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# THE IMHE GENERAL CONFERENCE: FOOD FOR THOUGHT – AND ACTION – IN A CHANGED WORLD

The 2010 IMHE General Conference, *Higher Education in a World Changed Utterly: Doing More with Less*, was the biggest and the best yet. With 438 participants from 62 countries, debates and discussions focused on the ever evolving landscape of higher education. Despite widespread change and reform, institutions continue to face growing demand with reduced funding, while trying to meet the expectations of students and stakeholders.

What are the implications of the financial crisis for higher education? The Secretariat produced a discussion paper emphasising the need to consider responses for improved productivity due to the lingering economic crisis, longer term goals of tertiary education (such as sustainable growth), social responsibility of citizens, and better co-operation among members of the global community. The paper examined economic realities, economic recovery, innovation and IT, social engagement and tertiary education, as well as post-crisis perspectives for tertiary education.

Speakers raised key issues. Luc Montagnier, Nobel Prize Laureate for Medicine 2008; President, World Foundation for AIDS Research and Prevention, insisted on greater interdisciplinarity and higher education as a transmitter of culture. Joe Astroth, Chief Education Officer at Autodesk, spoke on the role of education in innovation and the need “to inspire the best and brightest to take on new challenges facing the planet”. Barbara Ischinger, Director of the OECD Education Directorate, maintained that a high-quality and accessible higher education system should be a key element of any national education policy. Charles Reed, Chancellor of the California State University system, shared California’s experience in dealing with the financial crisis, with CSU employees taking a 10% pay reduction, among other tactics.

As higher education continues to expand and diversify, international competition is increasing, as is the for-profit sector. Many speakers focused on changing business models for higher education. Driven by the aspiration to move up in higher education and amplified by rankings, the current university model continues to undervalue higher level vocational education, as well as open and distance learning.

Social responsibility was also a hotly-debated issue. The 2010 conference included several speakers from non-OECD countries including Africa and Latin America. Many participants felt that

institutions and systems are not adequately fulfilling their responsibility to nurture research

in order to address pressing global challenges nor providing the equitable access to teaching that is relevant to the labour market and society as a whole.

There was widespread support for better understanding of and recognition for quality teaching in higher education, a topic on which IMHE is currently working. The AHELO initiative is also attracting ever more interest.

In the closing plenary session, Malcolm Grant, Provost and President of University College London, emphasised that institutions should take a longer term view, while bearing in mind the short-term implications. He insisted on avoiding short-term knee-jerk reactions, while maintaining fundamental values in the new austerity [see <http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20101010110512451>].

## Inside

- The IMHE General Conference
- Raise Your Hand
- Education Ministerial
- Education at a Glance 2010
- Quality Teaching
- Higher education in regional and city development
- AHELO
- Managing Internationalisation
- New members
- Publications of interest
- IMHE calendar



Preparation for the next General Conference, to be held in Paris from 17-19 September 2012, has already begun.

For a full report on the 2010 General Conference see our website:

[http://www.oecd.org/site/0\\_3407.en\\_21571361\\_43541789\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1.00.html](http://www.oecd.org/site/0_3407.en_21571361_43541789_1_1_1_1_1.00.html)

as well as the University World News Special Report: <http://www.universityworldnews.com/topic.php?topic=OEC2010>.

## RAISE YOUR HAND!

**What do you think is the most important action in education that we need to take today?**

The OECD Education Policy Forum, held at OECD Headquarters in conjunction with the 2010 OECD Education Ministerial meeting (4-5 November 2010), brought together high level policy makers, researchers, businesspeople, trade union leaders, analysts and practitioners to meet and map the road ahead.

It was also the culmination of the Raise Your Hand Initiative, launched at the close of the IMHE General Conference in September. As the OECD believes that education powers our future, the project gathered responses to the question, "In the context of the economic crisis, what do you think is the most important action we need to take today?"

The global public decided upon 5 top actions for education.

Thousands of students, teachers, parents and education specialists from 90+ countries have expressed their priorities for action in education today. Participants uploaded 325 original ideas and cast over 27,000 votes on line in just 30 days. "Teach to think, not to regurgitate" was the number one action according to participants. See <https://community.oecd.org/docs/DOC-16980> for the other four winning ideas, more about who participated, how the exercise worked and where OECD goes from here.

## INVESTING IN HUMAN AND SOCIAL CAPITAL: NEW CHALLENGES – THE EDUCATION MINISTERIAL

Education Ministers from OECD member countries and key emerging economies gathered at the OECD on 4 and 5 November 2010 to focus on how to foster human and social capital to benefit their post-crisis economies and societies. Themes included: tackling the effects of the crisis on education; matching skills to new needs; equipping effective teachers for the 21<sup>st</sup> century; and reinforcing the social benefits of education ([www.oecd.org/education/ministerial](http://www.oecd.org/education/ministerial)).

## EDUCATION AT A GLANCE 2010: OECD INDICATORS

Education at a Glance 2010 was launched on 8 September. It provides an abundant, comparable and up-to-date range of indicators. The indicators illustrate the participants in education, costs, and how education systems operate. In addition, they show a wide-range of educational outcomes, such as a comparison of student performance in key subject areas, the impact of education on earnings, as well as adults' chances of employment.



## QUALITY TEACHING: MOTIVATING TEACHERS, INSPIRING STUDENTS, IMPROVING EDUCATION

Cape Peninsula University of Technology (South Africa) has launched an extended curriculum programme to provide under-prepared students with a stronger academic foundation. The IMHE review revealed that this sort of programme could be a great opportunity for new teaching methods and alternative teaching-learning practices. Teachers then can be more innovative and increase productive student-to teacher interactions leading to renewed personal interest and motivation.

Through university leaders, faculty and students at Laurea University (Finland), IMHE reviewed the perception and dissemination of the university-wide teaching model "Learning by Developing", based on the notion of student-centred learning.

As confirmed by the IMHE team, the model is a progressive and distinctive educational innovation and is already being recognised nationally and internationally. The team thought that the model could be even more valuable should it be implemented more consistently and uniformly.

UNICAMP (Brazil) is ready and equipped to sustain quality teaching. IMHE explored the required conditions to define and implement an effective institution-wide teaching and learning centre. The IMHE team underscored the continuous efforts to define relevant policies, organisations and instruments to ensure the quality of education and advised UNICAMP to provide systematic appraisal of its improved quality of teaching.

For more information, contact: [fabrice.henard@oecd.org](mailto:fabrice.henard@oecd.org)

IMHE welcomes the following new members:

- > The University of Queensland – Australia
- > University of Zagreb – Croatia
- > Universidad Católica del Norte – Chile
- > Universidad Técnica Federico Santa María – Chile
- > Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore – Italy
- > Universidad Anáhuac – Mexico
- > Universidad Autónoma de Querétaro – Mexico
- > Universidade Zambeze – Mozambique
- > University of Ilorin – Nigeria
- > Knowledge Network Institute of Thailand – Thailand
- > Office of Postsecondary Education, US Department of Education – United States

## HIGHER EDUCATION IN REGIONAL AND CITY DEVELOPMENT: SECOND ROUND OF REVIEWS ALMOST COMPLETED

What policies, practices and mechanisms promote mobilisation of higher education in support of regional and city development? How to make reform happen?

Which brings greater benefits to cities and regions: a high performing regionally focused HE system or a single world class university?

These are the key questions being asked in the second round of the OECD reviews. New geographical areas in OECD countries and emerging economies have been examined, focusing on the interaction between higher education institutions (HEIs) and their cities and regions. All 14 review visits have been carried out, the last one being Lombardy. The latest review reports that have been completed and published are:

- The OECD/World Bank Bío Bío Region Review
- The OECD Paso del Norte Review
- The OECD/IMHE Rotterdam Review
- The OECD/IMHE Amsterdam Review

- The OECD/IMHE Berlin Review
- The OECD/IMHE Andalusia Review
- The OECD/IMHE State of Victoria Review

A conference will be held in Seville (Spain) on 10-11 February 2011 that will draw on these OECD reviews and other studies to examine innovative ways HEIs can make their cities and regions stronger, cleaner and fairer. It will highlight key issues in human capital development and innovation, as well as identify ways of transforming universities. The conference will bring together policy makers, practitioners, public and private entities concerned with regional development, along with HEI leaders and managers.

The IMHE Secretariat is currently negotiating with a number of cities and regions that are interested in taking part in the third round of reviews. The third round was kicked off in October 2010 with the review visit to Free State (South Africa).

For more information, contact: [jaana.puukka@oecd.org](mailto:jaana.puukka@oecd.org).

## AHELO: ON ITS WAY!

The AHELO project has made much progress on several fronts. The fifteen countries, the OECD and the Consortium have been working together to develop frameworks and instruments for the assessment.

The Group of National Experts and the National Project Managers both met during the week of 25 October and both groups commended the project's new pace and were pleased to see the work move ahead.

The two international expert groups met at the end of October to devise the provisional frameworks and discuss actual test items for the economics and engineering strands.

The international adaption of the CLA instrument for the generic skills strand is well on its way to proving that an international tool

measuring generic skills can be developed. Two test items have been chosen by the participating countries. The translation and cultural adaptation of these items is underway, providing valuable information.

Contractual negotiations have begun on the development of the contextual questionnaires and we are hoping to be able to have a complete set of test items (CLA adaptation for the generic skills, engineering and economics items, as well as contextual dimension), which will have been validated on a small scale by May 2011. Provided more funding is secured for the implementation, student testing is scheduled to begin in July 2011 with southern hemisphere countries and January 2012 for the northern hemisphere.

For more information, contact: [karine.tremblay@oecd.org](mailto:karine.tremblay@oecd.org); [diane.lalancette@oecd.org](mailto:diane.lalancette@oecd.org).

## MANAGING INTERNATIONALISATION – PROVIDING STUDENTS WITH THE NECESSARY SKILLS IN AN EVER-EVOLVING WORLD

An important aspect of IMHE's work in the coming two years will be a study on how the increasingly global nature of higher education is changing the ways in which institutions view their role and mission, and how that affects the way they work.

Internationalisation can be seen as a complement and a response to globalisation. According to Knight (2001), "the key element in internationalisation is the notion of the relationship between or among nations and cultural identities, thereby implying that nation-state and culture are preserved." The globalisation process is usually thought of as the integration of regional economies, societies and cultures as a result of a more global communications and trade network. More importance is being placed on having international, foreign language and inter-cultural skills to interact well in a global setting. This does not only refer to student mobility; international-

isation affects many aspects of institutional behaviour and provides new and exciting opportunities for all types of higher education institutions. To what extent is internationalisation reflected in institution-wide governance and management? How is internationalisation perceived by all players within institutions – faculty, students, support staff – and how is it implemented? How do internationalisation challenges influence institutional strategies, programmes, teaching-learning practices, students and faculty support and evaluation of quality? What does it mean to be an international institution and what are the implications of that for national policy and local links? IMHE's review will look at how institutions in different settings are managing internationalisation by identifying those instruments, and approaches which they use to plan, manage, diffuse and sustain internationalisation.



## PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST

### *Education at a Glance 2010: OECD Indicators*

Education at a Glance provides a rich, comparable and up-to-date array of indicators on systems and represents the consensus of professional thinking on how to measure the current state of education internationally. ISBN: 9784750332840

### *Educational Research and Innovation, The Nature of Learning: Using Research to Inspire Practice*

This book brings together the lessons of research on both the nature of learning and different educational applications, and it summarises these as seven key concluding principles. ISBN: 9789264086487

### *OECD Reviews of Vocational Education and Training, Learning for Jobs*

An OECD study of vocational education and training designed to help countries make their systems more responsive to labour market needs. It expands the evidence base, identifies a set of policy options and develops tools to appraise VET policy initiatives. ISBN: 9789264087460

### *Higher Education Management and Policy, Volume 22 Issue 2*

This issue of *Higher Education Management and Policy* includes articles on performance incentives, collaborative learning, gender equality issues, sustainable teaching development programmes, "employability" through skills development, peer review and knowledge production in the innovation system.

### *Trends Shaping Education 2010*

What does it mean for education that our societies are increasingly diverse? How is global economic power shifting towards new countries? In what ways are working patterns changing? *Trends Shaping Education 2010* brings together international evidence to



address questions like these. To make the content accessible, each trend is presented on a double page, containing an introduction, two charts with brief descriptive text and a set of pertinent questions for education. ISBN: 9789264075269

### *Education Today 2010: The OECD Perspective*

Organised into eight chapters, this report examines early childhood education, schooling, transitions beyond initial education, higher education, adult learning, outcomes and returns, equity, and innovation. The chapters focus on key findings and policy directions emerging from recent OECD work. ISBN: 9789264090613

### *Internationalization of Higher Education Global Trends, Regional Perspectives*

As the world around us become ever more globalised, higher education leaders, policy makers, and university faculty, staff and students have become actively involved in developing or updating internationalization strategies, approaches, policies and activities. This report presents and compares global (aggregate) level results with findings at the regional level. In-depth expert analyses and commentary on selected aspects of this regional data is also provided. Copies can be ordered from [www.iau-aiu.net](http://www.iau-aiu.net). ISBN-13: 978-92-9002-190-2

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### SAVE THE DATE:

The next IMHE General Conference is being held in Paris from 17-19 September 2012. Be sure you have these dates in your agenda!

**10-11 February 2011** *Higher Education in Cities and Regions – For Stronger, Cleaner and Fairer Regions*, Seville, [http://www.oecd.org/document/1/0,3343,en\\_21571361\\_45834904\\_45856897\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/1/0,3343,en_21571361_45834904_45856897_1_1_1_1,00.html)

### OTHER MEETINGS OF INTEREST

**13-15 January 2011** *Being Global 2011: Strategies and Models for Internationalizing Canadian Higher Education*, Toronto, Ontario Canada

**14-16 January 2011** *World Universities Forum*, Hong Kong, China

**11 March 2011** *CHEPS 25th Anniversary conference, The Reform of Higher Education and Research in Europe*, University of Twente, Enschede, the Netherlands [http://www.utwente.nl/mb/cheps/news/CHEPS\\_lustrum\\_2011.pdf](http://www.utwente.nl/mb/cheps/news/CHEPS_lustrum_2011.pdf)

**11-12 April 2011** *IAU Global Meeting of Associations (IV) on Internationalization of Higher Education, New Players; New Approaches*, IAU, Association of Indian Universities and the Indian Institute of Information Technology, New Delhi, India <http://www.iau-aiu.net/>

Find all our meetings on [www.oecd.org/edu/imhemeetings](http://www.oecd.org/edu/imhemeetings)

**17-18 Nov. 2011** *IAU International Conference 2011, Strategies for Securing Equity in Access and Success in Higher Education*, Kenyatta University, Nairobi, Kenya <http://www.iau-aiu.net/>



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Leslie Diamond, Editor  
IMHE Programme, OECD  
2, rue André-Pascal  
75775 Paris Cedex 16  
France  
Tel: (33) 1 45 24 92 24 or (33) 1 45 24 75 84  
Fax: (33) 1 44 30 61 76  
[imhe@oecd.org](mailto:imhe@oecd.org)  
[www.oecd.org/edu/imhe](http://www.oecd.org/edu/imhe)