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FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

**Higher
Education
in Europe**

In this issue:

**Quality Transnational Education: A Shared Commitment for
Sustainable Development**

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Higher Education in Europe

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From the Editors

This issue of *Higher Education in Europe* picks up a continuing strand of UNESCO-CEPES activity, that is, transnational education, its aspects and implications. Specifically, it is publishing eleven of the papers that were delivered (or, at least, prepared for delivery) at the Sixth Annual Conference of the Global Alliance for Transnational Education (GATE), "Quality Transnational Education: A shared Commitment to Sustainable Development", that was held in San Jose, Costa Rica, from 8 to 10 October 2001.

The title of the Conference underlines the question of "sustainable development" which was strongly evoked in a keynote address by Dr. Oscar Arias Sanchez, former President of Costa Rica and Nobel Peace Laureate. He argued that only through education and a resulting rise in standard of living do people become environmentally conscious and able to avoid short-term measures that do long-term damage to the environment.

Some of the Conference papers published herein directly cite the importance of education for sustainable development. Others suggest that since the growing demand for higher education can never be met by traditional "bricks and mortar" establishments, the only way to educate the large numbers of people needed to work productively in the information society and the new economy is via electronically delivered transnational education. Thus, it is transnational education subjected to rigorous quality control that constitutes the "Shared Commitment to Sustainable Development".

The eleven papers that we are publishing both reflect the session topics and also a certain logical grouping of their own, beginning with a set of three that deal with facets of a major problem, the impact of globalization in general, but specifically on (higher) education. In the first of these, Miguel Casas Armengol of Venezuela argues that globalization, of which electronically delivered transnational higher education possibilities are major vector, presents a serious challenge to the traditional (Napoleonic) universities of Ibero-America. These will have to adapt to all sorts of new global paradigms or be totally marginalized – along with their countries.

But, according to Laurie Marion of the United States, globalization can also have a more benign and grassroots scope, that of an opening to the world and a willingness for civilizations to borrow from one another, without, necessarily, depending totally on electronic means. She describes a project under way in Indonesian, whereby Indonesian school teachers are learning, through a project called "Whole Child Education", to apply the principles of Deep-Dialogue/Critical-Thinking, a philosophy of education for tolerance and inductive learning, developed by two professors in the United States. In the third article under this rubric, M. Frances Kelly of the United States returns to the globalization-electronic delivery-Internet paradigm to point out, with reference to five statements about the impact of the Internet that she makes, that all the effects of the generalization of access to the Internet may not be good. For instance, the Internet will exacerbate separate but unequal conditions in the world and fuel rising, but unrealizable, expectations, even if it stimulates education and educational standardization.

A second set of papers deals with the larger picture of accreditation and quality control in higher education in an increasingly globalized higher education scene. Even traditional bricks and mortar higher education institutions will have to pay close attention to quality control and mechanisms. Thus Y. P. Pokholkov, a. I. Chuchalin, and S. B. Mogilnitsky of the Russian Federation describe the elaborate Russian system for the accreditation of higher education institutions* and the internal quality assessment procedures of their own institution, Tomsk Polytechnic University, that has sought certification and accreditation not only by GATE, but also by the Open University Validation Services of the United Kingdom and the Central Evaluation Agency of Germany. With reference to a discipline rather than to a institution, Sharon M. Goldsmith of the United States describes the attempts made by national certification agencies in Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States to develop procedures for the mutual recognition of professional education and the credentials of speech/language pathologists. Finally, referring to quality in higher education in a major region of the world, Helena Sebkova of the Czech Republic describes the steps being taken to create a European Higher Education Area following the Sorbonne Declaration of 1998 and the Bologna Declaration of 1999. She interprets these efforts as an evolution towards the development of regional quality standards in higher education in Europe.

While external quality assurance may be of great importance in assuring the quality of transnational as well as of traditional higher education, much in the domain of quality assurance and sustained suitability must come from within individual institutions and be the fruit of individual efforts. Thus, Richard Henderson of the United States describes the questions of cultural and ethical adaptation required of an American institution wishing to offer leadership training courses in Asia and in Latin America. Two other academics from the United States, William J. Husson and Ellen K. Waterman, describe the efforts that need to be made in their institution, a Jesuit university in Denver, to develop effective on-line course programmes that reflect the same level of quality as traditional courses.

The matter of careful design and delivery in the domain of electronic courses is further illustrated by two papers dealing with aspects of the training of librarians. The first of these, by Vicki L. Gregory and Sonia Ramírez Wohlmuth of the United States, describes the setting up of a distance programme in library science that is to be directed primarily at Latin America. It will have both traditional and electronic components. Harvey R. Gover of the United States, with his eye completely on the electronic libraries of virtual universities, describes the *Guidelines for Distance Learning Library Services* as a guarantee to the distance student of the same quality of service in an electronic library as in a traditional one.

We bring the topic to a close with an article by Ansu Erasmus of South Africa who demonstrates that certain university technical assistance programmes can be quite traditional and still quite effective even in the electronic era. She describes an assistance programme linking her institution in South Africa with several Dutch higher education institutions through the Joint Financing Programme for Co-operation in Higher Education (HMO) of the Netherlands. The assistance projects that this organization sponsors must be sustainable.

The four articles making up the "Tribune" section of this issue are a diverse set. The first two of them, however, further develop the themes of globalization and of technical assistance in higher education that emerged from articles making up the topic.

Indeed, the first article, by Birgit Brock-Utne of Norway, while continuing the discussion of globalization, is very critical of its effects on higher education, particularly in Europe. For her,

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In the third and fourth articles, respectively, Jean-Philippe Antonietti, Fabienne Crettaz von Roten, and Jean-Philippe Leresche of Switzerland outline the results of a national poll undertaken in Switzerland, in 2000, on the public perceptions of the "higher institutes", *i.e.*, the universities and the Federal polytechnic schools, of Switzerland. Pavel Zgaga of Slovenia outlines changes made in Slovenian higher education following the 1999 amendments to the 1993 Higher Education Act of his country.

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From the Editors

This issue of *Higher Education in Europe* publishes most of the papers that were delivered at a two-day conference, held at the Poznań University of Economics, on the subject of “Public Relations - An Instrument for Transformation and Development of Higher Education in Central and Eastern Europe”. * Organized by the Chair of Economic Journalism and Public Relations of the Poznań University of Economics, by UNESCO-CEPES, and by PRELITE PR, its overall aim was to bring together professional people and academics working in the areas both of higher education and public relations in the transitional economies of Central and Eastern Europe. The organizers sought presentations aimed at an audience seeking to understand current issues of reform and development in the field of higher education in countries undergoing transition and to analyze and to situate the working relationships (that embody both vigorous competition and co-operation) between the public and the newly established private higher education institutions. An expected outcome of the various presentations was an evaluation of the concept of “Transitional Public Relations”, that had been formulated and developed by Professor Ryszard Ławniczak.

The typical paper (of which there were notable exceptions), which was prepared for the conference and presented, was a case study on the development and use of public relations at the presenter’s home institution or in neighbouring institutions. The articles resulting from three of these presentations focus on private higher education institutions and reflect the much-repeated thesis that the private institutions that appeared on the scene, virtually overnight and from scratch, after the collapse of communism in Central and Eastern Europe, had, perforce, to develop advertising and public relations campaigns early-on in order to survive and to occupy niches in a “market” that had been dominated by public institutions.

Thus, Professor Mihai Coman, Head of the Media Department at the University of Bucharest, in Romania, focuses on the self-promotion methods of the new private Romanian universities. Professor Erwin Gömbös of the International Business School of Budapest describes the ways in which private higher education institutions in Hungary recruit students and promote themselves. And Maciej Kolasiński, Arkadiusz Kulig, and Piotr Lisiecki offer a similar discourse with regard to the School of Banking of Poznań. They make the point that a higher education institution, in fact, competes simultaneously in two markets: the market in which it obtains its students and the job market into which it places its graduates.

However, the public institutions, which found their monopoly positions challenged both by the private newcomers and by the vastly reduced public funding available to them in the transition period, have been forced to adopt and to use the techniques of the new private institutions in order to hold onto their shares of the market and even to increase them in competition with one another and with the private sector of higher education. Hence the opening of fee-paying enrollments in the public institutions and efforts, on their part, at self-promotion through public relations and marketing.

The five articles (reflecting five presentations at the Conference) dealing with public relations in public institutions in transition illustrate several approaches to the activity, both narrow and broad. The authors of the first two articles in this group, being

associated with old, traditional institutions, show how tradition can be used to promote such institutions. The approach is particularly relevant to Nijole Bulotaite, Head of the Information and Public Relations Office of the University of Vilnius, in Lithuania, that traces its founding back to 1579. She describes a whole strategy of public relations based on the cultural patrimony of a venerable but, at the same time, modern institution.

Elena Kaverina of Alexander Herzen State Pedagogical University of St. Petersburg approaches the question of public relations at and for her institution in the same way, by stressing tradition, her university having been founded in 1797 as the oldest higher education institution *of its kind* in Russia. However, there is a contradiction, given the author's perceived need to deny an enduring aspect of the tradition whereby the University has been and still is, officially, a teacher training institution. The pedagogical university image, according to Kaverina, clashes with her target image, that of a broad-spectrum university, which is very good in many domains.

Newer public institutions that cannot, because of their short histories, base too much of their public relations on the evocation of tradition need to stress utilitarian arguments and, in the case of Poland, to play on the underlying feeling in Polish society that the public institutions are still the best.

For Professor Przemysław Deszczyński, the factor that must be confronted, even in the case of his well-reputed public university, the University of Economics of Poznań, is that the level of competition will be greatly increased and broadened as Poland joins the European Union and becomes part of the European Higher Education Area and the European Research and Innovation Area. Evoking the creation, in December 2000, by five Polish public higher economics education universities, of the Foundation for the Promotion and Accreditation of Economics Programmes, he describes the process whereby his institution sought and obtained accreditation by this Foundation. The process and the successful outcome have served as high-impact PR for the participating higher education institutions.

Evoking a similar institution in another Polish city, Aneta Szymańska of the Wrocław University of Economics examines the types of institutional research that must be conducted before a higher education institution can undertake a successful public relations campaign. She gives a detailed description of a situation analysis that she undertook of her university by means of a poll of the opinions and the attitudes of students towards their university. The results will serve as an underpinning for other types of very targeted PR.

The fifth article in this group moves the spotlight to the Czech Republic, in particular to the University of Economics of Prague. Here again an established and well-regarded public institution has had to deal with competition but also with the need to promote a branch campus, the Faculty of Management, located at some distance south of Prague, in Jindřichův Hradec. The authors, Petr Pirožk, the Vice-Dean for External Relations of this Faculty, and his colleague, Marie Hesková, describe several strategies that have been used to support and to build up this new campus, one of which is insisting on its "brand" obtained by being a branch of an "Ivy League" Czech higher education institution.

Three other participants in the Conference presented the topic of public relations in transition countries in a completely different way. The resulting articles emphasize descriptions of the ways in which PR is taught in their universities. The first author in this

group, Lyudmila Azarova of St. Petersburg State Electrotechnical University of Russia, describes the university-based degree programme in public relations offered by her university. It was the first one of its kind to be created in the Russian Federation. Set up in 1993, in co-operation with Towson State University in Maryland, it meets the requirements of both the Russian State Educational Standard in Public Relations and of the Public Relations Society of America.

Dr. Kaja Tampere of the University of Tartu in Estonia describes the evolution and the various course programmes in Public Relations at several degree levels that have evolved since the first programme in Public Relations was set up in 1996 in the Department of Journalism of the University of Tartu that, itself, was set up in 1978. Currently, the public relations programme places much emphasis on research in Public Relations and derives much support for the Department and for the university as a whole from the reputation and tradition of the institution itself, a very old university that was founded in 1632.

Finally, Dr. Minka Zlateva of the St. Kliment Ohridski University of Sofia surveys the teaching of public relations in Bulgarian higher education, particularly at her university. Instruction in the field, she adds, is stimulated by the need of social institutions in her country to understand and to make use of public relations, a basic element in a democratic society.

A third approach to the subject, a presentation of the mutually fruitful relationship of the Polish branch of a major international business consultation firm, Ernst & Young, and a major Polish higher education institution, the Warsaw School of Economics, is adopted by Izabela Pabich, the Recruitment Manager of the company in question. The two institutions assist each other with jointly organized courses and seminars, student internships in the Company, positions for adjunct faculty members in the School of Economics drawn from the Company, etc. In general, Ernst & Young promotes itself, to the best higher education institutions in Poland, as a very good employer of their graduates, going to some effort to familiarize itself with these institutions and in turn recruiting top graduates who have learned of the Company through its public relations efforts. In short, higher education institutions and employers can and should develop symbiotic relationships.

A fourth approach to the subject of the Conference, reflected in the article by one of the participants, was to demonstrate the political role of public relations in higher education including its possible ramifications in the larger society. Dr. Alfredo Arceo of Complutense University of Madrid, explains how the student and alumni associations of Spain, in their roles as interfaces and boundary spanners in regard to information transmission, eased the transition in Spain from Franco's dictatorship to liberal democracy in ways that favoured the granting, by the government, of university autonomy and academic freedom.

A summing-up article, by Professor Ryszard Ławniczak, could be considered as the concluding text of the Conference. It outlines the concept of "transitional public relations", that designates both public relations adapted to the special conditions of post-socialist, transition economies and societies and the use of public relations to combat the hardened mentalities of the past and to explain and extol the virtues of democracy and market economy and to suggest ways by which both can be achieved. To a greater or

lesser extent, he considers that most of the papers presented at the Conference reflected “transitional public relations”.

Turning to the “Tribune” section of this issue of *Higher Education in Europe*, the first article, by Kate Galbraith, a British journalist, discusses, in general terms, the rise of private higher education institutions in Central and Eastern Europe following the collapse of communism. While recognizing that the quality of the new private institutions is variable and that they depend on tuition fees and on good public relations pitches, she feels that they are structurally better suited to serve the post-communist world than the impoverished and overly-rigid public institutions, despite the generally excellent reputations that the latter have retained - mainly because they are old and established.

In the next article, Professor Masateru Baba of Shinshu University in Japan asks, rhetorically, who should pay for higher education. Citing the situation in his country, he argues that those who benefit from higher education should pay for it, and since the learner obtains the greatest benefit, he or she should pay the largest share. The method of payment proposed is a student loan system with repayment based on future earnings.

We close the “Tribune” with an article by two Turkish academics, Ferda Erdem and Janset Özen, who report on a survey they undertook of eighty-nine research assistants, who were mentored by senior research and teaching staff, at Akendiz University in Turkey. Generally, the experience of having been mentored- was viewed as positive and quite important for the career advancement of the individuals concerned.

As in the case of so many previous issues of *Higher Education in Europe*, we are concluding this issue with a set of insightful book reviews and studies. The set has been prepared by Professor Eric Gilder of Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Romania and by Fen Ying Zhu, a visiting scholar at this university, from China. The next issue of the review, the first for the year 2004, will be devoted to “Thematic Reflections on Higher Education”.

* The papers presented during the conference were selected by its Scientific Committee the membership of which included Professor Klaus Hübner, Chairman of the Advisory board of UNESCO-CEPES; Professor Ryszard Ławniczak, Advisor to the President of the Republic of Poland and Holder of the Chair of Economic Journalism and Public Relations at the Poznań University of economics; Mr. Andrzej Nartowski, a journalist for Cracow, Poland; and Dr. Jan Sadlak, the Director of UNESCO-CEPES.