bureaucracy is one of the obvious and direct consequence from this situation. The students cannot concentrate on their professional and educational aims, because they have to deal with a lot of organizational problems.

**Recommendations.** The Bologna system of ideas and conceptions has to be defined and explained. We have to try to find the common way of perception to all the changes in the education system. Both - the students and the employers should see the things in the same and clear way, where both understand the meanings and possibilities and so look forward to the goals.

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**Italy**

*Sapienza University of Rome*

*Lorenzo Grande and Jane Alibali*

**Introduction.** The Bologna Process is one of the major challenges that Europe is facing as the European member states are proceeding towards a de facto unification. During the Bologna Conference, which was held in the eponymous city in Italy back in 1999, all the Ministers of Education from 29 European countries signed the Bologna Declaration, a document which can be briefly summarised as follows:

1. Creation of a three-cycle structure for the higher educational system, composed of Bachelor's Degree, Master's and PhD
2. Introduction of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)
3. Creation of the Diploma Supplement
4. Introduction and further enhancement of joint degrees
5. Improvement on Quality Assurance at all levels

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** Our main objective is to focus on the critical points of this reform and provide constructive answers and propositions to what doesn't seem to have worked so far, looking at these issues from more than one point of view. We think that the Bologna Declaration is fairly well-structured, but it should be open to en route improvements.

**Analysis.**- Some member states are slowing down on the three-cycle structure reform or have combined the new system with the older one. This reform allows several positive consequences, such as student mobility among the three stages of education, both at national and European level, and employability after the Bachelor's degree. As far as now, only the PhD universe seems to be the most compatible on a worldwide basis. The implementation of the ECTS system consists of a subdivision of degrees into a number of “credits”, and is fundamental to allow student mobility and comparability between equivalent courses of study. The Diploma Supplement is a document which should be issued free of charge from every university in the Bologna zone, written in a commonly understood language and should contain all the relevant information for a future employer or foreign university to evaluate the students' skills and competencies. Joint degrees are an excellent way to boost compatibility between two or more educational systems, such as the successful example represented by the already existing “Erasmus Mundus” programme. The quality of teaching has to be assessed on a national, European and institutional level. The European agency for Quality Assurance (ENQA) is trying to adopt a non-monolithic approach in order to fine-tune evaluations and comparisons among different educational systems.

**Conclusions.** The Bologna Process represents the first great step towards the unification on a common ground of the educational systems of one fourth of this world. This reform has laid the basis on what could be a future of bright cooperation for the academics and personal development for the students. After ten years, it is now time to draw a line and decide on what reforms were more widely appreciated and which one were not and act consequently. In our opinion, the student mobility is still suffering from bureaucracy and economical interests of universities.

**Recommendations.** With the introduction of the Bachelor's Degree, many young students thought they would be able to enter the labour market at an earlier stage, by putting more stress on work experience but this has not happened yet, mainly because this reform was neither widely appreciated by the academics nor understood by the employers. One solution could be the enhancement of the teaching of professional skills within universities (the so-called soft skills), by connecting the higher education institutions with the labour market. Another fundamental matter is the social concern connected with

this reform. Universities and governments have to take all the actions needed to guarantee equal opportunities for poorer students and the disabled. Currently the approach varies from country to country, spanning from student salaries to student loans, but there is a overall lack of funding for bursaries and scholarships. Also, the Bologna signatories have to define a common policy between free access and selection before enrolment at university.

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### **Lithuania**

#### ***Vilnius university***

#### ***Roma Fedosejevaite***

***Introduction.*** The Bologna process was started at 19th of June in 1999. The idea was to create common European space of the Higher education, to strengthen relations between Universities in Europe and to strengthen intellectual, cultural, social, technological and scientific dimensions. If everything that was postulated in declaration of Bologna was realized, we would have the common European space for people to study, raise qualification and work. Now, 10 years later, when everything should be finished, countries like Lithuania just begin to change their system of the Higher education and face quite serious problems.

***Hypotheses, questions, aims.*** In my opinion, the most important aim of Bologna process is cooperation of higher education institutions of Europe to ensure qualified and accessible higher education. Other big aim is to create common system of comparable and easily readable degrees, which can facilitate lifelong studies, mobility and employing possibilities for European citizens. One of the steps to reach this, which is almost completed, is to create common system of credits ECTS.

Analysis. Lithuania, in particular, face the biggest problem with quality assurance. The Bologna process should help Universities to grow and improve, but in case of Lithuania, institutions of higher education prefer to hide their shortages in fear of reduced sponsorship and other financial threats, then to point out the problems and begin solving them. For example some institutions of higher education just mathematically recalculated national credits into ECTS, instead of overestimate abilities and whole degrees that students get. Lithuanian international reports may be very good, but they don't mirror the reality. It's not so difficult to delude everyone, but only we lose by preventing our system of higher education from development.

Bologna process brought the new idea of lifelong education. Problem here is the old fashioned point of view that higher education is just for young people and not every elder person let him or herself to study at University.

Conclusions. Bologna process seems to be more difficult and long then it was thought to be in the beginning. By now, whole process should be orientated to the second cycle – graduated studies and possibilities, but in some countries like Lithuania first cycle just started and people just now start to realize the goals of process and necessity of changes. Just now the social dimension is remembered and included in the whole process. It will take some or even much more time to realize everything.

Recommendations to Rectors, European Commissioners, etc. Aims of Bologna process postulates cooperation of European institutions of Higher education and covering shortages do not facilitate the success of the whole process. Rectors and Governments shouldn't let things like that happen, opposite, they should encourage universities to point out the problem and start searching ways of salvation not just inside the country, but by absorbing good experience of other countries. Also, more attention should be shown to social dimension and accessibility of higher education to elder people and people with disability.

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### **Poland**

***University of Warsaw***

***Anna Matuszewska***

***Introduction.*** The Bologna Process was created to improve quality of European higher education and adjust it to demands of the labour market. New rules, especially three-cycle structure of study and ECTS points were a part of general unification within the European Union and were established to make easier student mobility.

***Hypotheses, questions, aims.*** Now, eleven years after education reform we can observe first outcomes. UNICA goal is to discuss what we have achieved so far and what should be the strategy for further action. Urgent need to resolve the problem of unemployment among young people, may lead to shape university programs according to the needs of employers. This way could be misleading. The question is not: how to adapt university programs to requirements of the labour market, but how to do it, and not to lost academic spirit. There could be two answers. First is to avoid to make diploma factories from universities, but give students right to intellectual adventure. Second is to develop Erasmus Program, which is the best preparation to work in contemporary international and intercultural environment.

***Analysis.*** The construction of curricula should be based on learning outcomes. but the real quality of education depends on more stable factors than short-term fluctuations in the labor market. Universities should equip students with the knowledge, skills and attitudes. Primary task is providing general understanding of modern world as well as thorough comprehension in particular discipline. No less important are the problem-solving skills, logical thinking, openness, pro-citizenship attitude and willingness to take on new challenges. Extremely important is also preparing to work in globalized world. Student mobility programs seem to be a great lesson of flexibility, curiosity and understanding of other people. Such a qualification will be necessary in future multinational work teams. To realize that project indispensable is increasing funding for Erasmus Scholarship Program. Actually, partial scholarships allow only better-situated young people to study abroad. The dilemma between quality and the availability of study will always aroused emotions. The solution is not to follow in the directions of cheap study, but towards the policy on equal opportunities.

***Conclusions and recommendations.*** to Rectors, European Commissioners, etc...

The further reform of higher education should go towards raising the employability of graduates. This is necessary, but not essential. More quality education and more valuable competences are available by

pay more attention to intrinsic value of knowledge and developing student mobility. Additionally, these calls fulfill the assumptions of the knowledge-based economy, included Europe 2020 Strategy.

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### **Portugal**

*Universidade de Lisboa, Lisbon and Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Lisbon*

*Miguel Oliveira (UL), Pedro Antunes (UNL)*

**Introduction.** The main objective of the Bologna Process, since its inception in 1999, was to ensure more comparable, compatible and coherent systems of higher education in Europe.<sup>1</sup> Developing learners' competence is an important part of the mission of higher education. The term "converging competences" points to the need not only to train individuals for specific tasks, but to educate the whole person. Education is about acquiring skills, but also values and attitudes. Education policies are based on learning outcomes as an essential feature both in Europe and North America.<sup>2</sup>

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** Have the goals stated in the Bologna Process Declaration been achieved? What do students know and understand and what are they able to do on the basis of their qualifications? How can this be expressed and described, and how can learners carry their qualifications across borders without leaving part of their real value behind?<sup>3</sup>

**Analysis.** In 2007, ministers responsible for the implementation of the Bologna Process submitted national action plans for improving the recognition of qualifications, which is one of the priorities of this process. While the international legal framework for recognition is largely in place, there is still much to be done to improve the framework's implementation.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, the shorting of curriculum needed to obtain the same degree after Bologna Process is leading to some cases of procedural teaching and the discard of the development of scientific thinking, which is the opposite of the Bologna Process ideology. In fact, the Bologna Process is not being correctly implemented, with Governments and Universities paying attention mostly to quantitative and formal aspects of implementation. Quality assurance mechanisms and mobility programs are still to be enhanced in order to create the confidence necessary to the establishment of a European Area of HE. Special attention should be paid to assure that mobility programs are not socially discriminative. Students' mobility must play a role in promoting equal chances in life.

**Conclusions.** There are still big differences between the national action plans, demonstrating that there is great variety in practice among European countries.<sup>4</sup> Important aspects of the process must be enhanced.

**Recommendations.** : To reinforce policies about quality assurance and mobility. To assess good practices in implementation of the national action plans in order to create European benchmarks. To

identify aspects of “Bologna” that is linked more directly with the stakeholders (especially students) and makes them priorities in national action plans.

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### **Russian Federation**

#### ***Lomonosov Moscow State University***

#### ***Inessa Steklova***

**Introduction.** The Bologna Process as one of the most important steps towards integration and unification of educational standards on the European level has developed greatly since 1999 when the Bologna declaration was signed. The number of countries has grown up to 47 including Russia since 2003. All of them are united by the aims that are stated in the Bologna declaration.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** Main objective is to focus on the critical points of this reform and problems of its implementation in different regions, its correlation with the existing standards and particularities of national educational system.

**Analysis.** In attempt to meet the aims of increasing the mobility of students on all the stages of education as well as their employability countries try to implement and adopt European principles of higher education.

Nevertheless on their way they meet barriers that are difficult to overcome in short term perspective. These problems include major instruments of the Bologna process such as ECTS system, which suffers greatly because of the basic differences in educational plan that originally dominated in the country, two stages division of educational process that causes the problems of employability of baccalaureates as they are not acknowledged as fully educated people. This together with psychological barriers slows down the pace of achieving all the targets of renovation of educational system on European level.

**Conclusions.** The Bologna process is an important step of bringing together the educational systems of different countries. It not only fosters their cooperation but also to some extent brings together their citizens. In this respect it moves further the process of globalization that today is seen as one of the major tendencies of the world evolution.

#### **Recommendations.**

First of all for the countries new in Bologna process additional information on the system of credits and Diploma supplements is needed as most students barely understand the adopted system.

Secondly to prevent misunderstanding of baccalaureate status we need to attempt bringing together students along with the employers.

Finally and most important because of the fact that second step of education is predominantly not free the question of funding of different kind of scholarships needs to be solved.

## **Spain**

### ***Universidad Complutense de Madrid***

#### ***Miguel López Sáez***

***Introduction.*** In 1876 the education system in Spain was based on the so-called Institución de Libre Enseñanza. The objective of this institution was in the words of its founder F. Giner de los Ríos "creating men of integrity, educated and capable. Knowing that changes produce men and ideas, no rebellions or wars. "

With this institution in Spain began a period of reflection, and an education reform that would be stopped 1939 by the arrival of the dictator Franco. Later, different democratic governments have consequently initiated various educational reforms but none of them the initiated a draft reform of the university education system.

In 1988 the Constitution of the Universities claimed and called for reforms in higher education: freedom of research and education, teacher selection, guarantees for student exchange between universities. But it wasn't until 1999 that it was made public the first commitment calling for a reform that would improve university education not only in Spanish, but at European level. This reform appeared to be fulfilling some of the ideas of F. Giner de los Ríos.

***Aims and analysis.*** This reform had just started when I joined university. Moreover, I was not even aware of what this reform would mean. Later I learned that Spain was committed in a substantial change in higher education which was linked to the creation of a European common Space for university level studies. But one thing is theory and another practice. Talking about quality, employment and social issues in an international and national scenario of economic hardship is more than suggestive.

While issues relating to curriculum reforms are completed, we found some inconsistencies. Inconsistencies like that Madrid university faces a reform that requires a substantial economic investment in personal and material resources. . Hence arise questions like what exactly mean an ECTS for a teacher with near 200 students per class? What is mobility for a student who receives an Erasmus scholarship of 300 euros per month? What are the job prospects of a Bachelor or Graduate?. Questions may well be the script for a comedy show.

***Conclusions and Recommendations.*** I must also say that my experience as a student in other European universities, has allowed me to see the real educational applications of the reform. Some of them are a matter of laugh. The differences between countries in the way they are implementing the Bologna reforms are enormous, not only in resources. but also in what I would call the quality and enthusiasm of commitment showed in their adaptation process. In spite of my critical view in this regard, I have to recognize the great effort of the Spanish public university as an institution, and its commitment to this reform trying to implement improvements. I would recommend to European Commissioners some kind of effort to really unify the results of implementation of Bologna process in universities

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### **Sweden**

***Stockholm University***

***Hanna Westerlund***

Introduction / ***Hypotheses, questions, aims.*** The Bologna process has led to a lot of changes for European universities. The process is of course ongoing and must be assessed continuously along the way. Some of the issues that need to be addressed are the following:

Are students with a degree from a European university qualified to enter the labor market?

What is the impact of the new degree structure on employability – will it render Bachelor degrees “useless”?

What should signify high quality at a European university?

**Analysis.** The fact that a university and its departments educate different types of students should be discussed more openly. There are e.g. students who want to continue towards a more academic career and get a PhD and others who study in order to get a career outside of the university. I know that there are departments at my university where there is a division: Some feel that they should support students’ careers and help out with career days and job contacts etc., whereas others do not want to encourage contacts with employers by fear of losing students to the labor market prior to graduating (or that students will be discouraged to continue at the Master level). The different views are a challenge, but I do not believe them to be incompatible. More integration with the labor market should be able to be introduced without having to compromise too much with the academic education. The implementation of a two-year Master degree after a three-year Bachelor degree may cause a lot more challenges in the future since it may undermine the Bachelor degree: “It is difficult to assess employers’ acceptance of these new first-cycle qualifications because the first graduate cohorts are recent ... There are strong indications, however, that many institutions expect their Bachelors to continue to the Master’s fields.”<sup>1</sup> It will be interesting to see how this develops. However, since employers also value other things such as social skills, extracurricular activities and experience from part-time jobs etc., it is my hope that in many cases will still be sufficient with a Bachelor degree in order to signal to employers that one has the capacity to take in knowledge and make inferences – important qualities on the job market. Finally, a degree means nothing unless the quality of one’s education has been high. One key issue for me is to ensure high quality among the teaching staff (= high level of knowledge and pedagogical ability) as well as a high number of scheduled lectures and seminars. It is also important that the workload during one semester corresponds to the number of credits; i.e. 1 earned credit should have demanded approx. 25 hours of work for the student (including teacher-led hours), not less.

### ***Conclusions / Recommendations.***

Better connections with employers and university students – preferably initiated by the departments themselves. Internships should be able to serve as 15 or 30 credits and counted within a Bachelor degree.

If the Bachelor degree will lose status in the eyes of employers it must be made clear to students from the beginning that they are expected to study for 3+2 years in order to be attractive on the job market. Or rather, within which fields a Master degree will be acquired.

Assure great teacher quality and implement a minimum of teaching hours per week.

## **Switzerland**

### ***University of Lausanne***

#### ***Bistra Solakova***

**Introduction.** The Bologna process has the goal to create a functional and effective unified system of higher education. It faces the challenging question of how to balance between the opposing forces of giving everyone equal chance to benefit from education while preserving the high quality of education and differentiating between the more and less motivated students. This short analysis discusses the important question of motivation: How to give the right incentives for entrance into the higher education system, so that motivated students choose to study and unmotivated prefer not to enter a

university? It also proposes one possible answer: the introduction of admission selectivity and financial contributions to education carefully combined with social benefits for students.

**Thesis** In very simplified terms, education has the mission to transform the time and effort into skills and knowledge necessary for the career or personal objectives of the students. In this basic setting, only those who are motivated and ready to devote their time and effort into education would enter a university and obtain skills and knowledge. However, the world around generates inefficiencies such as benefits which attract the unmotivated to enter a university or costs which prevent the motivated from obtaining education. Bologna can help fine-tune these processes and minimize the inefficiencies through introducing a well-balanced student benefits, entrance examinations, and educational fees.

**Analysis.** Social benefits. The choice to go to a university brings with itself the opportunity cost of working and earning regular income. To decrease the effect of this opportunity costs, most countries have developed various types of benefits for students such as discounts on transportation, accommodation, cultural events, health care, etc. Furthermore, such benefits aim to enrich the cultural background of the youth and thus the society tomorrow. The potential problem with such encouragement policy is that it makes education attractive even to those who are less interested in obtaining knowledge and skills but would like to benefit from the various complementary advantages to being a student, i.e. social benefits attract also those who are not interested in studying but in “being a student”. One possible solution is to introduce age-related benefits, so that the youth would still grow interest in cultural activity, but at the same time higher education would not translate into ways to get a cheap health insurance or travel card.

Admission examinations. One of the most controversial topics in the Bologna process is whether or not there should be admission restrictions to higher education. On one hand, admission exams would possibly prevent unmotivated students from entering the higher education system for reasons such as the social benefits discussed above. On the other hand, the practical implementation hides potential risks and challenges: how to design the exams in such a way to guarantee that all motivated students will be admitted and the unmotivated will not be invited for the corresponding academic year? Because of these potential risks, admission exams are often perceived as a danger to one’s right to education. However, if properly designed, they would be able to distinguish between motivated and unmotivated students and at the same time signal to future employers about the quality of graduates.

Education fee. Another very controversial issue is whether or not higher education should be fully paid, partially paid, or completely free. Costs in education are constantly increasing and it becomes more difficult to finance universities through public funding only. Free education is a good way to encourage young people to study and make education accessible for everybody. However, it also has several serious downsides: it encourages unmotivated students to enroll and to take advantage of the social benefits for students, it is perceived as unfair by taxpayers who did not obtain higher education, and it potentially endangers quality because it decreases competition between universities. Paid university, on the other hand, would reduce the enrollment for benefits but at the same time it would inevitably disadvantage the students from low income families. A good solution would be a combination of paid university with well developed social funds and scholarship programs (similar to what private universities in the US have implemented).

**Conclusions** The careful combination of social benefits, entrance exams, and education fees would make higher education attractive to those who are motivated to study to gain knowledge and develop skills regardless of their economic background, gender, age, etc. while at the same time would discourage students who are uninterested in studying from entering the system for social benefits or other non-academic reasons. Furthermore, a university diploma will have more power in signaling the

quality of the graduate to potential employers. In its simplest form once again, we expect to have the unmotivated students to enter the labor market right after high school at a lower wage and the motivated students to enroll a university and stay out of the labor market for 3 to 5 years (in the general case) but be guaranteed employment at a higher wage afterwards. Thus, the inefficiencies due to university drop-outs, overconsumption of social benefits, and unemployment among university graduates will be minimized and higher education will be a step closer to its core mission.

## 7. Student mobility and the enlargement and consolidation of the European Union.

### **Austria**

#### *Vienna*

#### *Makram Khalil*

The European Commission reports the very positive impact of Erasmus program on the intercultural awareness of the most recent generations of students. With the Erasmus programme as part of the Life Learning Programme, the EU and their European partners fund mobility to a great extent. In 2012 the number of Erasmus students should reach 3 million students. The Bologna Process, which should lead to internationally comparable Bachelor, Master and PhD programmes, is another aspect of politically forced mobility – especially in combination with the possibility of EU citizens to choose work and study place freely.

Questions concerning this policy of forcing mobility are: Does (student) mobility programmes force European cooperation and contributes to the ongoing enlargement and consolidation process? Is there an economic necessity for (student) mobility that might also be useful for the enlargement and consolidation process? Why are other mobility programmes so small compared to Erasmus and do the mobility programmes of the European countries reach all social classes?

Exchange between universities is quite common for professors and other staff and this exchange and mobility possibilities reached students long ago. Students extend their employability and gain in a lot of other ways from exchange programs (might also be other than Erasmus). How student mobility can help in the process enlargement and consolidation of the European is a more complex question. Students are future leaders (statistically) that have more influence on the political process than others. They will play a very active role in the political process of EU's development. On the other hand there is a tendency – as studies show us – that current student generation is not as much interested in political participation as their predecessor generation was. Nonetheless this group of students has an interest in enlargement and consolidation of the European Union as it supports them with more possibilities.

There is an economic necessity of mobility nowadays. After capital and traded goods, the third wave of globalization is mobility and migration. Mobility is an important soft skill so students tend to pursuit exchange programmes as Erasmus in order to increase their job possibilities. This forced mobility can foster enlargement and consolidation if it is connected with intercultural exchange. The Erasmus programme provides an adequate framework to connect intercultural exchange with the possibility of increasing qualification and job possibilities. However, questions may arise, if the programme reaches more than just a limited and privileged group. The EU's policy makers have to be aware that forced mobility and migration is very often not connected with intercultural exchange.

There are several groups within society who feel that they will not benefit from the ongoing enlargement of the EU. If the EU wants to strengthen its position as consolidation institution it has to reach these groups as well. Student mobility programmes bring a lot of social and economic gains, but it reaches just a small group within society and there is the political risk that some groups within society are excluded of the possibilities of EU. Expanding mobility possibilities to a wider range of society could help intercultural awareness and force enlargement of the EU.

The EU should expand their mobility programmes to all social classes, especially to young people in vocational education. Although there seem to be first steps towards this goal, the integration of larger proportions of society into mobility programmes of the EU should go on. This policy could lead to a wholly new perspective on the advantages of European integration.

EU commission, policy of student mobility: [http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc80\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc80_en.htm)

## **Belgium**

*Free University of Brussels, Brussels*

*Oliwia Madrzynska*

Introduction. Twelve new member states entered the European Union in the last decade, which in consequence made the European Union more diversified. A lot of efforts in many different fields have been employed to consolidate the enlarged European Union. One of these fields is the system of European higher education. Thanks to the Bologna Process, the system has been harmonised and more and more young Europeans can develop their knowledge and skills by going abroad to study. Despite of all those efforts made in the educational field, the EU has still a lot to do to boost the opportunities for students in Europe. The topic “Student mobility and the enlargement and consolidation of the European Union” aims to analyze the opportunities and challenges that face Europe in the internationalisation of higher education.

### ***Hypotheses, questions, aims.***

During the Conference I would like to share ideas, worries and problems concerning student mobility with students from all over the Europe. We should reflect together how best to boost the opportunities for young people in Europe to spend time in another country for learning. Only by working together we can find solutions to improve the functioning of student mobility in Europe which is highly beneficial not only for individual students but also helps to consolidate the European Union.

***Analysis.*** The Green Paper elaborated by the European Commission in 2009 on “Promoting the learning mobility of young people” showed that learning mobility is highly beneficial for young people. It adds to human capital by giving students the opportunity of accessing new knowledge and of developing new linguistic skills and intercultural competences. There is also evidence that the Erasmus programme has helped higher education institutions improve the quality of their teaching.

It has not been confirmed that students with mobility experience are more aware of their European identity (Sigalas, 2009), therefore we should not correlate student mobility with European identity. Consolidation of the European Union is possible without changes in perception of the identity.

***Conclusions.*** To make steps toward consolidation of the EU by improvement of student mobility, we should first reflect about the obstacles European countries have still to overcome to boost mobility among students. Then we should examine what European universities are actually doing to improve the functioning of student mobility and what are their efforts to generalize it. We could select the best ideas and bring them in to the European level.

**Recommendations.** The disparity in higher education systems of European countries and a lack of information among students is still a major obstacle to student mobility. Deep improvements at institutional level are needed. Students need more information about costs and benefits of student mobility and they should be provided with personal assistance while studying abroad. Nevertheless, in all decisions taken student's wellness should be considered in the first place.

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## **Croatia**

### **University of Zagreb**

#### **Morena Simatic**

**Introduction.** The goal of the European Union is to become a powerful community of all the nations of European continent. Enlargement of EU has brought new members and new candidates. In order to embrace the European way of thinking and acting is to provide the students with different opportunities because educated and open-minded young people are the ones to carry the nations in the EU. Student mobility a way for students to experience and prosper from other countries, nationalities and cultures and is therefore needed to include all the present and future members into the programs of mobility.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** First and the main issue what needs to be discussed is the integration of different nations into one single unit without borders. Throughout history borders were the main reason of disagreements between nations. On which level is the national attachment present between different nations of Europe and is it possible to one day consider ourselves citizens of Europe rather than different countries.

Second, which closely relates to the first issue, is to discuss how much impact have mobility programs on changing the global mentality. Taking from the perspective of a candidate country that just recently entered the mobility programs it is possible to say that the mentioned impact is huge. Countries that were for long time closed for programs like this have a hard time getting funds, personnel and students to participate so it takes a lot of time and effort. Including the non-members into the programs is very important in order to improve their education systems, science and whole society in general. Students are still very sceptic towards going abroad and that needs to be changed immediately because soon we will become citizens of the same union and it is important to have professional and academic

competency. The goal is to help students be better prepared for challenges of the European integration process.

**Analysis.** The LLP programs along with Sefone project aim to include also the countries that are about to become members. Also, the history of mobility in Europe has been considered and there are different both positive and negative consequences present.

**Conclusion.** Mobility programs are a strong aim to help internalization and integration of the students and the European Union. The value and quality that comes from studying abroad in different cultural, language, national and history traditions should be recognized and appreciated.

It is of a high importance that EU consolidates with the candidate and other countries in Europe in order to ease and accelerate the development and the future integration into the EU.

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## **Estonia**

*University of Tallinn, Tallinn*

*Maarja Reinpõld*

**Introduction.** During 2006, 150 000 students from Europe participated in the Erasmus exchange programme accounting for nearly 1% of all students in Europe. The aim for most students are experiencing a new country, live away from home, meet new friends, study languages or other specialities and learn the foreign culture. As the EU has expanded, the student mobility in Europe has increased, both by more exchange universities and students. Yet the differences between students are increasing, as the EU includes more countries with unique cultures.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** Increased student mobility is a way for EU to create a more tolerant society, and a way to make a long-term sustainability for the enlargement of the EU. How is this done, and how can it be improved? What difficulties are encountered for new EU-state students studying in the old Europe and vice versa? Should increased student mobility also occur to outside of the EU, as a first step?

**Analysis.** The impact of the EU enlargement is vast: language knowledge and international experience is becoming more and more important for securing a job in the EU, compared to how it was a couple of years ago. This is a big attraction for students who choose to do an exchange.

But there are also difficulties: Europe is heterogeneous when it comes to welfare, some students end up with difficulties to fund their studies (for example eastern Europeans in West Europe), while others can truly afford to live a much richer life than at home. In the exchange environment it might create segregation, the students from the rich countries live in the centre and hang out with each other, while the poor students live in some suburb and only hang out with themselves. Then next problem is that an



exchange needs two parts: often eastern European universities have difficulties attracting foreign students, while famous western universities don't have this problem. In the end the students in attractive universities have a bigger access to a broader spectrum of exchange universities.

**Conclusions.** The trends are that the new student generation has a higher tolerance to other cultures, a bigger understanding and international experience. This is of course one of the aims of the EU, and it works in the sense, that new Europeans have a much more open and friendly attitude towards other Europeans. In the future it will probably make it easier for the European Union to have common politics.

**Recommendations.** It should be the interest of the European Union to equalize these inequalities, by for example granting a bigger economic support for students from the less developed countries. Another issue could be helping them more with social integration, while there still are some barriers between East and West. Incoherence cannot be fully ruled out, but political momentum and focus on turning pledges into implementation are needed.

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## **Finland**

### **University of Helsinki**

#### **Riikka Vihriälä**

**Introduction.** Student mobility can be divided into two types of mobility: horizontal and vertical. The first one refers to students spending a part of their studies abroad, for example in the frame of mobility programs such as Erasmus. The latter refers to students taking a full degree abroad. Vertical mobility faces many similar challenges as horizontal mobility, such as funding and the recognition of studies. However, in vertical mobility these challenges are often more difficult to overcome due to the lack of mobility programs; students willing to engage in vertical mobility are left to independently seek solutions to whatever challenges they might face. Getting rid of the obstacles of student mobility has been one of the central aims of the European Union for over a decade now. The Lisbon Convention, the Bologna process, the creation of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and the Diploma supplement have all contributed to making especially vertical mobility easier. However, there are still challenges to overcome and new ones arising. For example, the concepts of brain drain and brain gain within the European Union have become more relevant since the enlargement of the EU.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** The European Union has tried to make vertical mobility a real option for students. This type of mobility would create real European citizens with the capability to compete in the international work market. This presentation aims at critically exploring the phenomenon of vertical mobility and the benefits and costs of it for both the sending and receiving countries.

**Analysis.** The analysis is based on several articles. Especially the ESIB (the National Unions of Students in Europe) article Promoting Mobility – a Study on the Obstacles to Student Mobility (2007)

and the Kelo, Teichler and Wächter article *Toward Improved Data on Student Mobility in Europe: Findings and Concepts of the Eurodata Study (2006)* have contributed to the analysis.

**Conclusions.** The problematic aspect of vertical mobility is that it is always connected to brain mobility, which results to either brain gain or brain drain. For the sending countries vertical mobility can be a highly positive thing provided that the students return to their home countries to participate in the development of the country. However, many students stay in the country where they studied. This is particularly problematic because not all EU countries attract the same amount of students. In general, old and bigger EU countries attract students from all over Europe while new and smaller EU countries are the ones sending the students. In the worst case this creates regions of brain gain and brain drain. There are several on the one hand push and on the other hand pull factors that explain this phenomenon. Also problematic is that there is very little or no data on vertical student mobility. In international studies the amount of foreign students in a country has been taken to equal mobile students, which is false generalisation.

**Recommendations.** First of all proper data on vertically mobile students should be collected in order to be able to distinguish the current trends in mobility and possible regions of brain gain and brain drain within the European Union. Also solutions should be sought to avoid the birth of such regions.

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### **Italy**

**Sapienza University of Rome and University of Rome “Tor Vergata”**

**Valeria Giannuzzi and Irene Marta Predazzi**

**Introduction.** European Union is facing a challenging enlargement in this last decade. New member states are entering the Union, but their entrance has always been prepared by different actions aimed to create reciprocal knowledge and trust between the countries. One of these actions is student mobility, which is a powerful tool that since the 80's has permitted young students to move and learn new languages and cultures. This topic aims to analyze the potential and the limits of student mobility as a way to consolidate the feeling of a European identity.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** In first instance, we need to question how much Europeans and candidate Europeans are willing to change and share, starting from a historical and geographical analysis of migrations inside the European country and arriving to the modern Life Learning Programs (LLPs), projects as Erasmus Mundus and Searching For Neighbours (SEFONE), raising questions on the intrinsic difficulty related to the European motto “United in diversity”: how much is this really possible? Does student mobility really represent a useful tool to increase and structure European identity?

**Analysis.** We have considered European projects as Sefone and mobility programs such as LLPs inside and outside EU aimed to facilitate connections with the countries that are about to enter EU. We consulted the Eurobarometer and several articles from literature concerning the topic of Student

Mobility comparing it also to the phenomenon of “brain drain”. However there is the feeling that scientific studies aimed to analyze the students’ point of view on large scale are still lacking.

**Recommendations.** Our conclusion is that, to have a better understanding of this topic, the possibility to organize a general and standardized longitudinal observation through the elaboration and annual use of questionnaire to measure students’ perception year by year within UNICA Network should be considered. The focus on students' ideas and motivations to travel and migrate has the potential to generate an invaluable source of data that could be used to plan the best future moves.

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**Latvia**

*University of Latvia*

*Tatevika Paronjana*

**Introduction.** [Lifelong Learning Programme 2007–2013](#) established by the European Union (EU) consists of various possibilities for students to broaden their outlook as well as to establish contacts and gain knowledge which is a great opportunity for youngsters to develop their skills. One of the most popular programme for students is well known Erasmus, every year gathering thousands of young minds for changing their views of life as well as getting the academic feedback of time spent somewhere abroad.

These kinds of possibilities for students are the most challenging thing to gain while you are climbing the ladder of your career. Lifetime opportunity to see the world in different shapes and colors. The mobility and the enlargement and consolidation of students in the EU stand for these programmes, as the youth fortifies their opinions by communication, experiencing and taking the risk of the entire unknown. As long as these programmes exist and new ones come into cooperation, students can feel safe in this changing world.

But still I want to pay attention for the higher education which is not for free in many European countries. It makes difficulties for youngsters to fulfill their dreams, most of the cases getting troubles with the loans taken from the banks. Debt is the matter of interest for a lot of students as the question follows: Am I capable to get the higher education?

***Hypotheses, questions, aims.***

**Hypothesis.** The financial problem, caused by the weak educational system in the EU countries is the first difficulty for the student.

Question: How should the educational system improve to avoid the financial pressure made on students?

**Aim:** To comprehend the future possibilities for students which are not capable of paying the money defined for studies.

**Analysis.** Basing on the statistics from the EU web pages which draw the general conclusions about the situation of higher education. The priority for me is to analyze the situation in Latvia and the possible options how to improve the system.

**Conclusions.** Regardless of the fact that the universities in the EU are definitely opening up for new possibilities the gap between the students is apparent. This gap is apparent as soon as the question comes to the higher education and the possibilities for youngsters to cover the charges. Yet, as the Lifelong Learning Programme is being developed and improved one has to consider the real situation in the EU, beyond the one lifetime experience in the exchange programme.

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## **Lithuania**

### **Vilnius University**

#### **Kotryna Peilakauskaite**

**Introduction.** Students Mobility as a priority of Bologna process takes important role not only in European HE systems. It strengthens the academic and cultural internationalization of European higher education and helps to create European Higher Education Area. In 2020, at least 20% of those graduating in the European Higher Education Area should have had a study or training period abroad. Mobility is important for personal development and employability, it fosters respect for diversity and a capacity to deal with other cultures. One of the points of this topic is how to consolidate the feeling of a European identity without losing national identity and peculiarities of national HE systems.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** The first question is: is it really possible to achieve at least 20% of academic mobility and how we can reach 20%? However if it still would statistically rather small number could it actually effect on European identity? In general what is the role of academic mobility and how that actually helps to students in their future lives? Finally, if Europe would be succeed with European Higher Education Area's creation would it be enough to balance United States Higher Education system? It was one of the most important aims of Bologna process but is it still actual in 2010?

**Conclusions and recommendations.:** Mobility, no doubt, is really important part not only in academic affairs but in evaluation of society as well. Europe has really ambitious aims on it and each of related persons (Minister, Rectors, students ect.) would involved themselves into the processes that Mobility

could create a value on quality assurance, personal development, employability ect., in general to create European Higher Education Area and in the same - one Europe.

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### **The Netherlands**

*University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam*

#### **Eline Bötger**

**Introduction.** Since a couple of years the European Union provides scholarships for students who want to study abroad. Living in another country and experiencing its culture is in my opinion one of the best ways to foster understanding for foreigners and people from a different cultural background. Especially in the European Union these programs can contribute to a mutual understanding between the inhabitants of the different European countries. Although most European students have had no subject at school about European history (education systems remain mainly focused on the national history), they will nevertheless realise during and after their exchange how connected Europe and its citizens have been in the past and still are today.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** The enlargement and consolidation of the European Union will only work out when European citizens have the possibility to gain understanding for each other. Increasing student mobility is one of the many ways to do so. Therefore it is worth looking at the now existing exchange programs. Are these programs sufficient for the whole student population? Why do not all students take part in exchange programs? Should it be mandatory for all university students to study at least one semester in a foreign country? Next to these mobility questions it is useful to look at the bottleneck of the absence of a European identity. How can we integrate European history into the history classes at school without denying the own national identity of a EU member state?

**Analysis.** To make a new generation aware of their European identity and the big opportunity Europe can be for them, it is necessary to start at primary school. Next to the national history curriculum schools have to teach children about the history of Europe. These classes can activate the European identity which is crucial for the support of enlargement and consolidation of the EU later on. Classes should not focus solely on the political system of the EU, but also pay attention to the common European culture. These additional history lessons can clarify the interdependence of the European countries nowadays. Secondly the advantages of an exchange program have to be promoted at the universities itself. A requirement to study at least one semester in another country is a possibility to encourage students to study abroad. This may result in increasing numbers of students being abroad for one or more semester. Universities will have to create more flexible curricula in order to give students more possibilities to go on exchange programs without study delays. Increased efforts by universities to prevent study delay among exchange students will encourage student mobility.

**Conclusions & Recommendations.**

The educational system in every EU member state will have to adapt itself to the European exchange programs. Primary schools can do so by teaching children about the common European history and culture and universities can do so by stimulating exchanges and by creating a more flexible curriculum to prevent study delay.

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### **Portugal**

*Universidade de Lisboa (UL), Lisbon and Universidade Nova de Lisboa (UNL), Lisbon*

*Marlon Francisco (UNL) e André Caldas (UL)*

**Introduction.** The enlargement and consolidation of the European Union as a space for student mobility is becoming a topic of great importance. The number of students choosing to pursue their academic and professional studies abroad is rising at an extraordinary rate, which demands a broader vision and grounded evaluation.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** To promote student mobility at all cycles of studies, allowing students to take full advantage of cultural diversity and heritage.

**Analysis.** Student mobility within the European Union cannot be reduced to exchange programmes, and while those have been highlighted in European policies, we must realise that the choice of full enrolment in another countries' HE system is present and yet remains void of attention. One of the central issues in choosing a graduation/institution combination abroad is the quality of both, and whether or not they are suitable for the student. This evaluation is particularly extenuating for a foreign student, as these considerations are hardly common sense outside national borders. Particularly, for postgraduate students a direct contact with their research object or exposure to new methods and tools, developed by academics of different nationalities is an imperative today.

**Conclusions and Recommendations.** : We focus and propose the following points to be taken into consideration when discussing European-level policies for student mobility:

- Establishing a European authority to deal with accreditation and assessment of all graduations offered by universities within the European borders. An European authority at such level would function both as a search engine and a quality assessing device, not just nationwide, but also at European level;
- The existence of European directives to unify and direct student mobility, while simultaneously promoting and disseminating it;

- The promotion of a European Student Mobility Portal, similar to the existing EURES (European Job Mobility Portal), that would accumulate the responsibility of listing existing programs and institutions, as well as their application deadlines and procedures, and offering specialised and personalised support throughout these processes, including support regarding living arrangements abroad.
- A gradual harmonization of application processes, so that student selection becomes increasingly more just and equitable, while preserving the nature of different HE systems;
- The improvement of mobility networks designed for researchers and professors;
- A strategic approach towards a more concise and active network for internships and traineeships across European borders, acknowledging that these are paramount aspects of HE;
- At the University level, a policy based in incentives to student mobility, showing Universities commitment, must be designed, carried out and guaranteed by an impartial body

## **Russian Federation**

### ***Moscow State University***

#### ***Ivan Belanov***

#### ***Introduction***

- Consolidation of the EU is the part of globalization
- Enlargement of the EU is inevitable. It is taken place almost every year
- Mentioned processes are determined by economical, political and social factors
- Student mobility is phenomenon of contemporary society and closely linked with these factors

#### ***Hypotheses, questions, aims.***

- Does student mobility deserve diligent consideration?
- What problems exist in the area?
- How does student mobility influence the enlargement and consolidation of the EU?

#### ***Analysis***

The problem of student mobility does deserve our consideration, because

- It is connected with intellectual exchange between countries.
- It facilitates the development of tolerance between nations and cultures
- It is contradictory and complicated phenomenon, which has impact on our life
- This contradictory nature causes the problems of student mobility in the EU
- Brain drain and inability of governments to control scientific area properly

As a sequence, there are severe restrictions and quotas for student mobility programs in some universities

- Visa restrictions. Problems with getting long-term visas for students from non-Schengen countries
- Student mobility facilitates the consolidation of the EU and its enlargement
- It creates new proactive and free mindset of a person of globalized world
- It encourages people to be tolerate within multicultural society of the EU
- It allows to share the valuable experience among all people of the EU
- It makes possible mutual understanding of people, who belongs to absolutely different societies

### ***Conclusions***

- The problems of student mobility must not be neglected
- The quick and proper elimination of them is the key to increasing of effectiveness of the EU
- Student mobility will be the powerful factor of European integration and creation of strong solid Europe
- Spreading and developing of these programs are the primary concern of European student community

### ***Recommendations***

In order to help the development of student mobility programmes it is useful to improve visa system to make it more friendly for students, who want to participate in student exchange programs

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## **Spain**

***Universidad Autónoma de Madrid***

***Ana Villarrubia Mendiola***

***Introduction.*** We find ourselves in a European frame in which educational models tend to focus more and more on the students and on the active behavior they are supposed to be keeping towards their own academic and human learning experience. Within this context, the theoretical expectations seem to find a paradoxical obstacle to reach their goals: sometimes, students behave in a more passive way than they



are expected to. And, above all, they behave way more passively than how it would be necessary and convenient in order to keep the adequate functioning of new initiatives.

***Aims and analysis.*** We wonder sometimes how it is possible for some models, as could be the Anglo-Saxon, to be backed up by a great student participation in every initiative, keeping a student cohesion deep enough to awaken a rooted feeling of belonging. These models represent an international inspiration in the field of university formation. The fact that a student is involved, participative and active in university life and in the procedural politics of his own university is a clear sign of identity of many European universities and a challenge for many others. The European Higher Education Area must imply, besides an integral reform of course listings which is already in motion, a global restructuring of the concept of University.

The consolidation of the European Union needs the involvement of the young citizens, in this context, university campuses may symbolize the engine of a young Europe with union conscience. The mobility of European students between the borders is tightly tied to this concept. The role universities play in the international scenario is fundamental since it has the chance to become, besides a formation center, a real space of coexistence, personal growth and values education.

***Conclusions and recommendations.*** Concluding: a real generator of cohesion able to facilitate mobility and the acquisition of common challenges and commitments.

## **Sweden**

***Stockholm University, Stockholm***

***Anna Nidén***

***Introduction.*** The European Union has expanded rapidly over the last decades, from only 6 member states in its beginning in the 1950s to 27 member states constituting the EU today. The European Union is emphasizing the geographical, historical and economic band between its members and also trying to unite the member states' citizens as EU citizens. One way to do this is through student mobility.

***Hypotheses, questions, aims.*** In order to have a successful enlargement and consolidation of the European Union we have to focus on the EU identity among the EU citizens. If the EU citizens are to truly unite under and share a common EU identity we have to increase our understanding and knowledge of each other. The possibility of opening up our borders and universities for all EU students is a good start, but is it enough? We also have to consider at what pace we want to continue the enlargement of the EU as well as what effect further enlargement will have on the consolidation of the EU. Our goal should be that the EU citizens not only unite under their national identity but also as EU citizens and equals.

***Analysis.*** The European Union is rapidly growing larger through the acceptance of new member states. It is however important that the new member states meet the political and economic values of the EU as well as share the core values of the EU. Nevertheless it is easy to forget that with this rapid enlargement through new member states also the number of EU citizens increase. It is therefore important that the current and aspiring members and EU citizens also share a common knowledge of the EU and the identity they are supposed to share. In order to have a successful enlargement and consolidation of the European Union the EU identity and acceptance of each other should be the main focus. Complete and absolute student mobility within the member states could help in this process as it would widen our experience of each other and the member states. Further, it would hopefully help overcome cultural, historic and linguistic differences. While the Erasmus program has been a big success we still have to make it easier for students to study in their neighboring countries. We could

consider the possibility of having no language requirements, besides English, for students applying for studies abroad as it restrain student mobility in certain states and universities.

**Conclusions.** To increase European identity and secure satisfactory enlargement and successful consolidation of the European Union we have to increase the citizens' knowledge of the European Union, its member states and its citizens.

**Recommendations.** Alongside the Erasmus program, the bologna process is a good way to merge the educational systems in Europe in general as well as in the member states. This way it will be much easier to transfer grades between states and universities which ultimately will increase student mobility and will help us reach our goal of a common identity. Similar, EU internal, measures should be taken to facilitate mobility within the EU further. However, it is also important to monitor student mobility between member states in order to see if goals and measures taken to increase student mobility are met and if not; how we can proceed and improve in order to increase the knowledge of each other.

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### **Switzerland**

*Université de Lausanne, Lausanne*

*Mélanie Glayre*

**Introduction.** The European Union has incredibly increased during the last decade. A lot of countries are entering the Union. This entrance is always preceded by agreements and actions between them and the Union, in order to consolidate trust and exchanges. One of these agreements is students mobility, which increases more and more since the 80's and permits students to move all across the mainland to learn new languages, to approach new cultures. This topic aims to analyze the links between student's mobility and the consolidation of European Union in a interrelated connection.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** By analyzing modern LLPs (Lifelong Learning Programs) projects like Erasmus, we have to question us about the construction and the development of a new European identity, built on the well-known European motto: "United in diversity", and its impact on the consolidation of the EU. It would be interesting to think about non-EU countries like Switzerland or Norway and their influence on EU.

Analysis – **Conclusions.** Boundaries don't have to be a stumbling block to knowledge. Student Mobility take part in the consolidation of UE in the way of an opening. Cultures are mixed, become reachable, and this causes an influence on European identity. In fact, there isn't any major studies about it and it is a lack.

**Recommendations.** The Association of Students in Arts of University of Lausanne made a questionnaire a year ago which is submitted to Erasmus students of Arts about their experiences, their feelings, their motivations, etc.... It is a really useful tool to understand the way they travel, the problems, good stuffs, and it will become an invaluable data base in the development of LLP projects.

This questionnaire should be proposed in every universities of UNICA Network in order to improve the student mobility in UE.


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## 8. High quality universities with low fees: is it possible? How to choose the best university to study at?

### Austria

#### *The University of Vienna*

#### *Michaela Durackova*

**Introduction.** Forum of the topic 8 has been divided into couple of small discussions so far. These discussion groups have been created spontaneously, without any intention to develop the forum in the way it is. Some of them are already well developed, other have just very few comments.

**Hypothesis, questions, aims:** Tuition fees-yes or no? This question goes through our forum and it is also a main problem we try to discuss. We question also the problem if high quality education must be automatically paid. We come up with several ideas influenced by governments in our countries. What kind of problems does introducing of tuition fees cause? What kind of financial policy could/should be applied for financing of our studies?

**Analysis.** This group is called “Tuition fees-yes or no?”. Here the participants started chatting about if they think that a high quality education must be automatically paid. As supposed, the arguments of participants are very strong influenced by the country of resident or country of studies. Perhaps with already very little fees you can create a general feeling of quality and upgrade. When one has to pay for something, he or she can appreciate it more, because he or she knows it costs something. Therefore I am definitely a supporter of adequate and proper fees. The fees also keep the number of university graduates lower, which makes the conditions on labor market better for them. And I definitely think that there can be a high quality with low fees. The level of fees should be adapted on the purchasing power of population of a concrete country. The other part of the expenses of universities should be taken over by governments and governmental institutions. Also a different argument was produced. In tuition free universities the academic staff may feel very little personal responsibility for its student and for the information and quality of education they transfer to the students. And if nobody feels responsibility for the quality of education the quality gets worse and worse. The introducing of tuition fees may cause that students appreciate more their studies and do not see only the final bachelor/master/PhD degree, but appreciate the education as a great possibility to learn something for their future and as a start line of their career. Some students would pay any amount of money to get their diploma. Those students you can find in each country, at each university. In this case the tuition fees may block poor students from their academic career. In some countries the universities cannot compete with each other, since the quality of all universities is not the best one. The greatest competitors for those schools would present the foreign universities abroad. But the students often cannot afford to study abroad.

#### **Recommendations.**

The level of fees should be adapted on the purchasing power of population of a concrete country.

Public institutions, governments and all organizations which finance universities and academic personal in a country could give “money” or financial aid to every student and let him/her choose at which university and in which country he or she would like to study. In this way the states would not finance universities directly, but the government would partly finance students and give them free choice. The universities would try to get as many students as possible, so they would have to increase the quality of education in order to win students. This model would be great, but very hard to implement.

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Our arguments from forum at <http://unicaroma2010.it/drupal6/forum/08-high-quality-universities-with-low-fees-it-possible-how-choose-best-university-study>

## **Belgium**

***VUB, Brussels***

### ***Jiahao Mok Bosco***

Nowadays it is very important to determine what university you are going to for your own future perspectives. As a student it is always a challenge to choose the best school that’s the most compatible with your own capabilities and aspirations.

The choice is mostly based on the distance to the university, the level of quality of the university and the fees accompanied with it.

Therefore it is important to define what the quality of the university is based on. A good definition of quality should at least provide an abstract of different factors which determines the quality of education. It should have quantitative measurement, be backed with bibliographic references and should provide us statistical data on the quality of different university in Europe.

The question whether high quality universities accompanied with low fees are possible is rather ambiguous. At first sight we can deduct that it is possible to enter a prestigious university with low fees if some kind of institution or the government supports it. Nevertheless in a economic point of view, supported universities would likely lessen their innovation and because of that, the quality of education would decrease and consequently lead to the downfall of their competitiveness, whereas unsupported universities would likely increase their quality in compensation for a higher return which results in higher fees for the common student. So ideologically we should aim for a pareto efficiency on quality and fee on a grand scale.(pareto efficiency: decreasing fees without affecting the quality of education)

***Conclusion and recommendations:*** It is practically impossible to attain pareto efficiency on a grand scale since there will always be extern factors which we can’t take control of. Universities who have attained pareto efficiency aren’t necessarily the best universities to study at, since choices aren’t only based on objective factors. Everyone has different ideas and opinions about their ideal university. We should aim for is an easier accessibility to all universities in Europe by first clearing the hurdle concerning money. This can be realised by creating a system of loans on European level (zero interest) that allows less creditable students to widen their range of choice in which for instance the European commissioners can contribute to. Secondly we should clear the hurdle regarding information. Dependant on the support and collaborations of the rectors, the universities should be able to be more transparent and provide relevant information concerning their pros and “cons” that enables

the students to distinguish their most preferable university. Thirdly we should clear the hurdle regarding mobility by reducing the transport fees for students in which the European government and transportation companies can contribute to. Lastly, it never hurts to think outside of the box regarding this topic.

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## **Croatia**

### ***University of Zagreb, Zagreb***

#### ***Marko Banušić***

**Introduction.** What is a high quality university? Is it a place where we pick only the most talented staff and students, or is it a place where we take average students and turn them into high quality workers? World-class university belong into former group, but they do not provide us with sufficient number of good citizens, therefore we should work on ensuring a higher number of students become better citizens and workers and by doing so become a higher quality society. To achieve that we need low fees for students and high motivation from staff. We need to achieve that every university is a high quality, because due to financial and language barriers students do not have a choice but to pick one closest to their homes.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** Students lack choice due to financial and language barriers. Higher fees only deepen that problem. We need to increase quality in local universities. Question is how to do both: increase quality of universities and ensure that students can study abroad.

**Analysis.** In most cases lower quality stems from low motivation of university staff, primarily from professors. Interbreeding (older professors are replaced by their not so younger students and colleagues) inside one institution generates a culture of a steady state in which nothing changes and big necessary changes do not occur or they occur in a very slow pace further prolonging low quality agony. Students due to their personal situations are forced to enroll to such places and soon they become same as they tutors and continue a downward path. Such places become bottomless pits for money, and no financial incentives can turn them around.

**Conclusions.** Throwing money on the problem won't solve low quality problems. We need to make students more mobile in order for them avoid low quality universities, and penalize accordingly low quality universities. One solution might be to implement a model in which governments do not give money directly to universities but to students, and let students decide to which university they should give that money. Such action would stimulate a market economy and hopefully better quality.

**Recommendations.** Rectors should try to enforce high quality standards such as Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA by enforcing such methods as regular cycling of professors, requiring from staff constant education and participation on projects on other universities, preferably foreign and each time different. Governmental bodies and EU Commission should find methods and money to further stimulate student and faculty exchange.

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## **Cyprus**

*University of Cyprus, Nicosia*

*Christos Papaxanthos*

There are events in our lives which have a great influence on our future. Most of high school students have the same problem. How to choose the best university to study at? Especially in our days, there are a lot of opportunities and a lot of fields of studies.

There are many guidelines, which are going to help a prospective university student make the right decision:

- One must consider if he/she wants to go away from home and if yes, where?
- One has to decide what to study
- Does he/she want to live on or off campus?
- Check for the fee ranges and see if his/her parents will be able to afford the university
- Check the facilities the university has to offer
- Is s/he ready to become independent?
- Not to worry that s/he will be alone: students make plenty of new friends at universities
- Nevertheless, there are some warnings I would offer to the prospective student:
- Enjoy the university, but learn to be responsible
- Think of the cost and ask you parents if they can afford the university fees and living expenses
- Do you have the required grades to go to a prestigious university?
- Combine fun with reading, and vice versa.
- Do not decide randomly: make an educated decision
- Do not fulfil someone else's dreams: fulfil your own dreams

However, academics and researchers are trying to answer a difficult question, is it possible to have high quality universities with low fees?

- depends on whether the university is public or private
- depends on whether the university has sponsors (private and/or public)
- depends on the reputation that the university has already created for itself

- depends on the services that it offers
- depends on the host country's development (structure of each country's society)
- depends on the internationalization
- depends on the language used for research and teaching
- depends on the alumni base

In my opinion, it is very difficult for a young person to make the right decision, that is, choose the best university to study at. It usually seems that this decision is going to reflect his/her entire future and this makes the decision even harder. Are young people equipped with the right tools to make this decision? Moreover, I believe that not all universities are in the choice sets of all students. Some universities are more expensive than other (private versus public, abroad versus at home, prestigious versus community colleges). Some universities are of better quality than others. Some universities are more popular destinations than others, therefore, harder to get in. Top private universities in the US, though very expensive, offer need-blind admittance to students from all over the world! Hopefully, top European universities can do the same, because at the moment, despite the public grants and private scholarships available, expensive universities may be unattainable to smart students.

## **Denmark**

### *University of Copenhagen*

#### *Camilla Christensen*

The forum 8 of the UNICA conference 2010 is going to concentrate on a topic which is divided into two main questions:

- High quality universities with low fees: is it possible?
- How to choose the best university to study at?

The first question should in my opinion include discussions on two different, and very important, problems:

- 1) The quality of education compared to the total price
- 2) The quality of education compared to the tuition fees paid by the individual student

Whereas 1) to some degree should be comparable from country to country, 2) is more a political / ideological question. The main problem is how to measure "quality of universities". This issue overlaps with the second focus of the group; how a student should choose the best university. There are several organs ranking universities. These yearly rankings measure performance of the universities from several factors, mainly focusing on amount of money spend on research, number of doctorates, Nobelprize winners and other awards, published / quoted articles etc. I hope we will be able to discuss how important these measures are for the individual student and the level and quality of his/her education. In my opinion it is very important that Europe has high level



universities and some of the world's top researchers. But I don't think that these universities necessarily will have the best graduates for work not connected to research, but to the many other important positions in today's society. This means that the high ranking universities (which to some extent also are the ones with high fees) not necessarily are the best universities to choose for the individual student.

Another very interesting question, which I hope we will get the possibility to discuss, is the limit of how much students should pay to go to universities. I am from Denmark where education is free, and it is a political decision that everyone, no matter social background and economical status, should have equal opportunities to get a degree. I agree on this way of thinking, but I am very interested in the positive effects that paying a reasonable fee can have on the attendance and interest of the students.

I hope that we will have a fruitful discussion which will inspire all of the participants and other with interest in remaining and improving the high level of education in Europe.

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## **Estonia**

*Sirli Krikk*

### *Tallinn University of Technology*

**Introduction.** There has been a massive expansion of higher education in the nineties. Total enrolment in higher education increased from 68.6 to 110.7 million approximately between 1990 and 2001. The increase is especially high in developing countries – their total enrolment doubled from 29.3 to 58.3 million. Seems that it is not for the elite anymore – rather our studying length has been extended and higher education is common. This means also double investments into higher education and the financing can come from state funding or from the demander. (*Higher education funding in Europe is between 0,5% to 1,6% of GDP. Highest in the Nordic countries and the lowest in East of Europe.*)

**Hypothesis, questions, aims:** If we want to prove low fees, the financing have to come from a government. Did government's budget expanded with along with the higher education demand? Certainly not that much. In a situation of the higher education dynamic change we have to make political decisions. As Jeffrey Sachs says: "the technologies are known and the strategies proved; what is needed is simply the political and the financial will to implement them." We can get high quality education and universities if they are priority of public benefits and government invests in higher education. **We take our stand if higher education is a public interest and benefit or it should be personal gain?**

**Analysis.** As mentioned before higher education can have both sides – it can be a public benefit or personal gain. On one hand educated citizens are advantageous for your country development in a whole: they maintain the cultural heritage, democracy basics and the development of a whole country. On the other hand higher education can give personal benefits financially (there is correlation between higher education and income) and non-financially (higher status in the society, better opportunity of self-determination etc). University with high quality has to exist apart from competing on a free market and it has to be designed by socially important strategies. This means social involvement and government's investment. This can be a way out to get together high quality of the university and low fees for students (at least for the most talented ones).

**Conclusions.** The key solutions to challenges of high quality education with low fees is the political priority of investing in education. Access to higher education has to be knowledge-based and supported by government. It also gives less victory for private universities who might first stand out for money and benefit. The private universities will never be removed and should be there. But public higher education needs to have more high standards and quality to empower the investment. There will be no result if government invest just a little bit with big hopes. We need to prove quality system for public universities to get the maximum from the investment. This is a way we can give the best high quality education according to knowledge without any social dependence. It gives an opportunity to the most talented and potential students, which leads us to the best public benefit.

**Recommendations.** Firstly we need to prioritize higher education and support it with public higher education. It is only worth of investment if we remove the social dependence and give chance to the most potential students. Also, we cannot forget to pay attention to quality system and continuous improvements. Both factors – investment in working with quality system and investment through financial support can actually synchronize some benefits. To do everything a little bit will be waste of time and money.

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## **Italy**

### ***Sapienza University of Rome***

#### ***Alessandro Epasto and Eleonora Aversa***

**Introduction.** The importance of assuring University Quality has been officially recognized by the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) representatives since the Bologna declaration. Nevertheless, the European Community agrees that excellence in teaching and research should not be achieved without equal access to university study. Even in the presence of tuition fees, equal opportunities must be guaranteed.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** The aim of this presentation is to describe EHEA quality approach in the context of University Funding. The choice of the university to study at, or even the choice to not study at all, are deeply affected by considerations on both aspects.

**Analysis.** The topic is analyzed through University Quality, Ranking and Funding.

In the first part of the work, we evaluate University Quality, moving from its definition. Quality Assurance (QA) refers to a program for the systematic monitoring and evaluation of the various aspects of a project, service, or facility to ensure that standards of quality are being met.

Moreover, before the Bologna Process, University Quality was regulated and monitored only on a national level. Standards and procedures made incomparable the results achieved. The ways to achieve convergence in the methods and procedures of Quality Assurance maintaining national specificity are: Bologna Declaration (1999), ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education) (2000) and ESG (Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area) (2005).

ESG states that QA agencies to be effective should be independent from governments, institutions, and national tradition. Other criticisms on the activities of QA Agency regards students' involvement: in fact, the European Student's Union (ESU), a consultative member that represents student interest in the policy debate, complains about the lack of participation of students to the process of decision making concerning quality standards.

Another opportunity to evaluate University Quality is given by the instrument of University Rankings. They are lists of institutions sorted by a combination of factors like subjectively perceived "quality" and empirical data statistics. They are widely used in the US and they have significantly affected colleges' applications and admissions rising many criticisms.

University Rankings have several advantages. Standards usually secure a minimum level of quality but fail to incentive to beat that level. Moreover, rankings increase the competitiveness across universities, faculties and programs and help students on choosing the best university to study at. And, finally, the competition on quality can be the differencing aspect in an environment of public funded universities with comparably low fees.

University Rankings received many critics since 90s. In US a movement against them grew in 2007 involving institutions, educators and students. Critics concern many aspects. First of all, colleges outside of the English speaking world are disadvantaged. In addition, natural sciences have greater impact than other subjects. And, lastly, magazine's rankings are vastly influenced by fame, wealth, and exclusivity: in fact, older and more established institutes in US usually attract more award winning professors, but this doesn't assure high quality teaching.

Students in top ranked universities usually pay high fees. The problem of tuition fees cannot be considered without taking into account the wider aspect of University Funding. A great part of public University Funding is given by governments and other parties and this is true even for some private universities. Equal access to university is affected by both fees and support scheme. Current schemes have proven to be insufficient to ensure equal access and this applies equally to free access university. Moreover, it is important to highlight the funding gap problem, i.e. the difference in incomes between public and private universities.

**Conclusions.** High quality universities with low fees is an achievable target. The current approach to University Quality should be improved, both by aiming at its complete levelling throughout Europe and

by increasing the independence of QA Agency. Student participation in the policy-making process should be explicitly required in the ESG. The increase in competitiveness of the Higher Education context could raise the quality of the institutions. A new approach to University Ranking could deliver this result and help students on choosing the best university to study at. The funding gap negatively affects University Quality. University Funding should be improved both by raising the public expenditure and basing it on the actual achieved performances.

**Recommendations.** In order to have high quality universities we need to attract the best academics and students. This can be achieved with a mix of increased competition, more mobility and further financial resources. .

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## **Lithuania**

*Vilnius university, Vilnius*

*Jelena Larionova*

**Introduction.** “They wanted a great university without building a great university. They knew a lot about football, but not a lot about academia” (Brad Carter). I think this quote represents my ideal of a great university. First of all a high quality education institution needs to put all its focus on academic matters, thus providing the best possible conditions for studying as well as researching.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** Still, the question remains if you need a lot of money for that? Is it possible to create these perfect conditions with low funds and compete with our universities? I cannot provide a one sided answer as this matter is very delicate. On one hand a well financial supported university can fulfill all of the scholars’ expectations: a vast library with modern search engines, a safe social environment, funds for research and technological growth. But do these factors necessarily mean that a university would be of a high level? Are there any other possibilities to maintain high level of education excluding an over-average financial support?

**Analysis.** One of the finest examples of such university - Södertörns University, which is located in Stockholm, comes to my mind. It was founded in 1996 and is now one of the quickest expanding universities in Sweden. The main idea of this university was to connect teaching, researching and studying. This is a living example of how to organize the highest level seminars and conferences with low fees. The zone of interest in Södertörns University extends its geographical boundaries and reaches out even to Baltic States and other regions as they actively seek collaboration opportunities abroad. So what is the driving force behind this new lively and innovative form of university? I truly believe it is the power of ideas, the vision of the new collaborative scholar communities and wish to empower both students and lecturers to create their own path to find answers to problems that never existed before. What comes after that is financial support of businesses and increased attention of authorities.

**Conclusions.** So my final answer to a question of how to build a university with low fees would be that you need loads of new ideas and seek something which expands the borders of traditional structure of a university. Although one must remember that a quickly expanding institution demands funds later on, which becomes the main evidence it has become successful in transition from idea to its embodiment.

### **Recommendations.**

You need to reach financial support of businesses and increased attention of authorities.

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## **Latvia**

### **University of Latvia, Riga**

#### **Elīna Strausa**

**Introduction.** Nowadays the name of a higher education institution may have a bigger impact on person's professional carrier than person's real knowledge on the subject and his capabilities as a worker. There is a presumption that famous "brand" universities with high fees generate qualified workers. It could be true because top ranking universities have professors and lecturers who are acknowledged specialists in their field, modern laboratories, IT, student accommodations et cetera, which make them high quality universities.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** 1) Good study environment leads to qualitative education.

2) University can be of high quality if it has substantial financial resources. .

3) Financial resources may be obtained by setting high study fees, attracting sponsors or earning support of government and supranational organizations.

**Analysis.** I think it is generally agreed upon that in most of the European countries high quality universities have fees written with so many numbers that they are considered expensive from average consumer's<sup>1</sup> point of view. Moreover, we have to remember that there are many students from abroad who want to study in those universities and these students have different financial possibilities.

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<sup>1</sup> By "average consumer" I mean students who are natives of the country in which the university is located.

Although European Union consists of 27 member countries, there is a big social and economical divergence between the founding states and the new members. One solution to this problem is establishing of an international study funding organization that would receive money from member states and distribute it between students who otherwise cannot afford to study in high quality universities. Other solution would be giving money directly to universities in need. Alas, this is already happening, but amount of the financial support is so insignificant that it doesn't fulfill our goal – high quality university. Therefore, I have to admit that it is impossible to have high quality universities with low fees all thorough Europe. Why? Because governments of many countries lack a general understanding, that we all without regard to our nationality are hardworking students who yearn knowledge and who deserve to have the best education suitable to our intellect level.

**Conclusions.** The best way to choose a university to study at is to start from the top of university ranking list<sup>2</sup> and go down at the same time trying to find a sponsor.

**Recommendations.** By giving children a possibility to study at a high quality university you give them the foundation of their lives. You can build a mighty house on stable foundation.

## **The Netherlands**

*University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam*

*Lara Engelfriet*

**Introduction.** Equal chances for everyone are an important aspect of the constitutions of most European countries. Accessible education for all citizens is one of the ways to achieve this equality. Besides equality, high quality education is one of the major focuses of European Union. There seems to be a trade-off; equal chances in education are reached by low fees, high quality education by high fees. One of the tasks of government is to decline this trade-off by spending money on education. But as we all know, money is scarce and high quality education is not the only aim of government. So this is a question of how government could best allocate its money.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** The answer to how government should allocate its money in the case of universities is likely to differ a lot between European countries. In a sense, it's about the political philosophy of a country. Our aim here is to find a way to compare the various ideas and to derive from them a few strategies to one or a few ways to achieve high quality universities with low fees. With this objective in mind: should government cut or increase spending on education? Are fees necessary as an incentive for both students and universities? And should austerity or stimulus be the guiding principle?

**Analysis.** One of the differences between European countries is the extent to which universities are state owned or private. Private universities mostly have higher fees and because of that equality tends to suffer. Therefore, state owned universities are likely to contribute more to equality than private universities. Obviously, someone has to pay for education and in the case of state owned universities guess who pays (most of the costs)? Indirectly the tax payer pays the bill for university students. This could also be seen as a form of inequality, as university students are likely to obtain better jobs than an average citizen. So it seems to be fair to let students pay at least a small fee. Or, for example, let them borrow money which they can repay later, after obtaining a good job. In this way we obtained equality, but what about the other important aspect; high quality? To obtain high quality education, some

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<sup>2</sup> There are many university ranking lists made by different organisations, for example: <http://www.webometrics.info/top12000.asp>; <http://www.topuniversities.com/university-rankings> ;

competition between universities seems to be necessary. Universities must have an incentive to improve their education and students must have an incentive to do their best. University ranking lists could be helpful. However, the risk is that ranking lists provide the wrong incentives (leading to “botox” performance and window-dressing).

**Conclusions.** High quality universities with low fees are possible. The trade-off between quality universities and equality (low fees) could be offset by government intervention. This is one of the ways the trade-off could be offset, a way in which a golden mean between free market and government intervention is tried to be reached.

**Recommendations.** Universities should be state-owned but students have to pay fees. Competition between students and universities should be stimulated by ranking lists. However, care should be taken that competition does not stifle creativity and true innovation.

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## **Portugal**

*Universidade Nova de Lisboa (UNL) and Universidade de Lisboa (UL)*

*Nelson Peixoto (UNL), Álvaro Ribeiro Esteves (UL)*

**Introduction.** As we witness tuition costs skyrocket in some countries, the European tradition of HE seems menaced or even risks being seen as archaic. It is however a system of accessible Education, which promotes high (and probably higher) levels of social change and social turnover. Still, the quality of a University is not an intrinsic property; it is not an inter-subjective value.

**Hypotheses, questions, aim.** To answer the question of whether it is possible to have quality universities with low fees, firstly one must define what makes universities good. A debate on this must be held. And then, how much it costs.

**Analysis.** The quality of a University is not an intrinsic property; it is not an inter-subjective value. It must be assessed against students’ own idea of self-development and a battery of standards thought by professors, researchers, experts on sociology, on the science of education, on architecture, etc. This means that the breadth of programs and options, the quality of facilities, the quality of research and the chance of students’ participation on it, the value a University gives to extra-curricular activities, which leads to good and participant citizenship, good sports facilities, the degree of mobility and internationalization allowed and employability should all be taken into consideration and openly disclosed.

**Conclusions.** After deciding which standards make a university good, they must be implemented and guaranteed. Nevertheless one can certainly say that a good level of funding must be granted in order to have some degree of quality.

**Recommendations.** : Universities should not increase its intake of students just to collect more tuition-money for it risks creating an inverse correlation between money and quality. Funding should also be decided pluri-annually, allowing for better and more efficient planning. Students must also have a relevant role in deciding how money is spent, thus enhancing participation and citizenship-prone qualities.

## **Russian Federation**

### ***Lomonosov Moscow State University***

#### ***Evgeniy Antipov***

**Introduction.** Nowadays universities are no more the educational unstitutions for only the people from the highest strata. All over the world they face the same transition, from being universities for only a few, to universities for many. Great numbers of new universities appear every year. In most of the countries for-profit education prevail.

#### ***Hypotheses, questions, aims.***

So the question arise: how to find the ideal balance between the quality of the education and its cost?

The best way to make the choice is to use the rankings of higher education institutions made by the authoritative organizations.

**Analysis.** It has never been an easy task to find high quality for low fee, but it is always possible to find the optimal balance between the price and the quality. Using the rankings is the easiest and the most effective way to do it. There is only one serious difficulty here – to find the objective ranking.

**Conclusions.** In the process of choosing the university for future studying the emphasis should be made on observation of the rankings of higher education institutions.

#### ***Recommendations.***

Give attention to the rankings of universities, take measures to make them as objective as possible to help students make the right chose.

#### ***References***

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## **Slovakia (1)**

### ***Comenius University, Bratislava***

#### ***Natalya Dakuchyts***



**Introduction.** Education has always been an important part of human life. Unfortunately only restricted layers of society all over the world can study. For many young people the desire to study ends up when they meet the problem of university fees. Certain percentage of them do not continue their studies at all on one hand and on the other many students chose low quality establishments to study at or chose something they never wanted to study only because it is for free. The last possibility cannot be satisfactory neither for students themselves nor for the society.

### ***Hypotheses, questions, aims.***

To make education available for everyone who wants to gain knowledge.

To teach young people to earn for the university they want to study at.

To reach the level, where universities can only provide high quality education.

**Analysis.** In majority of cases young people are dependant on their parents very much. An existing stereotype that parents should give their children the best education they can sometimes leads to a problem that 19 year old adults do not know how to earn for thing they would like to choose in their lives. High quality universities with low fees are harder to reach in general. The reason stays mainly in motivation. It is easier to teach individuals to pay for their education as there is more motivation in investing to your own education than to someone else's.

**Conclusions.** In conclusion it is important to add that nowadays when technical progress does not go but run, we have to be more flexible and get rid of 20-30 years old stereotypes, in education particularly. In the era of great opportunities we have to show students the ways of doing work and studies and also motivate them to these studies.

### ***Recommendations.***

1. to evaluate teaching of individual subjects in universities. It can be by an online application filled out by students.
2. to create seminars where student's could learn more about how to be able to allow education they want themselves. To create seminars that can show what education can give students after they graduate.
3. engage students to the university life, make them active players.

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**Slovakia (2)**

***Comenius University, Bratislava***

## ***Alžbeta Žiaková***

What is concerns the high quality universities with low fees, the first of all, I suppose, that quality of education should be indipendant from money. In my opinion university with low fees and high education standard should be absolutely common. And when it isn't so, I think it is necessary to find a way how to prevent the situation when students will be forced to choose lower-quality university only because of their insufficient financial backround.

Therefore the possible solution should be to build up a system of financial subventions for students on international/European Union level.

This matter is not only about govermental work or teachers attitude, but the whole thing also requires students effort and their interest.

The choice of the best university to study at depends on many factors. On the one hand it is economical and cultural background, on the other hand personal and professional interests. For many students the significant criteria is the prestige of the university. But I consider that your personality and individual expectations effect you finally the most in your choice.

## **Switzerland**

### ***Lausanne***

## ***Noémie Barraud***

***Introduction.*** According to our discussion on the forum, we decided to divide our topic into two parts. The first one would be how to define “high quality universities” and the second one would be to explain what do we mean by “low fees”.

### ***Hypotheses, questions, aims and Analysis.***

“High quality universities”

The Academic Ranking of World Universities (originally from Shangai) is a ranking of the main universities. They are classified according to six criteria. In my opinion, these criteria can help us to give a definition of “high quality universities”.

The criteria are the education quality (Nobe prizes among students), the institution quality (Nobel prizes among researchers), the publications (in highly ranked journals, citations) and the size of the institution (and its performances according to the size).

The Global university ranking (originally from Russia) classifies 430 universities according to criteria like

- education (number of students, number of courses offered, number of students per teacher)
- research (number of patents, index h of the university)
- teaching quality (number of publications, citations counts and number of prizes: Nobel, Fields, Descartes, Abel and Lomonosov)
- affordability: overall budget per student

- international activity: number of researchers affiliated with an international community, percentage of foreign students
- visibility on the web: number of web pages, popularity on Google, pagerank

The Times Higher Education Supplement (THES) ranking of world universities uses a diverse mix of criteria including the research reputation (40%), the research impact (20%), the teaching quality (20%), the reputation among global employers (10%), the internationalization of staff and students (10%).

There are major differences with regard to the ranking methodologies used. These differences apply to the definitions of quality, the criteria and indicators to measure quality, the measurement processes as well as the presentation format . These differences lead to very different ranking approaches. The Berlin Principles on Ranking of Higher Education Institutions provides a very useful set of principles of quality and good practice in order to classify the universities.

In my opinion, these criteria will lead us to define the “high quality university”.

“Low fees”

For this part of our topic, we have decided to compare answers to the following questions:

- the cost of the studies in each country
- whether or not it depends on geographical region, city and faculty
- the education expenditures
- the graduated share of population

### ***Conclusions***

To conclude, we will find a way to combine those two parts in order to find criteria to choose the best university to study at.

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## 9.Sustainable development and greener universities.

### **Austria**

#### ***University of Vienna***

#### ***Katharina Obermeier***

**Introduction.** Universities these days encounter new challenges in the field of sustainable development and “greenness” in two different levels.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** On the one hand they are scrambling to burnish their sustainability credentials, with efforts that include wind power, organic food and competitions to save energy, recycling, student involvement, green buildings. Simple steps such as putting up recycling bins have been already taken by many universities. Universities have to take the same steps towards sustainability just as other businesses; the difference is that they also have to fulfill their role as a good example and idea maker and are a place where new ideas are born and new techniques and methods are being developed. Therefore universities should be ahead of other companies from a green point of view and be the pioneers to introduce new green methods.

On the other hand they are also adding courses related to sustainability and energy to their course program. More and more universities provide innovative, interdisciplinary education and research opportunities for undergraduate, graduate, and professional students, to better prepare them to identify and solve sustainability challenges. New “Schools of Sustainability” are being established every year, which is raising the awareness of the need for a more sustainable thinking in the societies worldwide.

**Analysis.** Surveys on the developments of the university from a green point of view show new trends with great potentials for the universities but also a substantial backlog. Often their budgets don’t allow them to make big changes in the university’s structure and buildings.

**Conclusions.** Thinking about sustainable development is a topic that will be unavoidable for every university in the upcoming years. But it is not only the task of the school itself, but it will also be the students’ role to consider a school’s sustainability at the time of choosing their university and course to contribute to a greener development in education.

#### ***Recommendations.***

Universities should rethink their concept with special attention to those three points:

whether the school’s students have a campus quality of life that is healthy and sustainable,

how well the school is preparing its students for employment and citizenship in a world defined by environmental challenges, and

the school's overall commitment to environmental issues.

#### ***References*** (selected websites)

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## **Belgium**

*ULB, Brussels*

*Brendan Coolsaet*

**Introduction.** The European Union became the world biggest economy. It managed to do so while creating a unique social safety net, which protects its citizens and supports the economy. It now has to adopt a third pillar for it to become a sustainable society: shifting towards a non-material and low-carbon economy. Universities play a major role here: who leads the way to a sustainable society, if not our universities?

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** Developing strategies for fostering sustainable universities in Europe

**Analysis.** Universities are significant contributors to waste generation, energy and freshwater use, chemical waste for its laboratories as well as indirect pollution caused by its daily activity (food production, paper use, student transport,...). Several steps can be undertaken for universities to set an example of environmental responsibility while increasing awareness and educating its students for environmentally responsible citizenship.

(Re)Defining a common “sustainability vision” for European Universities (e.g. Talloires Declaration)

Sharing information and know-how through a common European network (eg. ISCN)

Setting up a “Green European University Ranking” to stimulate healthy competition

Allocating funds specifically for environmental management and building efficiency on campus

Establishing partnerships with governments, NGO’s, foundations and industry

Helping universities performing audits and setting up strategies according to their needs

Stimulate student involvement and make the above initiatives clearly visible to the community as to increase awareness

**Conclusions.** All over the world, universities study environmental harm and the ways to solve it. The acquired knowledge needs to be made visible through the university’s daily activity. A lot of universities are already involved in sustainability efforts but Europe lacks a common project. Its global leading position on sustainability has to be reflected by its universities.

## **Recommendations**

Structurally and financially support and promote the above initiatives

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**Cyprus**

*University of Cyprus, Nicosia*

*Eleni Efthymiou*

In recent years, development in construction and manufacturing all over the world has been spectacular. Nowadays, big cities are created with high-technology buildings yet unbearable traffic in their streets; heavy industries are widely spread everywhere in order to satisfy the needs of consumers. In order for all of this to happen and work correctly, an uncontrolled exploitation of natural resources is taking place, as well as, an alarmingly huge consumption of electricity and fuels on an everyday basis, causing their quantities to decrease dangerously. Moreover, environmental pollution is severe and, because of that, we now face serious global issues like the water contamination, the reduction of biodiversity, the global temperature rise due to the hole in the ozone layer and the possible risks on human health.

In order to reverse all the undesirable consequences of our irresponsible actions on Earth, before it is too late, we all have to cooperate now to save the environment and change our lifestyle. We, therefore, need to live not just according to our needs but also sustainably for the environment. University students, the promising future of this continent, can take actions both in their university and their community towards that direction. First, the universities have to reduce the electricity consumption in their buildings and also reinforce the recycling methods in order to decrease the littering that is produced and save the trees from being cut unnecessarily to prepare paper. Second, every university has to give the chance and encourage its students to use the public means of transport like the bus or even the bicycle, where it is possible. Third, we all have to turn to sources of energy that are more friendly to the environment, usually called renewable sources of energy; for example, solar energy that is transformed to electrical energy with photovoltaic systems. Fourth, I think that we have to make our universities greener and, at the same time, prettier by planting trees in their grounds and also we have to make wiser use of the water by filtering it and reusing it for other purposes.

In conclusion, although the technological development has been destructive so far to the natural environment, together we can put an end to it by adopting ecological consciousness. As a result, technological development will continue in the world but it will be sustainable and environmentally friendly, at the same time. Us, university students, have to be the bright model in this campaign to save the environment by making our universities as greener as we can, with the lowest possible water and energy consumption, littering and air pollution.

What I would recommend to the Rectors of the European universities is to encourage their students to use mainly the bicycle and the bus to commute to and from their respective universities, organise conferences to inform people about environmental issues and also contests to reward students who make an original scientific project and discover something that could be used to save the environment, as well as, those who create pieces of art inspired by nature or share their ideas in a nice text that could be published in a magazine or newspaper.

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### **Finland**

***University of Helsinki***

***Tuula Lehtonen***

***Introduction.*** Everybody of us have to take care of our environment. it is because personal needs, environmental needs and global needs. People are more effective to change the World so it is needed to do more powerful work so that we could be more sustainable. That is also reason why universities should be greener. There is a lot of work to do and universities are the source of all the knowledge. We should be a role models.

***Hypotheses, questions, aims.*** Universities should lead the way towards better world. it is made step by step. There is needed small actions as much as whole organizations action. But the fact is that universities could do more and it has to be done by every university.

There is no university that could say that they do enough or that they don't have to do anything.

***Analysis.*** Universities should go deeper into them selves to see clearly are they sustainble and green enough. Sustainability and green arent only the words but they are massive actions. It has to be undestood that it means everyhthing. Trash, mobility, food, people, you name it. Everything have too considered if we want to have our universities, our world greener.

***Conclusions.*** It is everybodys job to work hard towards greener and sustainable world. If we think it deep enough we can do it. It is not just "somebodys" job to do – it is everybodys job. In university, students, professor, staff and everybody have to think these things.

Recommendations to Rectors, European Commissioners, etc...

-We should work step by step towards greener universities. It is everybodys mission.

-Universities are the key to everything else – we have to work to be the best

-research are looking how green everyhthing is – Do they research enough how green are the universities?

**Germany**

***Humboldt University, Berlin***

***Jennifer Ewald***

***Introduction.*** Even though most people will agree that sustainability is something crucially important that we must all strive for, the actual attempt at "being green" portrays a whole different picture. Predominant voices within this discourse usually always through out questions concerning "higher costs" and the "inconvenience" of greener policies.

There is definitely a need for positive examples of how to deal with or even attempt to tackle and approach the challenges of sustainable development and "greener" policies within our universities (and society as a whole). How can we as students overcome the difficulties of sustainability, work towards increasing awareness and becoming "greener" universities?

***Hypotheses, questions, aims.*** Is it possible to meet the needs of the present generation of students without compromising the ability of future generations to succeed? How can the everyday use of natural resources. become something we all do consciously and modestly? Can a "green mindset" be naturally incorporated in our everyday university policy decision-making without lingering negative connotations concerning higher costs and inconvenience? How must one mediate between



groups claiming universities' already tight budgets should rather go towards improving the students learning environment, then attempting to re-enforce an environment-friendly situation?

**Analysis.** An important first step would definitely have to involve breaking down negative connotations and hesitant attitudes towards “greener” policies. People (within universities, but more importantly also on a broader level of society) must be educated to the effect that sustainability and being green is not automatically seen as something annoying, tedious and irrelevant and involving higher costs as well as higher inconvenience. But rather it must be seen as an important step in securing the development of future generations.

Applying this hypothetic approach to reality could perhaps result in “sustainability awareness” workshops and seminars within the work place, universities but most importantly starting to imply this mindset at a young age – e.g. incorporating a “playful” and “light” approach towards greener attitudes in pre-schools and kinder gardens.

**Conclusions.** At a university level I have found two factors to be crucially lacking during my research at my own institution: transparency and visibility. First and foremost a university should have open easily accessible and tangible information concerning its own policies on sustainability and “being green”. Second, a university must aim to publicize, promote and actually make visible what exactly it is doing in terms of attempting to “be green”. I find this last aspect to be especially important, because only through this “visibility” can other universities learn and benefit from experience and can students be incorporated into a process that (should) also concern them.

### **Recommendations.**

As mentioned above one should promote transparency and visibility in every universities policy of sustainable development. Furthermore since debates about these developments also effect present students as well as future generations, the student body should have a voice, a right but most importantly also an interest to participate in these discussions. Perhaps in the form of “committees of sustainability” that are run by students, but communicate and exchange with their university.

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### **Italy**

*Sapienza University, Rome*

*Chiara Grillo, Michela Pellegrino*

**Introduction.** Ecology is the scientific study of the distributions, abundance, share affects, and relations of organisms and their interactions with each other in a common environment. Since human consumption is extracting more natural resources than can be replenished by ecosystems around the world, a wide variety of groups have adopted the “ecology” concept and given it their own particular interpretations, increasing our understanding of what sustainable development means within many different contexts. Progress on developing the concepts of sustainable development has been rapid since the 1980s. Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. "It improves the quality of life for all of the Earth's citizens without increasing the use of natural resources beyond the capacity of the environment to supply them indefinitely and it consists in taking actions, changing policy and practices at all levels, from the individual to the international.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** The fundamental goal is to spread this new awareness among the whole population, and universities in particular, need to promote it: declarations, and action plans may be considered as instructive instruments that promote and link all universities within a common engagement. If universities were transformed in sustainable institutions, they could be a model for every other organization, because they became the demonstration of a renovate confidence in realizing a change that seemed impossible to achieve. Every university should have its own action plan, not only with theories, but with real projects, learning how to “read” the political, social context and the administration criteria used in those circumstances. Projects need to be held in a flexible way: we need to take into account all branches of knowledge present in the universities and joining them together: keeping them apart would only increase the isolation, doubt, parting them from sustainability due to their thought of being unsuited to coping with its complexity.

**Analysis.** This topic will deepen the action plan that may take place in universities. It can involve energy conservation and efficiency (use of water and paper, etc), clean energy, green building design, transportations, food services, waste management, procurement, education and research, investment, supplies, the recycling process, and communication. However, starting an action plan may be difficult: endow a coherent project of eco-compatibility with a specific committee requires a long time to become effective. Universities, anyway, can pave the way for it with immediate actions (1-18 months). These interventions may also cause a monetary savings, which, obviously, would increase year by year: in 12-24 months their cost would be repaid.

**Conclusions.** College and universities have a critical leadership role to play by graduating students who fully understand the problem of climate change and are prepared to act by committing to achieve deep cuts in greenhouse gas emissions at the earliest possible date. These important efforts will inspire similar actions in other sectors of our society and create the momentum needed to get our political leaders and government on all levels to act before it is too late.

**Recommendations.** For what concerns the actual finalization of the action plan, we suggest a five action key action steps critical for reducing the campus carbon footprint:

1. Form a stakeholder group: identify key roles and responsibilities;
2. Complete a greenhouse gas emissions inventory: develop baseline measures through facilities and energy audits;
3. Develop a strategic climate action plan: outline mission goals, and timeframes, brainstorm all possible options and create a roadmap neutrality;
4. Identify resource investments: allocate financial, intellectual and personnel resources to reduce emissions;

5. Implement a tactical plan: identify and carry out specific projects and initiatives and monitor, report, and validate progress.

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**Latvia (1)**

*University of Latvia, Riga*

*Anda Baumerte*

**Introduction.** Green ideas are waving the world even more while ambitious investments in new buildings grow twice with fees, connected with climate policy, facilities and water. This could be our near future. Research shows that even now companies and government tend to choose greener buildings, in case of fiscal policy or consumer preference change will occur. So why don't universities?

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.**

To maintain green universities is cheaper in long term.

A green university will be more amiable for a future student.

A pleasant study environment makes studying more effective.

**Analysis.** At current situation, when competence and status is very important even in education, consumer preferences can change drastically. Therefore an university with eco-friendly status and energo-effective label would be the best advertisement even for those who do not appreciate fully the benefits of sustainability. If they do, this philosophy – university, which is thinking and was thinking before and after generations could be the most appealing.

Furthermore, electricity usage reduction, or effectiveness increase can result in fair savings, same as for paper print and copies. Re-usage and recycled materials usage can provide savings or it can also be named income, too. Greener environment is more relaxing and refreshing, therefore it motivates for studying, and also it can be a part of the green architecture or building infrastructure. Sustainability being the issue could be practiced or taught at place.

**Conclusions.** Greener universities can follow the development path of industry and attract future students with sustainable and healthy issues, good PR, and new infrastructure, at the main time the investment for the green campuses would pay off in fast period of time.

### **Recommendations.**

Invest in engero-effective light or light-regimes, heaters and coolers, materials, passive housing.

Use recycled materials and recycle.

Bring in more light with windows.

Use engeneering or environmental student's projects and ideas for making the campus greener.

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### **Latvia (2)**

**University of Latvia, Riga**

**Edvards Ratnieks**

**Introduction.** Higher education institutions are obliged to create a state of civil society and high quality labor force, and not to forget about the environment and the university, inside and exterior (natural environment, as many science related to natural resources. , excessive use). Therefore, build energy-efficient universities.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** People must be aware of the importance of energy efficiency. Universities are encouraged friendliness to the environment. Universities should be used more effectively in renewable energy **References.** .

**Analysis.** Currently, not all students are aware of environmental problems that could arise if the do not think energy efficient. Those who are concerned about environmental problems, often for environmental science students, but others are indifferent. Such problems arise when there is such a lack of knowledge. Universities are often spent on wasted paper, electricity, heat, etc.

**Conclusions.** Human sense of the many things - including their behavior, so they change can help solve many environmental problems. Friendliness to the environment can be achieved with the active interpretative work, environmental disasters and other examples showing, general information, lectures in universities. It is understood that the environment is the foundation. Higher Education in Action - a year of administration, although the study process and must work in the interest of the environment - must work to save paper, electricity and other resources. .

### **Recommendations**

Implement the above case, not only in law but in real life.

### **References**

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### **Lithuania**

Vilnius University, Vilnius

Givi Lengvenis

**Introduction.** Sustainable development, according to UN definition, is 'development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.' As ULSF (Association of University Leaders for a Sustainable Future) emphasizes, higher education plays a critical role in spreading this idea in the world because of the significance of higher education for modern society.

### **Hypotheses, questions, aims.**

1. Why universities and colleges are such important messengers?
2. What measures university or college should take to become a green and sustainable one?
3. Become green & sustainable and thus save money?

**Analysis.** Universities have always been places for bright ideas to be enthusiastically spread at, from where these were transferred to the public. And today higher education institutions gain even more influence on the society as 'they prepare most of the professionals who develop, manage and teach in society's public, private and non-governmental institutions' (ULSF).

To become green and sustainable, universities and colleges should take certain short-term and long-term measures, which cover not only the technical improvements, but also academical and ethical matters.

Financial difficulties sometimes prevent higher education institutions from becoming green and sustainable. Despite of that, there are many real-life examples of expenses reduction due to ecological and sustainable lifestyle.

**Conclusions.** Academic community could have a great influence on the ecologic situation in the world because of its adequate resources. and strong potential. Universities and colleges should immediately take short-term actions and make long-term decisions towards becoming greener and more sustainable institutions.

**Recommendations.** Take into consideration student societies proposals.

Become more open-minded and look at the problem from a wider angle of view.

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## **The Netherlands**

### ***University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam***

#### ***Linde Mollers***

**Introduction.** Worldwide, sustainability and global warming have gained more importance in the last couple of years. Also universities, who are a role model for the society, can be important key players in transferring the need of sustainability. Despite this, a lot of students feel like their universities are not doing all they can, to be as green as possible. While trying to find information about sustainability at my own university, I came across a ‘committee for sustainability’ run by students of the university. They come up with all sorts of plans for making the university more green. They started this committee on their own initiative. For me, I came across this committee by accident and as I have always been interested in the environment, I think it’s a pity I didn’t know of the existence of this committee before, and with me a lot of other students. Therefore, it’s important that committees like these get enough PR from the university so that other interested students know there are committees like these that they can join.

Furthermore, I think it’s really important to come up with some ideas or plans for universities which will make the transition to become a more green university inspiring.

**Questions.** The questions I would like to address at the conference are the following:

How can we, as students, increase the awareness and importance of becoming more green?

Is it possible to come up with a plan that has investments that will all be earned back within 10 years?

Can we make people more enthusiastic about being green in a positive way?

How can universities include more students in their plan making?

**Methods:** First of all, it is very important to make people more enthusiastic about the possibilities of becoming more green. Deciding to be more green does not mean you have to take a step back. Secondly, we should attempt to have the students bundle their ideas into new and interesting insights. Lastly, the universities should try to include students in their plan making. This transparency will lead to new and interesting ideas to make the university more environmental friendly and a better place for students, professors and employees.

**Conclusion.** Changing people’s attitude towards sustainability and making them enthusiastic of becoming more green, is important. Where there is a will, there is a way!

Universities should have transparency high on their agenda and join up with students when making plans. In doing so, they can learn from each other’s knowledge. Furthermore, this may even have a positive effect on the understanding between the students and the university.

Thus, it’s crucial to discuss the questions mentioned above during the conference and come up with good ideas. While trying to find the answers, students can learn to cooperate and also be transparent to the other students involved. This will, not only make the conference worthwhile, but also be a good practice to be transparent and something the students can use at their own universities when they go back to their home countries.

**Recommendations.** Transparency should be high on the agenda of the university. It’s important that student’s know what is going on at their own university. This will also lead students to think about the topics themselves and maybe come up with interesting ideas or join committees where they can

try to help the universities become more green and sustainable. Besides this, transparency within universities is also important, for they can be good role models to each other.

**References.:**

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**Portugal**

*Universidade de Lisboa (UL), Lisbon Universidade Nova de Lisboa (UNL), Lisbon*

*Tiago Gonçalves (UL), João Jesus (UNL)*

**Introduction.** As the public opinion gets aware about the importance and urgency of solving increasing environmental problems, the Universities should also support think-thank groups and action programs related to the energy efficiency or waste recovery and recycling.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** How to achieve a sustainable University that adopts practices and standards leading to efficiency gains and savings? And would Universities and Government accept to employ an equivalent amount of the money saved in scholarships, research and teaching facilities? Is it feasible in Europe to get partners from civil society and Government to donate as much as to match the money saved?

**Analysis and Conclusions.** The students of Lisbon Universities are concerned about saving essential resources, such as water, and to promote the rational use of electric energy. We think that an intelligent Energy Management Plan is not only a major contribution to a better quality of life for future generations, but also a way to improve working conditions on campus today. By enacting an efficient energy management plan, becomes possible to invest money saved on other strategic areas, for example, research laboratories and networks and scholarship programs. To assure full understanding and commitment, a debate must be started involving all stakeholders: schools, institutes, faculty, researchers, academic staff and students.

**Recommendations.** Universities throughout Europe should hold conferences involving the stakeholders as well as civil society and Government. From the many opinions heard, a coherent resources management plan should be designed and properly enforced.

At this moment, we can only propose a few generic goals:

- Disseminate green practices through teaching to enable proper waste reduction and promote recycling practices;
- Establish a rational policy about the using of resources and extend it to all campus services;
- Defend green purchase practices and source reduction initiatives;
- Support the installation of renewable energy systems across the campus;

- Establish clear and transparent rules related to the special waste recycling of the most common materials, such as writing instruments, computers and electronic instruments, toner cartridges, ink cartridges or batteries.

## **Russian Federation**

### *Lomonosov Moscow State University*

#### *Sergey Udris*

“Sustainable development, which implies meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, should become a central guiding principle of the United Nations, Governments and private institutions, organizations and enterprises”.<sup>3</sup>

To find proper solutions to these problems it is imperative to detect and reveal their source, which often is the result of human activity, economic activity in particular, and thus to switch over to sustainable development.

The fundamental principle of achieving sustainable development is the equality in sharing environmental costs and economic benefits between and within countries as well as between present and future generations.

According to the current situation of disproportional distribution of goods between and within nations, the UN Division for Sustainable Development is initiating various actions aimed at collecting data about global environmental resources, and implementing more rational and thrifty ways of their usage. This branch of economic sustainability, called the corporate sustainability, implies efficient usage of natural resources. . And the surest way of achieving it is to act locally (as was proposed in UN Agenda 21), through adoption of special legislation into the municipal law of a country. This is highly important for Russia where energy efficiency remains exceedingly low.

Still, global green initiatives are not “welcome” all over the world: the United States, world’s second CO<sub>2</sub> emitter, has not joined Kyoto protocol yet, while their share constitutes 16%<sup>4</sup> of world carbon emission. That disvalues the whole idea and nullifies the efforts of other states. Therefore, before putting forward an idea, it is necessary to think it out and guarantee that the actions suggested will be carried out by all participants unexceptionally.

Green movement is gaining strength all over the world. It is mainly supported by the young generation, students. “Greener universities” is a part of that movement and its main target is sustainability inside the university as an economical, social and territorial cell of the society.

Logically, this sphere does not differ in principle from the global one, except the average level of education in universities and the intent attention of authorities, which give these “cells” credit and provide ample opportunities to create and test various innovative models based on principles of environmental, economic, sociopolitical and cultural sustainability.

Today, according to the data from Green Power Partnership, People and Planet green League etc. the western universities has already achieved significant results in adopting alternative **References.**

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<sup>3</sup> Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987

<sup>4</sup> MNP (2007). "[Greenhouse gas emissions of countries in 2005 and ranking of their per capita emissions](#)". Netherlands Environment Agency website



of energy, creating excellent conditions for living, studying and working in the campuses.<sup>5</sup> However, other countries still lack resources. and potential to go over to such facilities.

## **Slovakia**

*Comenius University, Bratislava*

*Bohumil Petrik*

The agenda of sustainable development and greener society in general is becoming more and more popular – this is why it is also one of the themes of Unica conference this year. It has its significant reasons and universities as the highest educational institutions have to give a green light to projects oriented in this way.

Universities should be environmentally-friendly in order to show they care about the future, they should develop international and local students' initiatives aimed at sustainable growth, organize courses and regular lectures on this topic and morally support related projects of non-governmental groups.

Universities can also save costs spent on energy by installing fotovoltaic cells, using wind energy and other forms of energy and provide space for researchers and scientists which would test new greener technologies together with interested students, teachers and other university employees.

## **Switzerland**

*University of Lausanne, Lausanne*

*Lisa Kirschner*

**Introduction.** The UNICA Conference is a perfect starting point to establish small (or wider) action plans which every participating university can bring back home in order to improve the global changes towards sustainable development in Europe. Of course, the change will have to spread further eventually and involve all countries around the globe. But currently only European and a few other western countries have the economical stability and technological development that is required to begin and establish such major changes.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** Can universities lead the way to establish a culture of sustainable development in Europe?

**Analysis.** There are many reasons that would place European universities at the center of this process of change. University, as an institution, teaches its students (future leaders of the country) and thus has a central role in preparing future generation to face environmental and resource issues. Moreover, our Universities have the financial and technological resources. needed to lead the way in the research for sustainable development. University's great "melting pot" of knowledge is essential on the way towards innovation.

**Conclusions.** Europe could become a world leader in the research and in the promotion of new alternatives to our current ways of consuming (energy, resources. , etc.) In a long-term perspective, dealing with problems (energy, natural resources. , CO2 emissions) before they completely come out of hand can make great economical difference for our countries.

**Recommendations.**

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<sup>5</sup> Search for <http://peopleandplanet.org> or <http://www.epa.gov/greenpower/>

Every university should designate a group of people (Professors, students and campus employees) that would be committed to the promotion and development of sustainable development on the campus (and even beyond). This group can work on at least two levels:

1) Every university should make an assessment of the current situation on their campus. It involves estimating the quality of heating/cooling systems, waste recycling, how students and employees go and come to campus (car, bus, bicycle). Then, ideally, each University would set specific goals they aim to reach within a specific time frame to improve the global situation for their campus. Like having an "Agenda 21" for each university.

2) On the second level, universities should organize information campaigns about sustainable development, for the regular users of their campus.. The campaigns can comprise aspects like energy savings, promoting green mobility, diminishing paper/water waste, promoting recycling, improving green areas on campus, etc. In a long-time perspective, universities could also introduce classes on sustainable development accessible to all students of the university. Moreover, each university could organize exhibitions and conferences open to all public, to enable the information to reach a wider part of the population. In addition, universities should support and encourage new researches for sustainable development in all sorts of fields.

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## 10. Hard and soft skills: are the European universities helping the students to develop both?

### Austria

#### *University of Vienna*

#### *Lara Pivodic*

**Introduction.** Hard skills such as domain knowledge and technical competence are the primary focus of most degree programs at European universities. It is these skills that help us acquire a degree but it takes more to provide employability. Another essential cluster of competences are the so-called soft skills. This group of abilities has not yet found a place in regular curricula even though they determine to a great extent graduates' academic success as well as their chances to be accepted for a given job.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** A reason for the described situation may be the fact that the training of soft skills requires different, more interactive methods of teaching and assessment from those currently established in training programs in most academic fields. Another reason seems to be the predominant view that soft skills are just additional qualifications and thus less important than hard skills. As most universities don't take responsibility for teaching soft skills, it is largely up to students' own initiative and interest to acquire them at internships, extracurricular activities, during gap years etc.

Unfortunately, most curricula at European universities disregard the fact that soft skills are the sustainable ones that can be transferred to various academic and job-related fields and that support us in acquiring new "hard" knowledge and abilities when the present knowledge has become outdated.

**Analysis.** Well developed soft skills add to domain-specific abilities in making an individual succeed in their field of interest. Consequently, they form a competitive advantage in today's European economy. Therefore, it should be one of universities' tasks to equip students with these skills.

The nature of soft skills as compared to their "hard" counterparts requires teaching methods that are different from the currently established ones. Consider, for example, two very important soft skills in today's society: communication abilities and conflict resolution techniques. They cannot be taught in a classroom containing 50 students and one professor lecturing in front of them. What is needed are innovative, interactive techniques such as dialogue, workshops, role plays, team work etc. These approaches, in turn, call for more time, smaller classes, thorough preparation and individuals (both students and staff) who are willing to abandon conventional concepts of teaching and learning in favour of more effective methods. The MODES Project as developed by the School for Continuing Education of Università Campus Bio-Medico di Roma is a start in the right direction, albeit not comprehensive enough.

### **Conclusions**

European universities should make an effort to foster students' soft skills at least to the same extent as their "hard" knowledge and abilities. Following the example of communication and conflict resolution skills, these abilities have the potential to help people advance in many, if not most,

fields of study and work. This fact calls for structures that allow both academic staff and students to create appropriate environments for the development of soft skills.

**Recommendations.** Rectors could take a step toward incorporating soft skills into curricula by forming interdisciplinary work groups consisting of students, teaching staff and experts whose task would be to design methods/courses for the development of soft skills. As these skills are repeatedly shown to be not only an advantage but in fact a necessary requirement on the job market, it is in Europe's best interest to initiate and support their development at the university level.

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## **Belgium**

*Université Libre de Bruxelles, Brussels*

*Alexandra Samii*

**Introduction.** I believe that universities can nurture creativity. As several studies have shown, it is possible to implement creativity in higher education while still adhering to curricular constraints. However this creativity should be demystified: it shouldn't be seen as the inspiration one has for artistic purposes, but more as a tool that reason can use in order to redefine concepts, notice evolutions, synthesize elements which at a first glance don't seem to be connected. Indeed, successful scientists like Galileo, Einstein, Edison have been using innovative skills in order to contribute to the advancement of civilization.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** Feldhusen and Treffinger support an inquiry–discovery or problem-solving approach as an “experience with discovery learning, enhances creative performance by forcing the learner to manipulate the environment and produce new ideas”<sup>6</sup>. According to them, students should be provided with practical situations and materials that they use to begin avenues of exploration. The purpose is to spark intrinsic motivation and creativity in the classroom and encourage student experimentation and creative production. This approach on studies in universities should be encouraged more.

**Analysis.** In 1983, a seven-year study on American schooling by John I. Goodlad<sup>7</sup>, dean of the Graduate School of Education at the University of California at Los Angeles, found that on the average, only 7 out of 150 minutes of a course given to students involved teachers' responses to individual students. More than 25 years later, the situation hasn't changed that much. So far as a

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6 Feldhusen, J. F., & Treffinger, D. J., 1980, *Creative thinking and problem solving in gifted education*. Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hun, p.34

7 John I. Goodland, 1983, *A place called School*, Mc Graw-Hill

Law student I've had very few classes in which teachers expected an active attitude from us. Indeed, most of the time, the teacher speaks without interrupting and students passively follow. The 10 minute break in the 120 minutes class is most of the time, the only moment when students ask their questions to the teacher. I think the inquiry-discovery approach could be introduced in our university thanks to Academics and teachers who would act upon it by making the learning process more interactive but there remains one problem, the constraints for universities with open access: with tight budgets it is impossible in some disciplines to have small groups.

By instructing and assessing creativity in classrooms, both creative and critical thinking would be infused in the curriculum. Indeed, in addition to logical thinking and reasoning including skills such as, comparison, classification, deductive and inductive reasoning, thanks to creative thinking, curiosity would be stimulated and divergence in opinions promoted, using skills such as flexibility, originality, brainstorming, imagery, associative thinking and metaphorical thinking. With a problem solving approach in studies, both kind of thinking are valued and learned by students. Firstly, the problem is analyzed. Secondly, all possible solutions would be examined. Further to that, the best solution would be chosen and implemented. Finally, the effectiveness of the solution would be evaluated.

**Conclusions.** Young students can become constructive agents of change in Sciences, Arts and Literature. Even though creativity has been set aside in education for a while, it is still there, this Promethean spark just needs to be rekindled.

**Recommendations.**

Insert a more interactive, creative approach in the classrooms to enhance discovery learning and critical thinking in the curriculum.

**Croatia**

**University of Zagreb**

**Marko Pavic**

**Introduction.** Although Bologna process introduced many reforms and changed focus of the learning process to students, almost none has been done to give students not only the knowledge but also skills that are essential today for working process. Modern employers expect from graduate of second and especially third Bologna cycle to have multiple soft skills. Today one is expected, after graduating, to know how to work in a team; how to present own ideas and communicate them to others; how to prepare and write projects and grants; how to manage time, people and resources. ; how to negotiate etc. None or rarely any of these skills are transferred to students within current university programs and there is a present and clear need to change this and introduce soft skills in the modern Bologna curricula.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** Current Bologna curricula do not satisfy the need of graduates entering modern work market in soft skills they provide.

**Analysis.** Students that do not develop soft skills during their university education are not well prepared for entering the employment market. Current curricula are old and outdated regarding soft skills and Tight collaboration with employers is needed to access set of soft skills that are going to be developed under certain curricula.

**Conclusions.** Due to the rapid and constant changes in the needs of modern work market students must acquire not only the expertise within their field but also skills that will enable them to adapt for the modern competitive market.

**Recommendations.** Introduce soft skill courses into the second and third cycle curricula of the Bologna process to enable graduates to be better prepared for future employment.

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## **Cyprus**

**University of Cyprus, Nicosia**

### **Marilena Kasapi**

Nowadays, young people come against several social, economic and political issues, such as, diseases, unemployment, environmental pollution, the rise of crime and its consequent damages, racism and many others. Therefore, it is necessary for them to acquire and develop the appropriate skills in order to solve the different kinds of issues they will face in their future lives.

The most important tool to help them get through this is knowledge, which comes from their education. As far as the European Universities are concerned, young people get the chance not only to learn academically, but also to get the knowledge which will help them develop several skills and cultivate their intelligence in general. Measures for the latter are known as intelligence quotient (IQ) and emotional quotient (EQ) and the former are categorized into the hard and soft skills. Hard and soft skills are the special skills that people develop during and through their education, but also in their everyday life.

Many surveys on this subject have shown that a person's IQ is as important as EQ, which has to do mostly with that part of communication and ability regarding human relationships in different environments. The ability of taking decisions, communicating with others and working with them as a team, self appreciation, helping people, the acceptance of diversity and many others evolve from the development of the emotional part of our intelligence. It is obvious, therefore, that soft skills cannot and must not be considered of lower importance to hard skills (the skills that give someone a specialization, for example, quantitative skills, etc). As a result, soft skills are equally important and decisive for a person's success. European Universities must give their students the impulse to develop their soft skills in order to face the problems mentioned above, be successful in their work and built up a better future for generations to come.

I strongly believe that all students have some of those skills and abilities. The daily contact and experience with people who share the same ideas and the same worries lead only to cooperation and team work, which also leads to communication between people. Someone could say that various educational fields and professions, such as social studies, language and humanities, encourage the development of soft skills more than others, due to the fact that they study the human nature and behavior. When young people are involved in social activities they can easily develop their soft skills. Whatever they study. Thus, universities must offer their students as many opportunities as possible so that young people can get involved with social activities, and generally with their surrounding society. In that way, people will have the chance to meet new people, have new experiences, learn about new cultures and civilizations, have fun, be creative, learn and offer to society.

## **Lithuania**

*Vilnius University, Vilnius*

*Rūta Bikulčiūtė*

Introduction; Creative people should be educated at university, because today important problems require modern solutions. Modern solution means creative solution. Therefore studies at university must give wide range of knowledge: not only hard skills, but soft skills too.

Hard skills are specific, teachable abilities that may be required in a given context, such as a job or university application. Soft skills, sometimes known as "people skills," are personal attributes that enhance an individual's interactions, job performance and career prospects. Unlike [hard skills](#), which tend to be specific to a certain type of task or activity, soft skills are broadly applicable.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** Hard skills are more developed at the European universities because of the our education system. Theoretical knowledge are more important according to our education system. But how much just theoretical knowledge will be useful in future job? How much soft skills should be developing? So our aim is to compare hard and soft skills' development and maintaining at the European universities.

**Analysis.** As we know, hard skills sometimes could seem more static and maybe important than soft skills. But there is a question – will it be useful in near future? Somehow or other, we need more and more soft skills because today's problems require unusually decisions and therefore we need to get the other point of view. So there we see other question and problem together – do we need hard skills for decisions and soft skills for unusually decisions? To answer this question we need help from universities, from the place for young-man before self-contained life.

**Conclusions.** Hard and soft skills should be developed equally because hard skills belong to IQ and soft skills belong to EQ. EQ is impossible without IQ. Now we have to maintain this relation and understand that future life won't be successful without one of these components.

**Recommendations.** The most important thing to develop hard and soft skills is teaching method. In my opinion the method of teaching should be LdL, which means "Learning by Teaching". The fundamental principle is to hand over as much teaching responsibility to the learner as possible and to encourage as many students as possible to engage in the highest possible degree of activity. The team of students placed in charge of the lesson must think of appropriate teaching methods to convey their topic (i.e. chalk and talk, ex-cathedra teaching, working in pairs, group work, discussion, etc.). LdL encourages and demands creativity, independence, selfconfidence and fundamental key qualifications.

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## **The Netherlands**

*University of Amsterdam*

*Marie-Anne van Stam*

**Introduction.** First we need to know what hard and soft skills are. In my opinion: hard skill represent the knowledge (for example  $2+2=4$ ). Soft skills are the skills necessary to transform this

knowledge in to daily life (for example: if we put 4 students together we will get one strong team). University's need to develop both to make the world's knowledge and students grow.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** Hypotheses: University's help to develop both, but there is a difference in centre of gravity. Some focus on hard skills some focus on soft skills.

The question is: how to find the perfect balance?

**Analysis.** To find this perfect balance it is important to exchange students and information between universities. In doing so, there won't be any islands of 'unbalanced' students.

This exchange is only possible if university's are open for new idea's of students. If for example a student from Japan arrives in Italy and he has always had little debate-groups at his university. There must be a possibility for him to introduce this at the Italian University.

**Conclusions.** In my opinion universities help students to develop both hard and soft skills. But universities differ in degree and method. The perfect balance can be found to exchange students and their ideas about knowledge and (communication)skills. (ICT-solutions make this easier to achieve)

### **Recommendations.**

Exchange knowledge and create opportunities for students to introduce new ways of 'making knowledge grow'.

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### **Portugal**

**Universidade de Lisboa (UL and Universidade Nova de Lisboa (UNL)**

**Rute Rosendo (UL), Pedro Antunes (UNL)**

**Introduction.** The Portuguese higher education system is comprised of universities and polytechnic institutions. Universities carry out fundamental research while polytechnics conduct applied research and are vocationally or professionally oriented. Traditionally, the Portuguese Higher Education system favours hard skills. By and large, admission in public Portuguese Universities takes only in account grades obtained in High school. Likewise, it is attributed to the graduate a final classification that affects the access on labour market and postgraduate studies. Valid information on academic route and on employability exists in Portugal. However the data collected is not analysed at all. This is a serious flaw of the current system, since the use of this data relating to labour market would strengthen the capacity of institutions to improve and adapt their study programmes. Despite this tendency, the Universities of Lisbon are making an effort for gathering information about the academic and professional path of its students and graduates.

### **Hypotheses, questions, aims.**

- Define what type of hard and soft skills universities must explore.
- What are the obstacles for developing which one of them?



- How universities balance hard and soft skills?

**Analysis.** Students are generally happy with their degrees, although they feel somehow unprepared for their professional life. A small number of graduates participate in mobility programs. The majority of those students, however, refer that this experience was important to improve communication skills, acquire linguistic capacities, scientific knowledge and study and work methods. Also a huge majority of students pass through University without ever engaging or taking part in school governance, in students' Union life or in other University-related collective activities other than sport.

**Conclusions.** Finding a balance between economical and social aims of education and preparing students for active life are historically complicated demands, cause and consequence of never-ending political oscillations. It's not enough to enlarge the access to knowledge, the way students process that knowledge is very important too. Hence, in the contemporary society, Universities must provide students the capacity of creation, solving problems, deal with change, taking risks, stimulate team work, communication skills (soft skills), fostering participation in University governance, Students' Union life and Sport, without neglecting cognitive learning (hard skills) and encouraging students to continue their studies, based on the Bologna Process, lifelong learning.

### **Recommendations.**

Universities must i) facilitate mobility programs for students, teachers and researchers; ii) give social merit scholarships and/or credit with ECTS other activities, for example, volunteering, participating in a student Union, research; iii) collect data on this subject, take it into account in the deliberative process and make sure measures are indeed put in practice..

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## **Russian Federation**

### ***Lomonosov Moscow State University***

#### ***Anastasiya Korolkova***

**Introduction.** In the world of work, "hard skills" are technical or administrative procedures related to an organization's core business. Examples include machine operation, computer protocols, safety standards, financial procedures and sales administration. These skills are typically easy to observe, quantify and measure. They're also easy to train, because most of the time the skill sets are brand new to the learner and no unlearning is involved. By contrast, "soft skills" (also called "people skills") are typically hard to observe, quantify and measure. People skills are needed for everyday life as much as they're needed for work. They have to do with how people relate to each other:

communicating, listening, engaging in dialogue, giving feedback, cooperating as a team member, solving problems, contributing in meetings and resolving conflict. Leaders at all levels rely heavily on people skills, too: setting an example, teambuilding, facilitating meetings, encouraging innovation, solving problems, making decisions, planning, delegating, observing, instructing, coaching, encouraging and motivating.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** Training of the hard skills is an integral part of university education. As for soft skills some extra trainings are needed to develop them:

- a program of lectures,
- group exercises,
- handouts — even a week-long course.

**Analysis.** In Lomonosov Moscow State University much attention is given to the soft skills trainings. People learn how to work well together to develop the environment of support, encouragement and reinforcement.

### **Conclusions.**

- the soft skills trainings for students of the Lomonosov Moscow State University,
- the importance of such events,
- the role of the student organizations in it.

## **Slovakia**

**Comenius University, Bratislava:**

**Gabriela Urbanova**

Reasons, why are young people studying at universities are different and every student can explain and show own point of view about why he started to study there. It is a great opportunity to learn a big amount of information and to pass exams, what contribute to develop our hard skills. But what I am also sure is we want to be successful in our planned future work-life. To be successful at work means that we will be keen on our job and our job will satisfy us. But if we want to reach good position, we firstly need to get this job. What does it mean? - to sell ourselves. To be able show what we have learned. That means to present our soft skills.

So if we want to decelerate the importance of them, we need to define them. I consider as the most important soft skills which we should develop during the years of our education these: strategic thinking, written and oral communication, leadership, and adaptability. Following the Bologna Declaration, higher education across Europe has expanded rapidly and European universities are increasingly required to produce highly mobile graduates able to respond to the ever-changing needs of the contemporary workplace.

That is why I have a question: Are these skills involved in sufficient volume in the academical education?

I see in my daily life that a lot of my friends – graduate need to cope with situation, they do not reach their dream job due to lack of these soft skills. In last few years there was published many various studies about these topic but I got an impression that exist a big disproportion between how

employers make much account of these skills and how universities transform this significant finding in the praxis. As I have read, employers say that incoming high school graduates are deficient in soft skills and many of them said that the high school graduates they hire, lack adequate soft skills competency for even entry-level jobs. Furthermore students view the same. A lot of students mean they are not being sufficiently challenged in high school, their work is not relevant to potential future careers, and they experience few significant career-building opportunities such as internships.

Experiences identify as the most effective education processes, in which we- students need to imitate the real work situation. Good examples of them can be: solution of case studies, asking model tasks and problems to group of students, where they can go native skills being a good team player and presenting results into audience and of course cooperation with companies and recruitment agencies by organizing seminars with „professionals” and supporting internships.

On one hand I understand that this way of educational system is much more challenging to realize because it requires transforming a lot of used methods and it also involves higher costs. On the other side I see here a large space for closer cooperation between universities. They can offer to students not only possibility to take part in exchanging programs but also create more international academic challenges where we would solve such as case studies from real life.

That is why I consider this conference as great place not only to present these soft skills of every engaged team but also as time for finding a lot of inspirations for universities preparing successful workers.

## **Sweden (1)**

*Stockholm University*

*Matilda Sandén*

**Introduction.** The development and the combining use of hard and soft skills in today's and tomorrow's modern societies are of great significance for the multicultural and diversified European population. Therefore, the higher education systems in Europe are playing an important role in the development of relevant and lifelong learning opportunities, but also to bridge over the challenges, to thus meet the changing needs for a global and competitive job market. However, the European universities need to rethink their traditional academic and institutional roles and also to increase its flexibility and governance to be able to adjust to these new conditions.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** Is there a notion that the traditional academic diplomas are strongly linked to the status of hard skills? Professional governance of universities in tomorrows societies – is that a possible scenario and whom will thus push the process forward? How can we develop university diplomas with a higher standard of both hard and soft skills included in the academic degrees?

**Analysis.** In general, the universities in Europe have a deeply rooted academic tradition which has mostly focused on the development of hard skills for the students. The hard skills are easy to observe, quantify and measure, but also easy to teach. The hard skills also make it easier to compare universities between each other in a global academic world; now even more exposed to competition than ever before. But the focus on soft skills needs to get a bigger influence in the academic world. Further, the students must be more aware of the need to develop soft skills in order to enhance their work prospects. However, soft skills are not a natural talent which belongs to a few. How people relate to each other, seen from a broad perspective, plays an important role in the learning process. Thus, the influence and development of soft skills must get a bigger room on the academic agenda.

**Conclusions.** The European Universities needs to be more aware and to thus develop new strategies for how both hard and soft skills can be included and work together in the learning process. Therefore, more emphasis needs to be put on the soft skills.

**Recommendations.** Universities need to co-operate to a bigger extent with the job market (read: the public and private employers). More focus on practical training, international experiences and personal developments within the academic world. Shared governance between students and universities. Virtual and intercultural learning on the academic agenda.

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### **Sweden (2)**

#### **Stockholm University**

##### **Joakim Wold Jakobsson**

**Introduction.** One of the issues that have been raised within the education system is the use and teaching of hard and soft skills and how to balance these particular skills in an educational environment? All students have different learning techniques, learning needs and individual needs and this is important for the universities to understand in order to meet all students' needs. A balance between hard and soft skills is needed to provide a greater education for students of all ages. Universities are the main institution for a higher education in society and it is therefore important to give the right tools to the students to help them be successful both during their degree and after their graduation. During University studies the hard skills are often one of the main focuses and are being tested throughout different types of exams. But it is not always these hard skills that are in focus in a post-degree career job. After knowing the hard skills it is just as important to know how to use them among others and how to be able to act as a team member or as a leader in different work situations.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** What would be the optimal balance between hard and soft skills and why would this balance be of importance? How can we determine how to balance them both and what can we do to provide a greater education for all students? Would it be possible for the universities to measure the soft skills? How can we use hard and soft skills together in an everyday situation?

**Analysis.** I believe that universities often focus more on the hard skills and leave the soft skills to be learned after the education years when the student continues into their career. One problem with missing out the soft skills during the university stage could be that the hard skills may be tricky to apply if there is no understanding of communication and social skills in order to be able to read and understand other peoples actions and words. An example could be if a Teacher cannot connect with the students even if he or she have the right hard skills to do the job, or if a graphic designer could not meet the demands for an important campaign because they found it difficult to understand and relate to the clients needs.

Also of importance are how to balance these skills and how the universities can judge and grade hard and soft skills. Hard skills can often be tested in types of exams, but how would soft skills be tested? During my university years, in both Sweden and in the United States of America, the amounts of times I have been graded for my soft skills can easily be accounted for on one hand. The school system should be seen as a place that is more than where you receive your academic education, but also where our primary socializing takes place. In contrast, conflict theorists suggest that education is socially and politically constructed to exclude large numbers of children from lower socio-economic groups. This is done through an official curriculum and a hidden curriculum, which favours those children whose background, ethos and capital are more suited to the environment. If a student is lacking in soft skills they could potentially struggle to get the same rich exchange of experiences between peers than a student with strong soft skills and may not receive the same high education as a student that is exposed to these skills during their university life. In order to keep the complex structure, known as society, it is important for students to leave university as well rounded and balanced individuals with an equal understanding of both hard and soft skills.

**Conclusions.** To be able to give all students an equal education and preparation for their career job a good balance between soft and hard skills is needed.

**Recommendations.**

Focus more on soft skills and how to combine soft and hard skills within the educational system.

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**Switzerland**

**Université de Lausanne**

**Leila Kaufmann**

**Introduction.** Everyone has heard of the distinction between hard and soft skills. Hard skills are described as technical and administrative procedures. They are easy to observe, quantify and measure and usually also easier to acquire, because their learning doesn't involve any unlearning. They represent the main part of studies, sometimes even the only one! On the other hand, soft skills, also known as people skills, refer to how people relate to each other. "I think, therefore I am" was Descartes vision of the world. Just as Newton, his perception was quantitative. On the contrary, Martin Buber, in the lineage of Kant and Goethe, wrote that "there is no I taken in itself", we exist only through our relation to others. Soft skills are one expression of this theory. Among other examples, they include communicating, listening, cooperating as team members and resolving conflicts. Hard skills are the hard core of any studies. They're essential for all careers. But are they sufficient? We can answer this question on two different bases: a personal one and in the labor market context. According to "jobs.aol.com", there is a top ten list of the soft skills that are requested from employers nowadays. Among these we find in particular the strong work ethic, good communication skills, self confidence, flexibility and working under pressure. These abilities will be needed for a student to get the job he wants. But not only that! They also allow him to adapt to situations of life. This can't be obtained with hard skills only.

**Hypotheses, questions, aims.** The question should be addressed to the students: do they believe that universities are the right time and place to learn soft skills? And which ones should have priority? Should there be a proposition on the university level or is it better to leave the question to the faculties to have more accurate offers? One of the main problems is how to combine soft skills education with the Bologna Credits. Should we put these activities in the same set, maybe to the detriment of hard skills, or should we create something in parallel?

**Analysis.** In Switzerland, universities seem to slowly get aware of the importance of soft skills for their students, even though the question of employability has always rather been attributed left to specialized studies (HES). Uni Fribourg has for instance developed in 2009 a program of 15 formations in soft skills, including non verbal communication, efficient negotiation and talking to media. Uni Lausanne is currently developing a half-yearly computerized portfolio to help students recognize and bring out the soft skills they acquire during their studies.

**Conclusions.** It is essential to define in what way soft skills are necessary to students, which ones should have priority and in what way we could most efficiently offer their apprenticeship. In order to do so, UNICA 2010 might be very helpful, but it would also be interesting to have a national follow-up.

Recommendations to Rectors, European Commissioners: Each university should define a section to either create a questionnaire or use one elaborated while UNICA to now the real needs of their students, analyze the results and adapt the education offer, either by enlarging it or by changing the teaching methods.

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