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Campus of Jussieu in Paris
(Photo: Tumblr)

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news

ESNA's news section provides an easy-to-use format to learn about the latest developments in European Higher Education. The news are selected by our team from thousands of sources and drafted to provide you with the most comprehensive overview of events.

EUROPE: INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS DAY - AT ONE GLANCE

"Education is too expensive! What is the cost of stupidity?" This is one of the slogans used during the protests on this year's International Student Day. Thousands of young people gathered on the streets on 17th November to protest their outrage at significant changes being made to institutions across Europe.

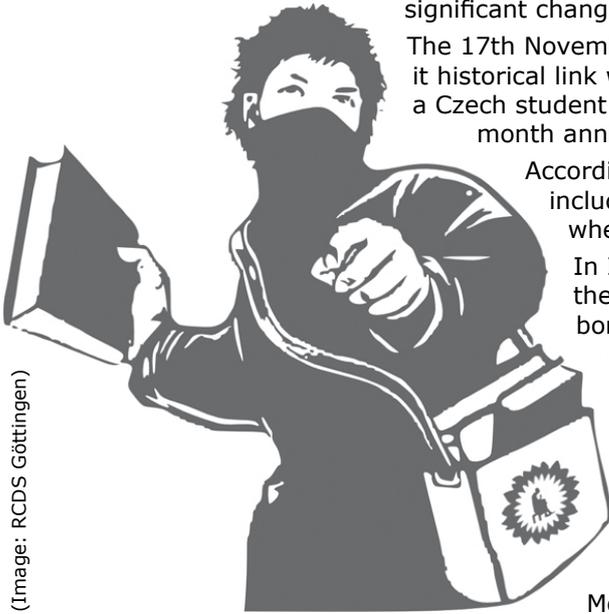
The 17th November is traditionally known as International Students Day because of its historical link with students, most significantly in 1939 when the Nazis suppressed a Czech student demonstration. However this year the day also marked the two month anniversary of the Occupy Wall Street Movement in New York.

According to press reports, demonstrations occurred across the world including New York City where 30,000 people joined in a rally and Spain where there were 26,000 demonstrators just in Madrid.

In Italy students combined their anger with the education system with the current financial system, with some throwing stones and smoke bombs at the prestigious Bocconi University in Milan, according to reports.

Rallies took place in almost 30 cities in Germany with the biggest in Berlin. Students showed their unhappiness over changes to tuition fees and new US-style Bachelor degrees. President of the German Universities Association, Bernhard Kempen, encouraged this opposition, saying the complaints were wholly justified. Education Minister Annette Schavan said she understood the reason for the students' grievances, acknowledging that mistakes had been made.

More protests are planned for 30th November. [1531]



(Image: RCDS Göttingen)

CYPRUS: FIRST MEDICAL STUDENTS TO ENROLL

In September 2013 the new Medical Faculty of the University of Cyprus will enroll its first students.

At a recent meeting held at the Ministry of Health, amendment of legislation and collaboration between academic medical doctors and the Ministry of Education was discussed. Health Minister Stavros Malas, the Minister of Education and Culture George Demosthenes, and the rector of the University of Cyprus Constantinos Christofides, all attended.

The University of Cyprus will employ its first academic doctors in 2012, who will join the Nicosia General Hospital, making it the first university hospital in the country.

"Next month will oversee the completion of the first Cypriot medical school," said Mr. Malas. Moreover, a framework was also reached, determining the qualifications of academic staff. Mr. Christofides expressed the hope that any problems that may emerge relating to the institution's budget will be resolved, so that the implementation of all strategic targets for 2012 and 2013 can proceed, undisturbed. [1026]

CZECH REPUBLIC: V4 COUNTRIES WORK TOGETHER ON HIGHER ED

A joint expert group will be formed to deal with university reform in Slovakia, Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic. These four countries formed an alliance 20 years ago for the purpose of furthering European integration through various policies, one of which is education. Collectively as the Visegrad Group (V4) the alliance has now highlighted similar education shortcomings in all four countries, including school management, experts and lack of qualified employees.

The education ministers from the collective countries have now proposed an expert group which will tackle these education limitations. "The joint expert group will solve them," Jozef Jurkovič from the Slovak Education Ministry said.

The Visegrad Group also aims to support education by developing scholarships for master's students for eastern European students; funded from the Visegrad Fund. With an annual budget of €1,448,000, the Fund will award about 400 semesters in total in the academic year 2012/2013. [986]

Development of future goals
"UCY at a Glance"
ucy.ac.cy/



Press Room of the V4 Group
visegradgroup.eu/

ESTONIA: COLLEGES STRIPPED OF STATUS

Two private colleges in Estonia have failed to meet the nation's minimum requirements. Consequently they will cease to operate as legally recognised institutes of higher education as of next year.

The colleges educate mostly Russian-speaking students. The ones in question are the Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences and the Tallinn College of Business Administration, both located in the capital, reported Päevaleht.

According to Heli Mattisen, head of the Estonian Higher Education Quality Agency (EKKA), the business school was already aware of the decision after last year's evaluation and therefore did not enroll any new students this year.

"The failure of the humanities institute in this year's appraisal was somewhat surprising, however, and the school will most probably have to merge its operations with another university," said Mattisen.

Earlier this year, two other colleges, the Euroacademy and the Evangelical Lutheran Church Institute of Theology, were also stripped of their right to award academic degrees. [1033]



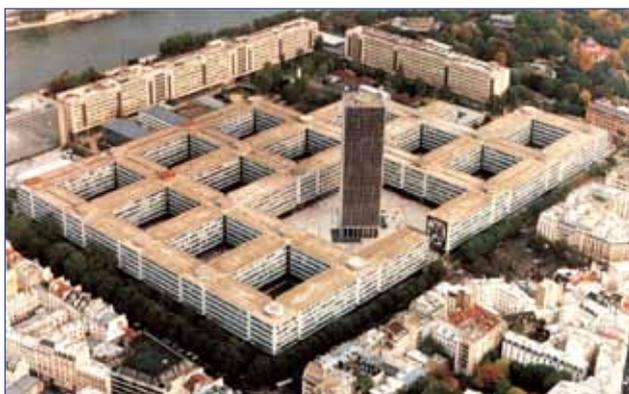
FINLAND: ART UNIVERSITY MERGER

All of the three major art schools in Finland have agreed on the terms on which a merger could be implemented. Last week the Finnish Academy of Fine Arts gave its approval on the plans which will aim to build one major Art University in Helsinki. The music university Sibelius Academy and the Theatre Academy Helsinki have already approved of the plans.

According to the early plans the three universities would have a shared strategic decision board, but every university would be responsible for organising its own curriculum respectively. The three art schools demanded that there should be an 18 million Euro raise in their budget if a merger is to be completed. (See also: *Bulletin N°093 – 6 April 2011*)

But even when there is more money, only the same amount of people will be lucky enough to be accepted to the schools. "The view of the review board is that the amount of students should be kept the same or reduced", said Maija Innola, the secretary of the board of review according to the newspaper *Vihreä lanka*. [979]

Press release of the Finnish
Academy of Fine Arts,
17-11-2011 (in Finnish)
kuva.fi/



Campus of Jussieu in Paris
(Photo: Tumblr)

FRANCE: JUSSIEU UNIVERSITY – A MONEY PIT

The asbestos removal operation of the enormous Jussieu campus, in Paris, has created much media sensation. A third assessment of the campus rehabilitation, published by the Court of Auditors this week, revealed that the project won't be completed until 2015 and will cost nearly €2 billion. Launched in 1996, the rehabilitation of the 311,000 m² campus was supposed to be completed in three years and cost €183 million.

The President of the Court of Auditors, Didier Migaud, lamented that despite the campus being officially inspected in 1999 and 2003, "recommendations were not adhered to."

"This operation has undergone significant deviations in cost and time. This is a textbook case of poorly managed operation," summarised Migaud. According to the Court, expenses were not paid and leases were extended without authorisation. A "disastrous" situation, with deadlines pushed back twice and a total cost multiplied by ten.

The cost of asbestos removal accounts for only 6% of the overall bill, whilst the rent of temporary premises accounts for 33%.

Launched in 1996 with a budget of €183 million, it is now clear that this operation will not be completed before 2015. The final cost is estimated now at over €1,85 billion. The case is now being referred to the Court of budgetary and financial discipline. [1356]

Court of Auditors Report,
17-11-2011 (in French)
ccomptes.fr/

Contributions to Bulletin N°117 - November 23, 2011:

Hannah Blackstock, Tino Brömme (editor-in-chief), Helen Salvin, Luis Taboada, Tania Woodcock



Claude Guéant (Photo: CG)

FRANCE: NORTH AFRICAN GRADUATES NOT WELCOME

France is currently in the process of shipping North African graduates back home after finishing their studies. Even though many speak French as their mother tongue, France is declaring they no longer have room for them in the job market. New immigration rules could potentially divest France of skilled, experienced graduates.

On May 31, Interior Minister Claude Guéant and Labor Minister Xavier Bertrand of France sent a memo called the "May 31 Circular" to all French regions demanding they impose harsher restrictions on issuing work permits to foreign graduates. Ever since, foreign graduates have found it increasingly difficult to find jobs after finishing their studies. Hundreds have already returned to Africa due to limited career opportunities in France.

Some analysts feel the influx of graduates to North Africa will help the African economy. Jean-Philippe Thiellay, vice president of the independent policy research institute Terra Nova in Paris, however, feels differently: "On an economic level, the students, are prevented from investing in France and creating wealth, even though they are young, talented graduates and multilingual. It's absurd." [1165]

May 31 Circular, Ministry of the Interior (in French)
circulaires.gouv.fr/

ITALY: STUDENTS BUY BONDS

Five students from Italy have started an initiative to buy government bonds in order to reap financial benefits later on. Motivated by the current financial crisis in their country, the entrepreneurs were fascinated by the words of Julian Melani, who made an appeal to "buy back the debt" by investing in BTP (Italian government bonds). The bonds would then be returned to the students with added interest in two years' time. The student organisation *Ogni Promessa è Debito* collected donations from fellow students at the Faculty of Economics, in Ranzani, Bologna. A website was also created, in order to post receipt of purchase of Treasury bills and to record the amount of securities that the students purchase.

"We want to prevent our country from spiraling into more debt. The invested money can later ensure young peoples' pensions, health care and education," explains one of the initiators, Stefano Onofri.

For the five young founders, this scheme is a simple, yet effective one. They believe that when a person invests money in the state then he will become more interested in the fate of the state. [1109]

Website of Ogni Promessa è Debito (in Italian)
ognipromessaedebito.com/

NORDIC NATIONS: BEST FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Iceland has claimed the number one spot for the third year in a row for being the country with the best gender equality. A report by the World Economic Forum (WEF) has measured gender differences in 135 countries world wide; but it is the Nordic nations which have come out on top, with Norway, Finland and Sweden following closely behind Iceland.

The annual review measured the difference between men's and women's economic participation and opportunities, political empowerment and educational attainment. Differences are disappearing in Switzerland, which came tenth in the study, there are equal women-to-men literacy rates and enrollments in higher education.

Women make up one-half of the brain power of the human capital that is available to an economy states says Saadia Zahidi, head of the WEF's Women Leaders and Gender Parity. If that one-half is not fully integrated into a particular country's development, it is fairly evident that there would be a detrimental effect."

Iceland currently has 43% female parliament members and has had a female head of state for 18 of the past 50 years. Current Prime Minister Johanna Sigurdardottir was appointed in 2009. [1168]



Press release of the WEF,
 01-11-2011
weforum.org/

daily higher education news online



SERBIA: MODERNISATION AGENDA OF UNIVERSITIES

Serbian Minister of Education and Science, Zarko Obradović, suggests that it is necessary to improve and modernise the management of higher education institutions so that they become an engine for the growth of society.

Obradović, opening the international conference "Modernisation Agenda of Universities in Serbia", said that higher education in Serbia ought to be in line with European standards of as soon as possible. His philosophy is that higher education is important for successful economic development of society.

The conference was held by the GOMES project (Governance and Management Reform in Higher Education in Serbia). The project aims for systemic reform of higher education in line with European principles. Its most important task is the development and implementation of new university models. The event was attended by representatives from the University of Krakow, Lisbon and from Crete. [919]

Press release of GOMES,
Nov. 2011 (in Serbian / further
resources available in English)

gomes.uns.ac.rs/

SWITZERLAND: NEW INNOVATION PARK TO BE BUILT

Following in the footsteps of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Boston and the Adlershof Institute in Berlin, Switzerland is planning on building a national innovation park.

Using federal money, the institution will support interaction between universities and industry on a larger scale and would have an "overarching national interest, benefiting competitiveness, efficient resources and sustainable development."

The Federal Council, who developed the idea, originally wanted only one location for the park. However criticism from the Cantons, who called the proposal "unfeasible and out of the question" has led to a compromise. Now the park is not being limited to just a single location.

At a press conference, Didier Burkhalter, Member of the Federal Council, stated that the end goal of the generation project was still far away, but the process had been "kick-started." [894]



Robin Parker (Photo: NUS Scotland)

UK/SCOTLAND: SHOCKING NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED

Robin Parker, president of the National Union of Students Scotland, has stated that the "disturbing rise in youth unemployment" was "extremely worrying news." He was commenting on recently published figures stating that a fifth of young people in Scotland aged 18-24 are unemployed.

Between July and September, 84,000 young people were out of work; this is 14,000 more than in the same period in 2010. Parker added, if we are to avoid condemning a generation to the dole queue, we must give school leavers and other young people the opportunities they need to find work, receive training or get an education.

Professionals agree that the Scottish government must out provide structure to prevent these figures from rising further. Richard Baker, Labour finance spokesman said the Scottish National Party "must redouble its efforts to get young people off the dole and into their first job."

Overall unemployment rate in Scotland now stands at eight per cent – slightly lower than the UK rate of 8.3 per cent. [1008]

NUS Press release, 17-11-2011
nus.org.uk/

UK: CONTROVERSIAL UNIVERSITY PRIMATE RESEARCH

A recent tribunal ruling has made it harder for universities to claim exemption from Freedom of Information requests. Consequently, these universities will be forced to reveal details of controversial research, including testing on monkeys.

One concerned institution, the University of Newcastle, argues that responding to requests could jeopardise the safety of scientists. The British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection (BUAV) has battled against the university for three years. Recently, the Information Tribunal passed a major ruling, insisting that the University hand over details of their experiments.

This could have implications for Britain's university sector. The University of Newcastle has already spent £230,000 opposing the applications from BUAV and is now expected to go to the Court of Appeal, where it will demand exemption under the Animal Scientific Procedures Act. [890]



BUAV Report, 15-11-2011
buav.org/

Each copy of your ESNA bulletin will provide information on studies which have captured our attention as pieces that may contribute to our common understanding of higher education. Our priority is to keep ESNA readers at the forefront of the knowledge pool on higher education and provide an arena for the issues raised in these studies to be heard.

new studies



Will Archer & Jacqueline Chen
International Unit | July 2011
English

[Download](#)

SITEIMPROVE | October 2011
English

[Download](#)

INTERNATIONAL PRICING STUDY UK AND KEY COMPETITOR COUNTRY INTERNATIONAL STUDENT FEES

This report has been commissioned to help British universities identify the comparative cost of study for international students across a range of higher education institutions in the UK and the top competitor countries for international students. It is a snapshot of the market, intended as a starting point for examining the competitive positioning of the UK as a destination for international students in terms of fees charged, and offer some guidance and practical measures universities can employ to ensure the fees they are setting remain attractive and competitive in what is a very busy marketplace.

THE QUALITY OF UNIVERSITY WEBSITES

A new study researched by SiteImprove Ltd, a business formed in 2003, known for their website governance tools, scanned the top 25 US public college websites. The content quality on public university websites was assessed. The data collected from the study was an overview on each website and broken down into categories. This study focuses on the following areas: Content management systems and errors. The most common errors which crop up on university web pages are broken links and misspellings.

EMPLOYABILITY OF UNIVERSITY GRADUATES IN FRANCE

The French ministry of higher education has presented results from its second national survey on the employability of university graduates, conducted between December 2010 and April 2011. Its purpose is to assess the status of French graduates, 30 months after graduation. This evaluation is done through four indicators - the rate of insertion, the share of jobs in middle management or executive level, the share of stable employment and the share of full-time jobs - broken down by area (Economics and Management, Humanities, Language Arts, Social Sciences, Sciences, Technology and Health) and degree of discipline.

Ministère de l'Enseignement
Supérieur et de la Recherche
2011 | French

[Download](#)



Neil Lee and Jonathan Wright
The Work Foundation | Nov. 2011
English

[Download](#)

OFF THE MAP? THE GEOGRAPHY OF NEET UNEMPLOYED YOUTH WITHOUT EDUCATION IN THE UK

The high level of young people who are NEET – not in employment, education or training – is one of the most serious social problems facing the country. There are currently an estimated 979,000 16-24 year NEETs in England.

Launched as part of a research partnership with the Private Equity Foundation 'Off the map?' examines NEET rates across Great Britain. It identifies a group of black spots for the problem and argues that without effective, targeted action from government and business, a generation of young people in these cities will face a bleak future in the labour market.

W&W REPORT 3 – ECONOMY AND SCIENCE IN GERMANY WIRTSCHAFT UND WISSENSCHAFT: PART III

Heterogeneous, colourful, diverse - and the society in Germany is changing its face. However the cultural change takes place slowly. Also, universities and enterprises have been slow on their way to utilise the diversity of our society to make sense of it - and capitalise on it. They are stuck between the endless discussions about integration, the woman question and educational opportunities. The W & W Report shows vulnerabilities - and possible solutions.

Michael Sonnabend
Stifterverband | October 2011
German

[Download](#)

All European Higher Ed Conferences



events December 2011



Brussels

1 December

EU-DRIVERS

ANNUAL CONFERENCE FOR A REGIONAL INNOVATION PLATFORM

The EU Smart specialization strategies initiative, universities improving their strategic interactions with regional stakeholders. The conference is by invitation only for senior university leaders and CEOs of large companies, SMEs and representatives of regional authorities to engage a high level dialogue on new directions for regional innovation, with senior representatives from the European Commission.



Brussels

2 December

INTERNATIONALISATION REVISITED

31ST EUROPEAN POLICY SEMINARS

The vast majority of analysts and actors in international higher education concede that internationalisation has come a long way during the past two decades. It moved from being a peripheral trait of institutional activities to the very core of institutional (and sometimes national-level) strategies, not only in the West, but in most corners of the world.



Vienna

5-6 December

THE PARADOX OF THE BOLOGNA PROCESS

EDUCATION, MOBILITY AND EMPLOYMENT IN THE DANUBE REGION

This conference, organised by the Institute for the Danube Region and Central Europe (IDM), gathers policy and education experts to discuss European higher education from the perspective of the Danube region. The implementation of the Bologna Process in the region, 'Europe of knowledge' vs. its administrative borders, the effects of supranational and national immigration and visa regimes on mobility, problems of a common European labour market, higher education and public responsibility, are some of the topics. Key aspects will be examined in several thematic workshops.



Newport, UK

7-9 December

POSITIVE FUTURES FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

CONNECTIONS, COMMUNITIES AND CRITICALITY

The SRHE Annual Research Conference is planned as a participative event at which delegates presenting their own work will also participate in the discussions in plenary sessions and the presentations of the work of others. The Conference programme is planned on the basis that delegates will attend the whole event over the three days.



Brussels

9 December

GLOBALISATION OF INNOVATION

This conference will shed light on: threats and opportunities from the rapid growth of newly emerging economies; policy options to attract knowledge and to stimulate creation of Global Innovation Networks (GINs) with latecomer economies; the role of institutional frameworks in both the EU and emerging economies and how EU firms can tap into external knowledge sources.



Lund, Sweden

15-16 December

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT OF INTERNATIONALISATION

The conference will examine some of the challenges facing universities and governments as a result of the growing internationalisation of higher education throughout the world. Participants will have the opportunity to hear from leading experts on global trends, to learn about new developments and to consider practical responses. Case studies of national policy and institutional practice will be debated and new approaches to the evaluation of internationalisation discussed.