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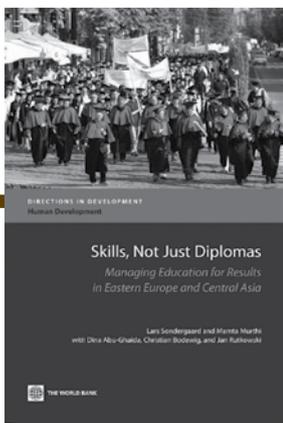
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news

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.



EU press release, 23-11-2011
europa.eu/

EUROPE: NEW 19 BILLION INITIATIVE FOR EDUCATION IN EU

A new initiative for education is being launched by the EU commission. Set to be starting in 2014, 'Erasmus for all' is a seven year program which will replace the current Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP).

Under the new scheme, five million students, twice as many as now, will get the chance to study abroad as part of Erasmus. The initiative, which has a proposed budget of 19 billion Euro, would fuse all the current EU and international schemes for education, training, youth and sport, replacing seven existing programmes with one. This shall "increase efficiency, make it easier to apply for grants, as well as reduce duplication and fragmentation."

735,000 vocational students would be able to spend part of their education and training abroad. Master's degree students would also benefit from a new loan guarantee scheme set up with the European Investment Bank Group.

Xavier Prats Monné, deputy general for education and culture at the European Commission, recently stated that the 73% increase in budget would go towards increased cooperation between businesses and universities and also increased mobility between university staff and students. [1220]

EUROPE: UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY DIFFERS GREATLY

According to the European University Association's latest report, the level of autonomy varies widely across European universities. The report ranks various aspects of university autonomy of 850 universities in 26 countries.

Thomas Estermann, lead author of the report, told the *New York Times*: "Generally, we have seen an improvement in autonomy."

Autonomy allows universities to set their own salaries for professors. Henning Rockmann, head of legal affairs at the German Rectors' Conference, said in an interview with the *NYT*, "to be attractive for foreign professors to teach in Germany, you have to have attractive salaries."

Commenting on England's recent tuition fee fiasco, Estermann believes there are complications in being too dependent on public spending, or student fees. "If you receive public funds, how independent can you really be?" he said. [857]

University Autonomy in Europe II,
 EUA, 15-11-2011
eua.be/



Misir Mardanov (Photo: MIN)

AZERBAIJAN: MORE VOCATIONAL TRAINING NEEDED

The education minister of Azerbaijan, Misir Mardanov, has criticised the allocation of government funds, stating that more should be given to aid vocational training programs. Speaking at a recent conference, Mardanov suggested that students are missing out on opportunities because not enough is being done to support other options to university, such as training for vocational programs.

Currently, 90,000 of the 130,000 school leavers do not get the chance to receive education in universities and vocational education.

The Draft State Budget 2012 allocates only AZN 1.7 million (€ 1,6 million) for development of vocational educational and AZN 109.2 million (€ 104 million) for higher educational institutions. "I think these figures should be either equaled or reversed," commented Mardanov.

However the state budget will allocate a budget for the National Entrepreneurship Support Fund that is 2.6-fold more than to 2011. [928]

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Image: Disney/Apple

Press release UEJF, Sept. 2011
uejf.org/

FRANCE: STUDENTS DROP 'JEW OR NOT JEW' LAWSUIT

The Association of Jewish Students in France (UEJF) has been embroiled in a battle with computer giant Apple over a controversial I-phone application. The 'Jew or not Jew' application lets users look at a list of 3,500 Jewish celebrities from 50 countries to see if they are Jewish or not.

In September, the UJEF joined forces with anti-racism group J'acuse to file a lawsuit against Apple, arguing that the app "violated France's strict laws banning the compiling of people's personal details without their consent."

Now the legal action against Apple has been dropped as the application has been withdrawn worldwide.

Developer of the app, John Levy, stated that the app was not offensive and was created for amusement. Jonathan Hayoun, Chairman of UEJF, retorted that Levy was being naive and that the app reinforced old clichés about Jews as most of the listed individuals work in media and finance. "[Levy] seems to understand that such applications can be misused for anti-Semitic purposes," added Hayoun.

UEJF plan to pursue other offensive I-phone apps, including "best quotes of the right-wing politician Jean-Marie Le Pen," and a list of Adolf Hitler's "greatest" speeches. [1184]



Guilherme Portada
 (Photo: AAUALG)

PORTUGAL: HUNGRY STUDENTS GET FOOD PACKAGES

Extreme austerity measures have been put into place in Portugal where hungry students in Algarve University will start to receive food packages and the University of Porto seeks donations from alumni.

The president of the Academic Association of Algarve University, Guilherme Portada, admitted to the news agency LUSA that there are hungry students attending the institution, some of whom are now to receive basic needs packs, including food and clothing. Portada stressed that the current budgetary constraints "do not allow for effective aid" by social services for needy students. He explained that "many of them told us that they have lost state payments, or payments are at such a reduced level that they can no longer afford food. Some are wary of bank loans, repayable a year after their course finishes, as they want to concentrate on getting a job rather than endure the pressure of loan repayments leading to panic."

Another Portuguese University is looking for a solution to the cuts in public spending by seeking help from alumni. The University of Porto (UP) will be the first to create a cabinet of fundraising, and asking alumni for donations will be one path they will explore. The aim is to "professionalize" the contact with potential stakeholders, especially the alumni, strengthening the relation with them and trying to exploit the sense of "gratitude" to the university they graduated. [1408]

Press release by AAUALG, 24-11-2011 (in Portuguese)
aualg.pt/

RUSSIA: MORE OPEN TO FOREIGN STUDENTS

The Russian government will ease regulations to allow more foreign students to enter the Russian higher education system.

Verification of foreign students' diplomas and academic degrees has, until now, been a complex process. It currently takes over six months to substantiate an overseas high school diploma.

In 2012, the Ministry of Education and Science intends to publish a list of foreign qualifications and universities that will be recognised. The list will only include universities of the G8 countries that enter the top 300 in the Academic Ranking of World Universities or the QS World University Rankings.

"We will simplify procedures for confirmation of diplomas and degrees for a number of leading foreign universities to attract highly qualified specialists and foreign students," Igor Protsenko, director of the International Integration Ministry, told *Izvestia*.

Vladimir Putin, Dmitry Medvedev and Andrei Fursenko, minister of education, have repeatedly expressed their concern regarding Russia's current brain-drain epidemic. Fursenko and Putin held a meeting earlier this month to discuss the possibility of attracting more foreign scientists to Russia's universities. With regards to retaining foreign scientists and researchers, Fursenko stated that "core facilities have been created for them." [1315]

Meeting of Fursenko and Putin,
 Ministry of Education and Science,
 19-11-2011
eng.mon.gov.ru/



Vladimir Putin and Andrei Fursenko
(Photo: Gov.)

RUSSIA: DEVELOPMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL SCIENCE

Vladimir Putin and Russian education and science minister, Andrei Fursenko, recently met to discuss the development of institutional science.

Fursenko showed Putin the correlation between the funding of institutional science and the growth in research and development. "Overall, you can see that it is growing steadily. In the past years, the funding for institutional science has been increasing, which is very important, as institutional science attracts private investments."

Mega-grants, of up to 150 million Roubles (€3,6 million), have been issued to leading scientists. Core facilities have been created for them, with the government pouring money into state-of-the-art university equipment and programmes.

The percentage of PhDs under 40 at universities has also been increasing steadily since 2004. In 2008, progress came to a halt, which coincided with the beginning of the economic crisis.

An incentive for universities was also issued; with an annual sum of 100 million Roubles given to those universities who can prove the merits of its programme. [1061]

Press release by the Russian
government, 19-11-2011

premier.gov.ru/

SLOVAKIA: EVERY 3RD GRADUATE JOBLESS

"The biggest problem with graduates is their lack of work experience and exaggerated salary expectations," Lucia Burianová of the Profesia job portal told The Slovak Spectator.

Slovakia's unemployment rate reached a seven-year high of 13 percent this September, according to the Labour, Social Affairs and Family Centre (ÚPSVAR). UPSVAR reports that almost a third of all graduates under the age of 26 are presently unemployed.

František Palko, the director of the Economic Policy Institute, told the TASR Newswire that the quality and amount of university education is not in sync with the needs of the labour market and long-term communication between educational institutions and employers does not exist in Slovakia.

Henkel is a firm which frequently hires university economics graduates. "But we are prepared for that," Martin Resutík, human resources manager for Henkel "we train our new employees without any complications." [931]

SPAIN: CANARY ISLANDS DEBTS WITH UNIVERSITIES

The regional government of the Canary Islands owes the universities 50 million Euro.

According to rectors Eduardo Doménech from La Laguna and José Regidor from Las Palmas, the Region has breached its budget agreements and accumulated, in 2010 and 2011, a debt of 50 million Euros. The universities subsequently want to take the Region to court.

During a parliamentary session last Tuesday, Canary Islands minister of education, José Miguel Pérez, rejected the claims, saying that all data has been verified by the accreditation agency (ACEAU) and that "ignorance, misinformation or a lack of information from the previous administration" have caused a misunderstanding.

The minister also announced cuts of around 3,5 percent in the university budget for 2012. Outraged universities state that funds for investment in infrastructure and staff are in danger.

In addition universities are also lobbying Spanish MPs for changes in law so that there are clear rules concerning their budgets.

The Canary Islands are an autonomous region of Spain with two universities and 50.000 students. [1085]



Image: Taringa

Press release of the
University of Las Palmas,
08-11-2011 (in Spanish)
ulpgc.es/

SWEDEN: UNIVERSITY STUDENTS MORE PROMISCUOUS

In 2009 female university students had an average of 11 sexual partners, double the amount that their counterparts in 1999 had.

Results from a recently published survey by Uppsala University show that promiscuity has increased. The survey is carried out every five years amongst female students who visit the student health service.

As well as being more promiscuous, students are also taking more risks. In 2009 almost a third of female students had contracted a sexually transmitted disease such as chlamydia or genital warts. This is double the amount of a decade ago. The proportion of women in university using a condom with a new sexual partner has also decreased by eleven percent in ten years. Academics state that these figures show a worrying lassitude on sexual health matters among the current female students in Sweden.

Tanja Tydén, professor in health sciences at Uppsala University adds: "The development is worrying. To be able to break the trend...more must demand that their partners use a condom." [1016]

Abstract of the study
onlinelibrary.wiley.com/

TURKEY: SCIENTISTS RESIGN EN MASSE

57 scientists have collectively resigned from the Turkish Academy of Sciences (TÜBA). The academics have simultaneously left the institution in protest over new regulations which have recently come into force.

Before, TÜBA members were appointed independently. The new rules now state that this autonomy will be abolished and the membership process will be brought tightly under government control. Most scientists see it as another method for the government to gain power, following the replacement of many judicial and military officials with political appointees in the past year.

"Academies are organized through the principle that only independent scientists may decide upon the merits of other scientists, as in scientific issues," the resignation statement read.

Under the new system, the government, the Higher Education Board (YÖK) and TÜBA will each appoint one-third of the member body. The academics also said they were going to establish an independent and autonomous "Science Academy" association. [1012]



Statement by TÜBA, 22-11-2011
tuba.gov.tr/

UK/SCOTLAND: OBAMA EFFIGY BURNT BY STUDENTS

An effigy of U.S. president Barack Obama has been burnt by a student association in St. Andrews, Scotland. The conservative party association burnt the effigy as part of an annual tradition which has seen the right wing student group also deface effigies of Gordon Brown and former South African President Nelson Mandela.

According to sources the group had a choice of five effigies of figures to burnt, including the late Libyan dictator Moammar Gadhafi, but chose to burnt Obama said student official Patrick O'Hare to MSNBC. He added that the Students' Representative Council had since voted in favor of a motion that burning effigies of public figures was not constructive. Sam Fowles, St Andrews Students Union vice president, said: "I do not believe this was a racist act but I don't believe that makes it any less disgusting."

The St Andrews Conservative Association apologised for any offence caused. Suggestions that the effigy was also wrapped in an EU flag have been denied. [986]

Press release by St. Andrews
Student's Union 23-11-11
yourunion.net/

daily higher education news online



In the book review section of your Bulletin, the ESNA newsroom will share with you its reviews and announcements of the latest publications on higher education policy, management and debate.

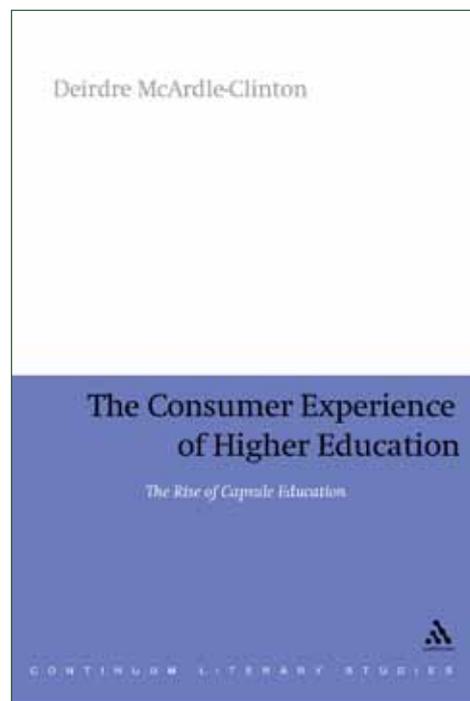
out now

THE CONSUMER EXPERIENCE OF HIGHER EDUCATION THE RISE OF CAPSULE EDUCATION

This work examines the philosophy underpinning current higher education provision. Contemporary culture seems to encourage consumers to purchase products where the product is shaped by the provider and the input of the consumer is very limited. Research suggests that students, their perceptions shaped by the educational experience they have undergone, view education as a commodity and require that information be packaged for easy consumption. The purpose of this study is to examine the current situation in education against the backdrop of an emerging trend that sees education as a product and students as consumers or customers. The literature provides a basis to argue that a qualification now is frequently a simulacrum while previously it represented knowledge and competency.

Deirdre McArdle-Clinton
Continuum | November 2011
ISBN: 978-1-441-17919-7
English 280 pages
paperback £27.99

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upcoming

James Martin,
James E. Samels et al.
John Hopkins University Press
March 2012
ISBN: 978-1-421-40459-2
English 352 pages
hardback \$45.00

Order

THE SUSTAINABLE UNIVERSITY GREEN GOALS AND NEW CHALLENGES FOR HIGHER ED. LEADERS

Colleges and universities are at the forefront of efforts to preserve the earth's resources for future generations. Carbon neutrality, renewable energy sources, green building strategies, and related initiatives require informed and courageous leaders at all levels of higher education. James Martin and James E. Samels have worked closely with college and university presidents, provosts, and trustees to devise best practices that establish sustainable policies and programs in the major areas of institutional operations.

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN UNIVERSITY (INTERKULTURELLE KOMMUNIKATION IN DER HOCHSCHULE)

As part of the internationalization of higher education, intercultural competence has become a key qualification. This volume displays results of a research project to analyse cross-cultural misunderstandings and to promote intercultural competence. The contributions represent a typology of critical incidents and misunderstandings as well as study related concepts and materials for practical work in the context of intercultural training. The book is therefore suitable both for reflection and for the practical development of high-school-specific programs to promote intercultural communication.

Order

Adelheid Schumann (ed.)
Transcript Verlag | May 2012
ISBN 978-3-8376-1925-6
German 200 pages
paperback €26,80

UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE AND REFORM POLICY, FADS, AND EXPERIENCE IN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

The new fascination with products and the commercial value of research, coupled with the rise of neo-liberal "new public management" in the public sector more generally, has led to the rise of a managerial class in the university. This collection of essays focuses on the rise of this "new management" and the widespread use of business models and market principles since the late 1970s that have undermined the autonomy of the professoriate.

Order

Hans Schuetze, William Bruneau,
Garnet Grosjean (eds.)
Palgrave Macmillan | May 2012
ISBN: 978-0-230-34012-1
English 256 pages
paperback £58.00

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.

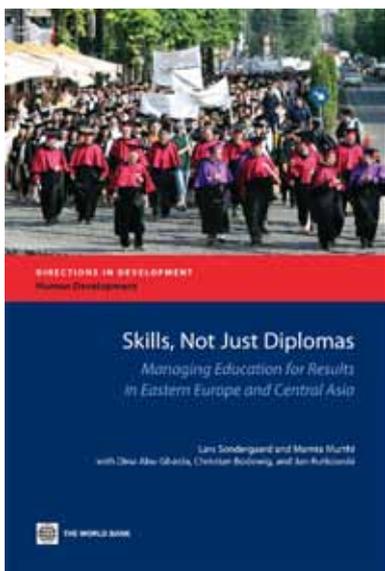
new studies

CHANGING RELATIONS CLASS, EDUCATION AND CULTURAL CAPITAL

Based on analyses of survey data of the cultural practices of Norwegian students in 1998 and 2008, this article addresses the changing relations between class, education and cultural tastes of students in Norway – particularly focusing on what Bourdieu termed “cultural capital”. Proceeding from international and Norwegian debates regarding the nature and social importance of cultural capital, the article first discusses the changing relation between social class and educational careers. On this basis, changes with regard to the use of music and literature, both in forms of genres and individual artists/authors, are analysed. While general relations between preferences for musical and literary genres and social background appear to be quite stable, with traditional highbrow genres in both years being closely related to students with high levels of cultural capital, students’ interest in traditional highbrow genres have weakened considerably in the period under study. The study concludes a general decline in interest towards such forms of culture.

Jostein Gripsrud, Jan Fredrik
Hovden, Hallvard Moe
University of Bergen | Nov. 2011
English \$39.95

Order



Lars Sondergaard, Mamta
Murthi, Dina Abu-Ghaida et al.
World Bank | November 2011
English

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SKILLS, NOT JUST DIPLOMAS MANAGING EDUCATION FOR RESULTS IN EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

The countries of Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia (ECA) are currently emerging from the deepest recession suffered by any developing region. Earlier boom years in the ECA region exposed significant bottlenecks to growth, particularly with respect to the skills of the labor force. Paradoxically, for a region with relatively high and expanding educational attainment (as measured by the number of years of completed schooling) and relatively high-quality education in the early years of schooling, a shortage of worker skills has emerged as one of the most important constraints to firm expansion. This report seeks to answer the following questions: Why do ECA firms increasingly complain that they cannot find graduates with the right skills? What can ECA countries do to close the skills gap?

IN PURSUIT OF AN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION DESTINATION REFLECTIONS FROM A UNIVERSITY IN A SMALL ISLAND STATE

This research aims to explain why international students choose to pursue their education in a university in a small island state (North Cyprus) which is suffering under international embargos, yet has been successful in establishing a global higher education sector. One hundred and eighty-four international students studying at the Eastern Mediterranean University (EMU) answered a questionnaire that gauged their reasons for coming to EMU, their satisfaction with the university, and their willingness to transfer to another institution if given the chance. The top three reasons for choosing EMU were the internationally recognized diploma, reasonable tuition fees, and English medium of instruction. Although students did not seem to be dissatisfied with the university facilities and the education they were receiving, 58.9% indicated that they would still transfer to a university abroad. This shows that EMU needs to work harder at its retention strategies and to further improve student satisfaction. Implications for EMU management and guidelines for universities in other developing nations--in particular small island states with limited natural resources--who want to establish themselves as higher education centers are discussed.

Salime Mehtap-Smadi, Majid
Hashemipour
Eastern Mediterranean
University | November 2011
English

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european policy papers

SUPPORTING GROWTH AND JOBS – AN AGENDA FOR THE MODERNISATION OF EUROPE'S HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEMS

This recent communication was adopted on 20 September 2011 and contains relevant measures on topics such as training and human resource management. Increasing attainment levels to provide the graduates and researchers Europe needs is the communication's main aim.

► Communication, 20-09-2011
ec.europa.eu/education/

BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS TO RESEARCH – CONSULTATION ON THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA

The European Commission has launched a public consultation to find out how the European research environment can be radically improved. The goal is to achieve the European Research Area (ERA) by 2014, creating a genuine single market for knowledge, research and innovation. This will enable researchers, research institutions and businesses to circulate, compete, and co-operate across borders, increasing growth potential. The consultation runs until 30 November 2011.

► Press release, 13-09-2011
europa.eu/rapid/

EUROPE 2020 FLAGSHIP INITIATIVE INNOVATION UNION

The ERA consists of agendas and policies, one of which includes the Innovation Union Flagship Initiative. The Innovation Union sets a bold, integrated and strategic approach, which exploits the EU's strengths in new and productive ways – and thereby maintains the economic foundation that supports the quality of life and social model. The Innovation Union fears that the EU's "Business-as-usual" approach will lead to a decline in competitive advantage.

► Communication, 06-10-2011
ec.europa.eu/research/

REPORT OF MAPPING EXERCISE ON DOCTORAL TRAINING IN EUROPE "TOWARDS A COMMON APPROACH"

The ERA has put forward 'Principles for Innovative Doctoral Training'. They will be tested in 2012 with visits to a sample of schools. The principles refer to: research excellence, attractive institutional environment, interdisciplinary research options, exposure to industry and other relevant employment sectors, international networking, transferable skills training, and quality assurance.

► Report, 27-06-2011
ec.europa.eu/

DRAFT REPORT on the contribution of the European institutions to the consolidation and progress of the Bologna Process

In November Luigi Berlinguer, member of Committee of Culture and Education, submitted a motion to the European Parliament to enhance the Bologna Process through the European Commission.

Berlinguer presents the achievements of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and suggests further measures such as joint degrees, recognition of cooperation across

borders and the establishment of an effective Euro-Mediterranean higher education area.

Head of the Committee of Culture and Education, Doris Pack, and EU commissioner Andrea Vassiliou support the motion also because the EHEA has not been discussed for years in the European Parliament.

The motion will be decided on March 2012, and is supposed to reinforce the position of the European Commission before the next Bologna conference in Bucharest, Romania, on 26-27 April 2012.

► Minutes of EU Committee Education and Culture Committee, 22/23-11-2011
europarl.europa.eu/

► **Download the report**

Photo: LB

