European Universities Initiative: Impact on Academic Leadership and Ranking

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Contents

- University rankings / Pros and Cons

- University governance and rankings

- European Universities Initiative (EUI)

- Universities reaction to the Initiative

- The impact of EUI on academic leadership and rankings

- Open questions

❑ Global ranking has absolutely **shifted** the nature of **the conversation** around HE, emphasizing universities' **performance!**

❑ Global rankings coincided with the **acceleration of globalisation**

❑ Ranking became a relevant actor with a significant **impact on HE**

❑ Ranking is driving a **resource-intensive competition** worldwide

❑ Significance and influence of ranking is **far beyond HE institutions**

- The most global rankings are mostly focused on **research** and **reputation**

- Number of indicators are important for institutional **strategic planning** and **public policy**

- **Significant variability** among rankings and significantly different placement of the same institution

- **Proliferation** of different types of rankings

- Universities 'learn' how to provide resources and **manipulate rankings**

(E. Hazelkorn, 2019, The dubious practice of university rankings)

- **Different roles** of global and national rankings

- Rankings can be/is in the focus of **policy makers** and **institutional leaders**

- Strategic, organisational, managerial or faculty actions are often, but not always **in accordance to rankings**

- Due to the fact that ranking indicators often do not represent reliable quality measures, rankings **cannot be systematically integrated** into university governance

(T. Leiber, 2017, University Governance and Rankings. The Ambivalent Role of Rankings, Accountability and Competition)

o **Increased** and **centralised management** and **limited involvement of academics** in   governance might have a negative impact on quality

o University governing that allows **higher level of academic freedom** is more likely to be related to **institutional excellence**

(T. Karran, L. Mallinson, Academic Freedom and World-Class Universities: A Virtuous Circle?, 2019)

o Emmanuel Macron's initiative, Sep 2017, at the Sorbonne University:

These European Universities would be drivers of educational innovation and the quest for excellence.

o Flagship initiatives of the EU ambitions for building EEA (European Education Area) by 2025

o EC proposed the initiative to EU leaders at the Gothenburg Social Summit, Nov 2017

Bring Europeans together

and

increase international competitiveness of European higher education

o   Quality and competitiveness of **EHEA**

o   Promoting **European values**

o   Based on co-envisioned **long-term strategy**

o   Focused on sustainability, **excellence**

o   Curricula delivered across **inter-university campuses**

o   **Mobility** at all levels of study

o   **Joint research**

o   Cooperation of **interdisciplinary teams** to deal with most relevant issues relevant for Europe and globally today

A shared, integrated, **long- term joint strategy** for **education** with links, where possible, to **research and innovation**, and to **society**

➢ 17 alliances, 114 universities, 25 member states

➢ 5 M Euro per alliance

➢ 3 years funding period

➢ a broad range of HE institutions

(research-based universities, comprehensive
universities, fine arts universities,
technical universities, applied universities)

Immediate response!

Position paper by:

- Centre de Recherches Interdisciplinaires (CRI)
- European Consortium of Innovative Universities (ECIU)
- European universities Foundation (EUF)
- EuroTech Universities
- The Guild
- Université de la Grande Region (UniGr)

Networks of European Universities
should strengthen research excellence

o Mobility leads to **a shared European space for research** and innovation and the improvement of research quality and impact.

o Deeper collaboration between a cluster of universities will **boost the research capacity** of universities through the circulation of ideas and the provision of a trust-based framework of collaboration

o **Collaboration within research and education** can foster innovation

o The networks could also **pioneer new approaches to, and common standards for doctoral training**.

European University Foundation,
April 2018, www. uni-foundation.eu

o   Promoting excellence in education should not play second fiddle to excellence in research, nor contribute to the cartelisation of the European research landscape.

The European Consortium of Innovative Universities, April 2018

o   EUI must **connect research, education and innovation** to maximise their impact
o   The close collaboration within **the knowledge triangle** is essential for disruptive innovations
o   **Open governance structure** - Universities have a strong role in society as a whole
o   This is also why the EUI could focus on Bsc, Msc, Phd, but should **not exclude continuous education**.
o   Cooperation and communication skills, information literacy, creativity, citizenship and problem solving are **essential competencies** in the 21st century's education
o   Governance structure must ensure **effective decision-making processes** and **combine a top-down with a bottom-up approach** to reach the university as a whole and to bring the collaboration on a strategic central level.

○ Education is regaining attention?

- Progressive transformation of Europe
  into a global campus where everyone will be free
  to learn, teach and do research…

- European Pedagogy Council?

- European Academy of Mentors?

Center for Research and Interdisciplinarity, Paris

o Ranking will need to be redefined?

- To be more comprehensive?

- To better balance different components?

o How is going to be balanced cooperation and competition between alliances and within? Will it influence the formats and kinds of leadership and institutional governance?

o Will the benefits of the alliance will be distributed evenly across the members?

Networks will require
new **transnational academic governance models**,
new funding arrangements
and
challenging institutional **cultural changes**

Michael Murphy, EUA, President, June 2019

➢ How the **university governing** will ensure **effective cooperation**, involving all levels of the institution?

➢ How will be managed **inter-university governing** to ensure an active and relevant role of each partner?

➢ What will be an **academic leadership role** in ensuring that the alliance is bottom-up, with students and staff playing an active role?

➢ What will be an **impact of a EUI** on ranking and *vice-versa* ?

➢ Is **education** regaining attention?

Thank you

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